



# 2013 FRC New Season!

## Frisbee Throwing, Pyramid Climbing Robots!

Over 60,000 people were up bright and early on Saturday, January 5, anxiously awaiting the announcement of the 2013 FRC Season Game Challenge. Teams across the nation, and world-wide, either watched the Kickoff on NASA-TV or attended the festivities at one of the 83 Kickoff sites. Illinois hosted two Kickoff Events this year and Special Thank You's go out to the folks at IIT (Chicago) and Bradley University (Peoria) for all of their hard work and being such gracious hosts!

Watch the 2013 Season Kickoff Video Here - <http://www.ilfirst.org/frc/events/2013-seasons-challenge.html>

## Reflections on Kickoff

### The Chicago Kickoff

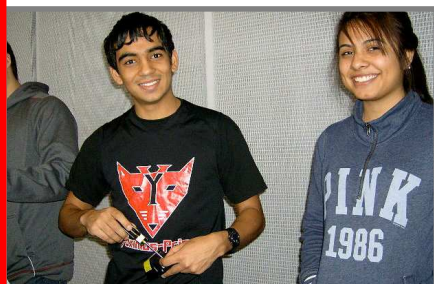
- submitted by Elyse Hill, FRC Team # 1781 Electric Eagles - Chicago



**LOOK...It's Frisbee!!!**  
FIRST FRC Team # 4787  
Northside Prep Mustangs - Chicago



**Checking out the Kit of Parts...**  
FIRST FRC Team # 4551  
Robotic Rangers - Chicago



**Helping out with Rookie Build...**  
FIRST FRC Team # 3695  
Foximus Prime -Yorkville

Hundreds of excited students, mentors, rookies, veterans and FIRST administrators gathered at IIT's Hermann Hall in awe and curiosity as to the new 2013 FRC game. When the kickoff began, there was palpable excitement in the auditorium. The wait was almost too much to bear and thankfully, it was at that time that the annual kickoff broadcast began. Dean Kamen, engineer, inventor, and now the innovator of the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) gave an inspiring speech about his start as a young entrepreneur to his current work at FIRST and his involvement with the robotics competition. His inspiration for creating the FRC was based on his young adult life, trying to figure out an innovative way to make money over the summer without having to mow lawns or wash cars, so he decided to make amplifiers and sell them to kids who were in bands around town.

Also in the broadcast, many veterans that are currently in colleges and universities around the country gave their testimony about what FIRST meant to them. They also mentioned what FIRST did for them in their post-secondary endeavors. There are 155 scholarships available to students with a net-worth of \$16 million. These scholarships are available for any concentration and any school, although there are many specific schools that have partnered with FIRST.

Then, the moment everyone was waiting for finally came: the FIRST 2013 game was introduced, called Ultimate Ascent.

After the numerous clips from FRC about the game and a brief look at the rules, people flocked to the room directly across from the Hermann Hall auditorium to get a look at the 2013 field that IIT students put together as an example of what to expect. According to the game manual, the field measures by 27 by 54 feet. There are four goals : low, middle, high and pyramid. The first three goals can be used during the autonomous period, which is 15 seconds long. During this time the robot will try to score in the low, middle and high goals for two, four, and six points respectively. After the autonomous period, the robot is operated by drivers on the alliances. The pyramid goal can also be used to score and is worth five points. The period where the robot is manually driven lasts for two minutes. At this time, the low goal is worth 1 point, the middle is worth two points, and the high goal is worth three points. The robot also must climb a pyramid located at the center of the field towards the end of the round. Depending on how high the robot climbs, the team will earn extra points at the end of the round. Those points are scored based on three levels. If the robot climbs to level one the team scores 10 points, level two is 20 points, and level three is 30 points.

Three classes were also offered for Rookies on how to design a robot using the programming software, LabView. They were also able to Brainstorm fundraising ideas, and get an in-depth review of the rules in the manual.

Finally, around two p.m., teams went to get their kit of parts which has changed a lot from previous seasons. Now, veteran teams have the choice between a voucher for AndyMark, or a full kit bot. Everyone had a choice of a belt drive or a chain drive, and there were a host of other changes that will make for an interesting build season this year.

# Reflections on Kickoff

## The Peoria Kickoff

- from FRC Team # 4212 Techno Ferrets - Galesburg Website  
<http://technoferrets.com>



Our team attended the 2013 kickoff on Saturday January 5th, at Bradley University Renaissance Coliseum in Peoria, IL. The competition was revealed for this year, the name of the game is Ultimate Ascent.

