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Skip West, Valencell and RapidSOS Honored with CTA's 2016 Innovation Entrepreneur Awards

San Jose, CA – September 21, 2016

Today, the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)[™] named Skip West, an entrepreneur with a passion for creating innovative products; Valencell, a company focused on advancing technology to deliver the most accurate biometric wearables; and RapidSOS, a startup developing technology that could completely transform emergency communications, the winners of the 2016 Innovation Entrepreneur Awards.

Launched in 2012 by CTA's flagship magazine It Is Innovation (i3) and CTA's Small Business Council, the annual awards honor entrepreneurs and businesses with revenues under \$30 million for their contributions to the U.S. economy. Each year, a panel of tech experts recognizes one executive, a small business and a startup company.

"Each of this year's Innovation Entrepreneur Award winners demonstrates the innovative spirit that makes our industry so remarkable," said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO, CTA. "Valencell's passion and commitment to

Small Business Executive of the Year: [Skip West](#) has been a member of CTA's Board of Industry Leaders and the CTA Foundation since 2014 and was founding chairman of the association's Small Business Council. West founded and sold his first company in 2003, then founded MAXSA Innovations where he serves as president. From its beginning, MAXSA Innovations has worked tirelessly to develop new and innovative products, most recently entering the world of solar energy and lighting. The company's products are designed to ensure protection, safety, comfort and enhance consumers' enjoyment of life. West also is an adjunct professor at George Mason University.

Small Business of the Year: [Valencell's technology](#) is focused on creating the most accurate wearables for applications including sports and fitness, health, gaming and first responders. The company's success derives from a passion to enable people to live healthier, fuller lives through biometric wearable technologies. Accuracy in all conditions is at the heart of what Valencell does - anyone, anywhere, doing anything, wearing any device. Valencell's biometrics lab puts consumer products through rigorous testing on people with a wide range of skin tones, physical ability and ages to validate real world accuracy.

Startup of the Year: After witnessing challenges in our existing emergency communications infrastructure, [RapidSOS](#) formed with the mission of transforming the world of emergency response, communication and management. The company is dedicated to harnessing cutting-edge technology that will change the outcomes of millions of emergencies across the U.S. and globally. The RapidSOS team

Innovation Entrepreneur Awards honorees:

Jim Barry - CTA's Digital Answer Man

Trace Cohen - New York Venture Partners

Joellyn Gray - Fujifilm

Frank Gruber - Tech.Co

Larry Richenstein - Peak Ventures

Paul Sabbah - Stamford International

Eric Schwartz - NAPCO Media

Michael Sorrentino - Sorrentino Media

Kristen Stippich - Airfoil Group

Haley Velasco - Whistle Sports

To learn more about the Innovation Entrepreneur Awards, visit CTA.tech/IEA for videos of the winners and information on the 2017 nomination process. Find complete profiles of the IEA winners in the January CES issue of It Is Innovation (i3) magazine.

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