



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **City of Riverside Seminar to Answer Questions About Drone Use**

*Free public education seminar Dec. 5 will feature FAA, local aviation experts*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The popularity of drones – and the potential for conflict with public safety agencies and local aviation – has spurred the area’s first free public education seminar on private use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).

Riverside Municipal Airport, in cooperation with the City’s Police and Fire departments, is holding the seminar from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Wallace Theatre on the campus of California Baptist University, 8432 Magnolia Avenue.

The event is free, but seating is limited. Registration is strongly encouraged. To register, go to [www.riversideca.gov/airport](http://www.riversideca.gov/airport) and click on the flyer.

“The use of unmanned aircraft systems, or drones, is increasing rapidly, both among people who have varying levels of aviation experience and with people who have never flown anything before,” Airport Manager Kim Ellis said. “But there has not been a corresponding level of public education about what drones can – and cannot -- do, so this seminar is very timely.”

Much of the education that has been conducted around the U.S. has been for aviation professionals, such as airport personnel, public safety agencies and regulators, Ellis said. But, he said, the educational opportunities for the general public have lagged behind.

Ellis, who has previously worked for both Los Angeles International and Ontario International airports before coming to Riverside, said he is not aware of another event like this one that has been held in California.

“There’s really no such thing as a typical drone user, so the need for education is definitely there,” Ellis said. “Users range from people who have decades of experience flying full-sized aircraft to hobbyists who have lots of experience flying model planes to people who just bought a drone and want to jump into the world of aviation on an affordable scale.”

The need for such a seminar is especially acute given the widespread availability of the drones and their relative low cost compared to other types of personal aircraft. The rapid rise in the popularity of drones has also given rise to recent concerns about how drones might disrupt public safety efforts, especially in the aerial firefighting area.

“As someone who has devoted his life to aviation, I can tell you that you don’t want your first foray into what can be a great experience to end with concerns about whether you have impeded law enforcement or broken a law,” Ellis said. “This seminar is a great opportunity for people to get educated about what they can and can’t do with a drone.”