Debbie Lewellyn opened the ceremony by speaking of progress Caterpillar had made in supporting FRC teams. Then a mechanical engineering professor from Bradley University, spoke to us about engineering opportunities. After this, we watched the kickoff video feed featuring Dean Kamen (the creator of the Segway and founder of FIRST) and Woodie Flowers as well as numerous CEO's, and students from the winning Chairman's Award team the Simbotics.



After the presentation, we were allowed to pick up our kit of parts and view the playing field. It was a very overwhelming day and the competition looks both interesting and challenging. We are looking forward to the challenge of this years competition and excited to get the build season underway!

## Good Luck to Everyone!

## Important Dates & Info

- **02/19 - STOP BUILD! BAG the BOT!**
- **02/20 - DUE - Judges' Information** (8 PM EST)
- **02/21 - CLOSE - Award Submissions** for Chairman's, FIRST Dean's List, Woodie Flowers, and Entrepreneurship
- **02/28 - Regional Competitions Begin** - For a listing, visit: <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/regional-events>
- **03/08 - DUE - Entries for Midwest Regional Poster Contest**
- **03/09 - Make Ready for Your Event Workshop** hosted by Team # 1739 Chicago Knights. Details are still being finalized so for the latest updates visit: <http://ck2009robotickickoff.groupsie.com/main/summary>
- **03/15 - DUE - Sign-up for Midwest Regional National Anthem Singers**
- **04/04-04/06 - MIDWEST REGIONAL - UIC PAVILION - CHICAGO** - For information and the latest updates, visit our NEW Website: <http://www.ilfirst.org/frc/events/midwest-regional.html>
- **04/24-4/27 - FIRST Championship - St. Louis, Missouri**



## Aug 2 & 3 - Teams Save the Date!

### and Get Ready to Rock at the Rock River Off-Season Regional Competition!

Illinois FIRST teams # 81 MetalHeads, # 1625 Winnovation, # 2039 Rockford Robotics, and # 3352 Flaming Monkeys, have joined forces to put together Northern Illinois' very first Off-Season Regional! The competition is open to all FIRST FRC teams and will be based on the 2013 ULTIMATE ASCENT game.

This is a great chance to meet other robotics teams, introduce new team members to a competition, hone your robot driving skills and most of all Have Lots of FUN!

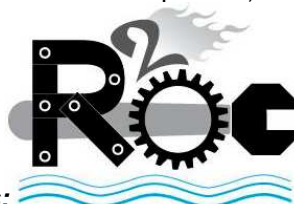
#### When

Friday, August 2, 2013 - Competition Prep, and Team Social

Saturday, August 3, 2013 - Competition

#### Where

Rock Valley College Phys Ed Center  
 3301 North Mulford Road  
 Rockford, Illinois



#### Info & Updates:

<http://www.r2oc.org/index.html>

#### Register at:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/159041490911433/>

#### Follow Roc on facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/events/159041490911433/>



# Fabulous FLL Finale!

## State Championship Winners



Every team participating in the Illinois FIRST LEGO League Championship has attended one of the 22 Qualifier Tournaments somewhere in the State of Illinois. To qualify for advancement they had to be in the top 25% of the teams participating in that qualifier. In a very true sense, each team participating in the State Tournament is a WINNER!

- 362 LEGO teams in Illinois
- 22 Regional Tournaments throughout the State
- 80 LEGO teams participating in the State Tournament

**CONGRATULATIONS TO EVERYONE!**



**FLL Team # 6338 - Girls with Gears**  
Rookie of the Year Award



**FLL Team # 5858 - Newton Busters**  
Inspiration Award  
2nd Place Ambassador Award



**FLL Team # 14 - Titanium Ducks**  
3rd Place Ambassador Award



**FLL Team # 5961 - RoboPOP**  
Robot Performance Award  
2nd Place Champion's Award



**FLL Team # 5438 - Bolin Builders**  
3rd Place Champion's Award  
3rd Place Robot Performance Award



**FLL Team # 6058 - Broken Hippies**  
Gracious Professionalism Award  
2nd Place Robot Performance Award

## Award Winners

### Champion's Award

Team # 3340 - Century Strikers - Mt. Prospect

### 2nd place Champion's Award

Team # 5961 - RoboPop - Lake Villa

### 3rd place Champion's Award

Team # 5438 - Bolin Builders - East Peoria

### Inspiration Award

Team # 5858 - Newton Busters - Glenview

### Teamwork Award

Team # 10736 - Thinkinators - East Peoria

### Gracious Professionalism Award

Team # 6058 - Broken Hippies - Lake Zurich

### Ambassador Award

Team # 9885 - The Moovers - Kildeer

### Robot Table Performance Award

Team # 5961 - RoboPOP - Lake Villa

### Robot Design Strategy and Innovation Award

Team # 208 - Toyminators - Palatine

### Project Innovative Solution Award

Team # 6969 - Skeleton Crew - Moline

### Rookie Award

Team # 6338 - Girls with Gears - Orland Park

For a complete listing of Awards, please visit the Illinois FIRST LEGO League web site

