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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ECIA Foundation and Eric Max Fund Support Grassland Middle School Robotics Program**

Atlanta, GA – When Eric Max, who was a long time ECIA & Foundation board member, passed away in January of 2017, his family asked that in lieu of flowers, people donate to a fund in his memory through the ECIA Foundation. ECIA worked with the family and identified a [robotics program](#) led by Tina Finley at [Grassland Middle School](#) in their home town of Franklin, TN. Over 40 friends, family and businesses donated to the Fund. Last month, ECIA Foundation made the first presentation of funds to the school and the Max family generously matched this year's funding.

The funds will be used by the school to support the "Eric Max Drone Club" where 6-8th graders will learn to code, build and fly microdrones. The program will continue to receive support for at least five years.

A few months before he died, Eric received the ECIA Distinguished service award at the ECIA Executive Conference 2016. The presentation was accompanied by this dedication: "Eric has been active in the industry for over 45 years – and seems to have spent the better part of those years as a devoted member of industry associations. He served as a board member and past president of EDS. He was the chapter president for the Southeast NEDA Chapter then served on the NEDA Board and the NEDA Education Foundation. Eric was instrumental in guiding the formation of ECIA and has provided direction as a member of the ECIA board, the ECIA Executive Committee, and the ECIA Foundation Board. His perspective and contribution have been invaluable. He probably has his name attached to more board motions than any other director who has ever served! That is a great measure for how active and involved he's been. Eric's positive attitude is contagious and he serves with a huge heart – which we are so thankful is now healthy. Eric and his wife Becky are devoted to their family and community. Eric was also involved as a board member of the Colorado Boys Ranch Foundation, a national award winning residential treatment and education center for adolescent boys. Thank you Eric, the industry and the association owe you a debt of gratitude for all that you have contributed throughout the years."

"I was honored to attend the presentation of the award to Grassland Middle School," recounted Debbie Conyers, ECIA Foundation Director. "Eric's wife Becky, daughter and granddaughter were there along with Jim Kaplan, Foundation President. The students are thrilled to have the opportunity to learn how to code and operate the drones, and this will no doubt inspire them to consider tech careers. This kind of experience can be life changing for a child," she concluded.

About ECIA Foundation

As a charitable affiliate of the Electronic Components Industry Association (ECIA), the ECIA Foundation promotes the value of the electronic components industry and facilitates the association members' efforts to give back to the industry and the community at large. A staunch supporter of education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), the ECIA Foundation through relationships with colleges and universities as well as veteran hiring programs, encourages careers in electronic component industry. For more information about ECIA, visit [www.ecianow.org](http://www.ecianow.org) or call 678-393-9990.