

April 2015

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BLOG by Dan Green

Dan's latest blog may be found on the Illinois *FIRST* [website](#). Any questions on Illinois *FIRST* programs or events may be directed to Dan at dgreen@usfirst.org.



VOLUNTEER AT CHAMPIONSHIPS

As you all know, *FIRST* is a volunteer driven organization. World Championships has grown for each *FIRST* program this year. Not only will events take place at the Edward Jones Dome and America's Center, but now the Renaissance Grand Hotel and Union Station will also be hosting events. Free transportation will be available between the various venues.

Please consider volunteering April 22-25 in St. Louis. Just log into [VIMS](#), click on Apply for an Event and choose which of our four *FIRST* programs you would like to support. Thank you for your consideration.



There are two more events for this year's Jr.FLL season in Illinois. More details may be found [here](#).

4/11 – Celebration at Raupp Museum, Buffalo Grove
4/12 – Central IL Expo – Lincoln Land Comm. College, Springfield

We now have 151 Jr.FLL teams registered in Illinois. Registration ends April 15. Specific questions may be directed to our Illinois Jr.FLL program partner, Mary Buchanan, at jrFLL-contact@ILfirst.org.



Congratulations to the Team Technicians from Fairview Heights, winners of the Robot Performance Award at the Central IL Championship tournament. The Team

Technicians received one of the alternate slots at the FLL World Class Open Championship tournament at LEGOLAND in Carlsbad, CA. Three teams from Illinois will attend the event.

For all of the FLL teams who are not attending post-season events, it's a great time to start planning for the upcoming Trash Trek season. National registrations will open in the first week of May.

Specific questions may be directed to our Illinois FLL program partner, Diane Michalczuk, at contactfllillinois@gmail.com.

FTC

FIRST® Tech Challenge



This past week 10 Illinois teams competed at the Northern Super Regionals in Des Moines, IA. Eight advanced through the Illinois State Championship and two through a Michigan Championship.



Congratulations to these Illinois FTC teams advancing to the World Championships!

#5037 got robot? - 2nd place Inspire
#7129 Robo Raiders - Think Award
#7006 RoboTitans - Tinker Division ranked 3rd
#5200 Robots Incorporated - Smith Division ranked 7th
#6007 Octopi - Tinker Division ranked 6th

Remember, this year the FTC World Championship will be held at Union Station instead of the Edwards Dome. More information may be found on the [FTC World Championship information page](#).

FIRST recently announced FTC software and hardware changes. FTC teams will no longer use the LEGO NXT controller. For the 2015-16 season, they will be moving to a Java-based android platform powered by the Qualcomm Snapdragon 410 processor. New platform testing took place in several states, and there was plenty of positive feedback from teams and mentors. Demonstrations will be held at Worlds.

More information about the platform changes is available at [FIRST Tech Challenge new android-based technology](#). Teams and mentors may post questions on the [US FTC Q & A Forum](#).

Specific questions may be directed to either of our Illinois FTC program partners: Sue Kunzeman at FTC-contact@ILfirst.org or Jonathan Weiland at jwFTCI@gmail.com.



FIRST®Robotics Competition



Congratulations to the following Illinois FRC team award winners from March competitions:

#1208, MeTool Brigade – Excellence in Engineering, Rock City and Excellence in Engineering, St. Louis
#1625, Winnovation – Regional Winners, Rock City
#1739, Chicago Knights – Judges’ Award, Central IL
#1756, Argos – Regional Winners, Central IL and Creativity Award, Central IL
#2039, Rockford Robotics – Regional Chairman’s Award, Central IL
#2040, DERT – Imagery Award, Central IL
#2338, Gear It Forward – Judges’ Award, Wisconsin
#2451, PWNAGE – Regional Winners, Rock City and Innovation in Control Award, Rock City
#2481, Roboteers – Regional Winners, Rock City and Industrial Design Award, Rock City and Regional Winners, Central IL and Quality Award, Central IL
#4143, MARS/WARS – Regional Finalists, Central IL and Excellence in Engineering, Central IL
#4212, Techno Ferrets – Regional Finalists, Central IL
#4931, Edwardsville Technologies, Gracious Professionalism, St. Louis
#5442, Mechanical Monarchy – Highest Rookie Seed, Central IL and Rookie All-Star Award, Central IL

Congratulations to John Johnson #4143 for Woodie Flowers Finalist Award, Central IL. Congratulations to Vera Koch #2481 for Volunteer Award, Central IL. Congratulations to Addie #2039 and Evan #4156 for FIRST Dean’s List Finalist Awards, Central IL.

With the lack of feedback from Chairman’s interviews this year, teams may find it useful to use a form that FTC uses called the *FIRST* FTC Team Judging Session Self-Reflection form, which may be found [here](#).

The Midwest Regional (MWR) will be held April 2-4 at the University of Illinois Chicago Pavilion. All details may be found [here](#). Contact info for MWR: gasmith@uic.edu and volunteer coordinator: dj_npta@yahoo.com.

SENIOR MENTOR CORNER

The Senior Mentor Corner is a potpourri of events and activities that may be of interest to teams or students of our Illinois *FIRST* teams. Some information will be directly from *FIRST* HQ. Other events/activities may not necessarily be sanctioned functions of *FIRST* or Illinois *FIRST* but may be of general interest to our teams regarding fun events, fundraising, etc.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPORTS AND ROBOTICS

An [article](#) was written by a parent of an Ohio FRC team that competed March 19-21 at the Central Illinois regional in Peoria. The article/blog lists 10 differences between high school sports and robotics. Every *FIRST* coach, mentor, and parent will recognize the positive, fun, Gracious Professionalism and Cooperation attributes discussed.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Chicago area scholarship from the Society of Women Engineers is for female seniors that plan to pursue engineering or computer science in the fall of 2015. Deadline is April 10. The application may be found [here](#). Additional SWE scholarships may be found [here](#). Colleges, universities, professional associations, and corporations offer college scholarships to participants on *FIRST* FTC and FRC teams. Millions of dollars are available to our students. *FIRST* scholarship information may be found [here](#).

ROTARY AND SLINGSHOT

This year Rotary International was featured in the Rose Bowl Parade with a float that promoted clean water around the world. Rotary and Dean Kamen’s invention, SlingShot, share the goal of distributing clean water to the millions of people who need it. Teams may want to consider contacting your local Rotary Club to work together on this global challenge. Perhaps your local Rotary Club would support your team’s showing of the SlingShot movie.

We encourage team mentors to share this newsletter with other mentors, coaches, parents, students, and sponsors so everyone knows what is happening throughout Illinois for all FIRST programs. The newsletter is posted each month on the IL FIRST [website](#).

Diane Cabiness, FIRST Senior Mentor – Illinois
DCabiness@usfirst.org

www.ILFIRST.org