[http://insciteillinois.org/?State\\_Tournament\\_Information:Winners](http://insciteillinois.org/?State_Tournament_Information:Winners)



## State Champ Century Strikers in the News!

By James Kane, Daily Herald, February 4, 2013

### Lincoln Middle School Students Win State With Solution to 'Senior' Problem

"When the nine-member Century Strikers First Lego League team at Lincoln Middle School in Mount Prospect organized last fall, their challenge for the year was "Senior Solutions" — identifying a problem older people faced and developing a practical, cost-effective solution.

The students, coached by several of their parents, visited Frisbie Senior Center in Des Plaines and talked with people there. Then they brainstormed ideas on a variety of issues seniors face before settling on the difficulty they face reading information on their medicine bottles.

Their solution: putting QR codes on the bottles so that when held up to a tablet or smartphone, an app will give the prescription information in a large, easy to read font..." [Read the article at - http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20130204/news/702049901/](http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20130204/news/702049901/)



# Fantastic FTC Finish!

## Illinois State Championship - December 8, 2012



WOW! What a great event! Thirty-two teams from 5 States! Energy was high, the venue was great, the competition was fierce, but most of all every team member, mentor and coach were truly gracious professionals, displaying the *FIRST* spirit of cooperation! A great big THANKS and much appreciation to tournament organizers Ryan and Kori, the IIT crew, and all of the many wonderful volunteers who gave their time and hard work to making this State Competition the best yet!

## Congratulations Award Winners!

### Inspire Award

Team # 5037 - got robot? - Elgin, IL

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Team # 5202 - Try 2 Understand - Decatur, IL

3<sup>rd</sup> Place - Team # 5085 - Newton's Lawyers - O'Fallon, IL

### Winning Alliance

Team # 3785 - Beastie Bots - Highland Park, IL

Team # 6007 - Octopi - Crystal Lake, IL

Team # 3537 - Mecha-Hampsters - Martinsville, IN

### Finalist Alliance

Team # 3216 - Robophins - Chicago, IL

Team # 5451 - Da Big Merks - Highland Park, IL

Team # 5202 - Try 2 Understand - Decatur, IL

### Think Award

Team # 5202 - Try 2 Understand - Decatur, IL

### Connect Award

Team # 3785 - Beastie Bots - Highland Park, IL

### Rockwell Collins Innovate Award

Team # 6200 - Ohm's Olympians - Marion, IL

### PTC Design Award

Team # 6387 - Girls on Wheels - Naperville, IL

### Motivate Award

Team # 5451 - Da Big Merks - Highland Park, IL

### Judges' Award

Team # 6429 - Girls Gone Wired - Highland Park, IL

### Judges' Software Award

Team # 5085 - Newton's Lawyers - O'Fallon, IL



**2012 WINNING ALLIANCE FTC TEAMS -**

# 3785 - Beastie Bots, # 6007 - Octopi, # 3537 - Mecha-Hampsters



**FTC Team # 6200**

Ohm's Olympians - Marion, IL  
**Innovate Award**



**FTC Team # 5085**

Newton's Lawyers - O'Fallon, IL  
**Judges' Software Award**



**FTC Team # 5451**

Da Big Merks - Highland Park, IL  
**Finalist & Motivate Awards**



**FTC Team # 3216**

Robophins - Chicago, IL  
**Finalist Award**

## Illinois State Inspire Award Winner

## Congressman Hultgren (IL-14) Congratulates FTC Team # 5037 got robot?!

Congressman Randy Hultgren officially recognized *got robot?* in the U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday, February 5, 2013.

Congressman Hultgren, who sits on the Committee on Science, Space and Technology, displayed a *got robot?* team shirt during his speech on the house floor in which Hultgren congratulated student members for their accomplishments. Congressman Hultgren stated,

"On December 8th, 2012, *got robot?* FTC Team 5037, a group of high school students from Elgin, Illinois, won an award at the the FIRST Tech Challenge Illinois State Tournament. Now *got robot?* will represent Illinois in the FIRST World Championships in St. Louis, Missouri this upcoming April."

"Out of 2,500 participating teams around the world, *got robot?* is one of only 128 to qualify for the World Championship. At a time when we need to do everything we can, everything possible, to promote science education and basic scientific research, I am so thrilled to be able to say that I have met this team, seen the robot and it is fantastic. We are so proud of these students and we wish their team the best of luck. Go *got robot!*" See the video at: <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/clip/4352351>



# Midwest Regional April 4 - 6 Update!

We at Illinois FIRST Midwest Regional Planning Committee are really excited about this year's MWR! First of all The field of competitors is impressive! Fifty-four teams from Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin and from as far away as Turkey will be in attendance (49 veteran teams plus 5 rookies) with close to 50% of the teams being 5+ year vets and 11% of the teams having over 10 years experience!

We've been busy with meetings and discussions to ensure that the 2013 Midwest Regional is the best ever! As decisions are made and details are finalized, the information will be communicated to registered teams via Midwest Regional Email Blasts and posted on the new Illinois FIRST web site, Midwest Regional page(s) - <http://www.ilfirst.org/frc/events/midwest-regional.html>

Speaking of the new web site, be sure to check it out! Go to [www.ilfirst.org](http://www.ilfirst.org), then click on the "FRC" (above) to get to the FRC Home Page. It is still a work in progress, so let us know what you think, your opinions and comments or if you discover any corrections that need to be made.

Also...Congratulations go out to Gerry Smith who has been named the new Midwest Regional Chairman!

## V.I.P.s



## Calling All FRC Student Team Members! Student Ambassadors Needed!

The Midwest is not only a premier competition event it is also a premier event for showcasing the talents of our FRC students and highlighting the benefits of engaging students in the FIRST program. Every year the planning committee invites VIP's who are often captains of industry, CEO's of major corporations, technology leaders and influential educators to the Midwest Regional in order to thank those who support FIRST FRC, show them first-hand the positive impact of their support and also to attract new potential sponsors and donors to our FIRST Family. Who better to be their guide than YOU?!

Your job is very simple. Ambassadors are assigned a VIP. All you have to do is take your VIP on a tour of the competition. Show them the pit area, the cheering section, talk about the robots, the game, and just be there to answer any questions he/she may have. Tell and show them what this program means to you! You will also be given the opportunity to have lunch with your VIP at the VIP luncheon on Friday afternoon. This is an opportunity of a lifetime. Don't miss out!

If you are interested, please first discuss it with the mentors on your team, then sign up by registering in VIMS. More information will be forthcoming. In the meantime, if you have any questions, you can contact Cis Noble at [cis71@comcast.net](mailto:cis71@comcast.net).



This year the Midwest Planning Committee decided to do something different. Instead of having one or two teams singing the National Anthem at opening ceremonies, we thought it would be really awesome to have a whole choir representing our FIRST Family coming together on the field singing the Star Spangled Banner. Can you feel the goose-bumps? So...

## National Anthem Singers Needed!

We know you are out there! Show spirit for FIRST and your team by joining the FRC Midwest Chorus to sing the National Anthem during opening ceremonies. Students and mentors are welcome. We would love to have a representative from every team.

Please email Paul Wood at [krismerwood@gmail.com](mailto:krismerwood@gmail.com) by March 15<sup>th</sup> with the names and contact information for anyone interested in joining us. Details will be sent to you.



## You Design the Midwest Regional Poster!

**Have fun! Get creative! Imagination Rules ...!**

We are so proud to have such incredible, diverse, innovative, multi-talented students in our FIRST FRC program! So for the creative, artsy, marketing savvy students on your team this contest gives them an opportunity for the to showcase their talents by designing a poster for the 2013 Midwest Regional!

**The winning poster design:** (1) will be featured on the Midwest Regional web page and used by the Regional Planning committee in any advertising and promotion of the event. (2) A digital copy will be emailed to all participating teams for their use in PR, marketing, brochures, school/community flyers, invitations, newsletters, etc; and (4) the winning team / individual will receive special acknowledgement and recognition at the Midwest Regional Event.

The Winning Poster design along with the Honorable Mention(s) poster designs will be mounted and featured in the Midwest Regional Art Gallery! After the Regional the artists will get to take their masterpieces home!

**Contest Details, Submission Deadlines and Rules**, as well as last year's winning design by Lucas Simes of Team # 3135 Robotic Colonels, can be found on at <http://www.ilfirst.org/frc/events/midwest-regional/poster-contest-and-event-flyer.html> or in Email Blast #1 (<http://www.ilfirst.org/frc/events/midwest-regional/email-blasts.html>). Questions? Contact - [ilfrc4u@gmail.com](mailto:ilfrc4u@gmail.com)

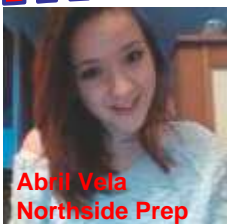


# Happenings in Our FIRST Community

## NCWIT Announces Winners of the 2013 Award for Aspirations in Computing!

The National Center for Women and Information Technology Award for Aspirations in Computing honors young women at the high-school level for their computing-related achievements and interests. Awardees are selected for their computing and IT aptitude, leadership ability, academic history, and plans for post-secondary education. Thirty-five national winners were selected from more than 1,800 applications from all 50 States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and U.S. military bases.

## In the Spotlight...



**Abril Vela**  
Northside Prep

With a passion for technology, Abril spends her time taking her schools computer science classes and participating in *FIRST* Tech Challenge Robotics (FTC) as well as *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC). Organizing an all girls FTC team has been a highlight of her year and just the beginning of her outreach to girls encouraging them to get involved with technology.

Through FTC she was able to mentor Girl Scouts in *FIRST* LEGO League as well as host a LEGO robotics workshop for 6th-8th students. Abril also received the opportunity to intern at the Obama campaign and worked as a Dashboard Support Intern on the tech team. This opportunity provided her the chance to work with outstanding engineers as well as experience a piece of history. Currently enrolled in an Oracle Database class and an Advance Data Structures course through IIT, Abril hopes to go on to college pursuing a major in computer engineering.

### Abril Vela - 2013 National Winner

FTC Team # 5360 - Ada Graces

FRC Team # 4787 - Mustangs

### Safia Abdalla - 2013 National Runner-up

FTC Team # 5360 - Ada Graces

FRC Team # 4787 - Mustangs

### Trushitha Narla - 2013 Illinois Winner

FTC Team # 5360 - Ada Graces

FRC Team # 4787 - Mustangs

### Judy Wu - 2013 Illinois Winner

FTC Team # 2813 - Teen Girl Squad

FRC Team # 1739 - Chicago Knights

## FTC and FRC Demo at LEGO State!



Huge Thanks goes out to FTC Teams # 116 - Crazy Eights, # 11 - MiniStang, and # 5202 - Try 2 Understand and FRC Team # 111 - WildStang for demonstrating their robots and showing everyone "FIRST after LEGO" at the Illinois FLL State Championship.

*"We had an almost constant stream of visitors, both adults and students visiting these 3 booths, inquiring about FTC for their kids."*

## FRC Teams at Manufacturing Career Awareness Fair!

Submitted by - Melissa Wolski, FIRST FRC Team 2338 - Gear it Forward, Oswego



On November 16, Melissa Wolski and alumnus Susan Snow represented their team at the Valley Industrial Association Career Fair at Waubensee Community College. Team 2338 and our sister teams, IMSA's Titan Robotics 2022 and Batavia's Order2Chaos 2704, were able to spread the word about *FIRST* Robotics to area high school students and businesses. This annual Manufacturing Career Awareness event enables high school students to meet with local manufacturers and learn about job paths and opportunities. Many of the businesses were willing to help us with mentorship and/or manufacturing.

## Digital Media Award - New this Year!

*"Award celebrates teams that look beyond the team website, taking into account the numerous ways people search for and consume content."*

How about the Illinois *FIRST* Newsletter?



Did you know that the newsletter goes beyond Illinois and Northwest Indiana FRC teams?

Sponsors, Donors, Regional Planning Committees, Regional Directors, Senior Mentors, Community Organizations, LEGO, FTC and Friends of *FIRST* across the land receive a copy! So Teams send us your news, write-ups, photos and etc! Email to, [ilfrc4u@gmail.com](mailto:ilfrc4u@gmail.com)

Hmmm...How about "Reflections on the Build Season" with photos?

## New Illinois & NWI Web Site Update!

Illinois *FIRST* (<http://www.ilfirst.org>) and FRC (<http://www.ilfirst.org/frc.html>) sections have been launched!

Still a lot of fine-tuning to do, so please email either Dan Green ([dgreen@usfirst.org](mailto:dgreen@usfirst.org)) or Lori Hall ([ilfrc4u@gmail.com](mailto:ilfrc4u@gmail.com)) with any comments, suggestions, edits or corrections.

Teams please check out your sponsors listings and web site link for accuracy. Also, anyone have pictures of team members at Regional scholarship tables? If you do, please send them for use on the Scholarship page.

Work on FTC and LEGO is just starting. Existing sites will remain active while work is being done.



**BAE Systems - Finger Lakes -  
Palmeto - Hub City -  
Central Valley**

<http://www.theredalliance.com/livefeeds.html>