

June/July 2015



Junior FIRST® LEGO® League

There are several Expos in June for Jr.FLL in Illinois. Times, location, and other details may be found [here](#).

6/06 – South Holland Public Library Jr.FLL Expo
6/06 – Peoria Public Library Jr.FLL Expo
6/13 – Matteson Public Library Jr.FLL Expo

The Waste Wise season will open for registrations in August. Be prepared to look at trash in a whole new way!

There is now an Illinois Jr.FLL Yahoo group for coaches and parents to post questions about the Jr.FLL program or challenge, and to share coaching strategies and resources. It is a restricted group and will function similar to the FLL Yahoo group. The group name is jrfl_illinois. Jr.FLL coaches - if you have not yet done so, please complete the Jr.FLL [survey](#).

Specific questions may be directed to our Illinois Jr.FLL program partner, Mary Buchanan, at jrFLL-contact@ILfirst.org.



FIRST®LEGO®League



Challenge Release - August 25

National registrations opened for the Trash Trek season on May 5th. You can register your team at this link: <https://my.usfirst.org/fl/tims/site.lasso>.

Illinois registrations will open on August 1, 2015.

FLL teams in Illinois are keeping busy this summer spreading the good news about the program at the following locations:

06/06 - Peoria North Branch Library
06/07 - Girl Scout STEMpalooza, Vernon Hills
06/10 - College of Lake County engineering department Robotics Festival
06/18 - Tinkering Lab, Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier
06/25 - TechWeek at Merchandise Mart, Chicago

06/26 - TechWeek at Merchandise Mart, Chicago
06/27 - Peoria riverfront Museum
07/16 - Tinkering Lab, Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier
07/18 – Robot Revolution Summer Block Party, Museum of Science and Industry
08/20 - Tinkering Lab, Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier

Thank you to all of the teams that are doing demos!

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



FIRST® Tech Challenge

FTC registration is now open. Illinois already has 26 teams registered including 1 rookie. The registration process has changed, so FIRST has created a helpful registration video, "[FTC Storefront Walkthrough](#)." It explains this year's process. They recommend watching before starting the registration process.

There is another video about the new FTC platform. FTC engineer, Thomas Eng, hosted a Google Hangout. It gives teams and coaches more in-depth information and recommendations for learning JAVA. If you missed the Hangout, you can watch the video [here](#).

Later this summer Illinois FIRST plans to host new platform workshops. These workshops will take place around the state. If your team is interested in assisting with these workshops, please contact [Illinois FTC](#). If you are interested in attending a workshop, please use this [Google form](#).

Illinois FTC league play will be returning this fall. There are plans to expand. Is your team interested? Use this [Google form](#).

If you have additional mentors, coaches, parents, or team members who you would like to receive the Illinois FTC Team Blasts, please email: ftc-contact@ilfirst.org

If you would like to receive the US FTC Team Blasts: [Subscribe to US FTC Team Blast](#) Note: Coaches and mentors who are registered through TIMS should automatically receive US Blasts.

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



FIRST® Robotics Competition

An FRC Workshop is planned for **Saturday, September 19**, at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora. All Illinois FRC teams are welcome to attend. More details soon, but mark your calendars now for an event you won't want to miss.

The 3rd annual Rock River Off-Season Competition will be July 24-25 at Rock Valley College in Rockford. This is a chance to compete with your 2015 robot one more time. Visit [here](#) to see who is coming and add your team to the list. Volunteer registration is also [open](#). Friday night is load-in and team social. Saturday morning load-in is also available for a full day of matches. Host FRC teams 81, 1625, 2039, 3352, and 4655 hope to see you in July!

UPS team #1675 has invited us to the 5th annual [RoboFest](#), held at the Wisconsin State Fair Expo Center in conjunction with Harvest Fair and Milwaukee Maker Faire on Saturday, September 26th. Optional load-in will be on Friday evening (25th) and there will be exhibitions on Sunday the 27th.



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.

OUTREACH / TRAINING

We encourage teams to plan some summer outreach activities at neighborhood fairs and festivals. Summer is a good time to fundraise by offering workshops, clinics, and classes for your community. Summer is also a good time to schedule some in-house training in anticipation of the upcoming season.

NASA 3D SPACE CONTAINER DESIGN CONTEST

Students ages 5-19 are invited to design containers using 3D modeling software that could be used by astronauts on future space missions. The contest is hosted by NASA and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and ends August 2. More information [here](#).

CHICAGO SOUTHSIDE MINI MAKER FAIRE

The 3rd annual [Chicago Southside Mini Maker Faire](#) will be on Saturday, August 8, at Chicago's Ford City Mall from 11am to 5 pm. Deadline for applications for Makers is June 15. Booth space is free, unless you are selling a product. Admission is free. Grab your team and come attend, or better yet demo or volunteer. FIRST FRC

#1739, Chicago Knights has been involved since the event's inception.

DEMO OPPORTUNITIES

The College of Lake County is Grayslake has invited us to demo at their 2nd annual Robotics Festival on June 10. FLL, FTC and FRC partners have sent out more specifics on this event. More demo opportunities for TechWeek at Chicago's Merchandise Mart on June 25-26. Mentors, please check your email. Having your team demo at conventions, trade shows, and community events is not only good exposure for FIRST, but you may make contact with future mentors or sponsors.

MUSEUMS AND SUMMER STEM

A new exhibit, [Robot Revolution](#), is now at the Museum of Science and Industry. There is an additional fee to attend this exhibit.

The [Chicago Children's Museum](#) at Navy Pier in Chicago has free nights every Thursday evening from 5:00 – 8:00 pm.

Rockford Park District's Nicholas Conservatory and Gardens has a new [LEGO exhibit](#). The exhibit includes bricks and sculptures set among tropical plants, building contests and elaborate displays by LEGO clubs.

The [St. Louis Science Center](#) always offers free admission, and has extended hours on Thursday evenings through the summer.

[Children's Discovery Museum](#) in Normal has an Innovation Station Lab & Maker Space, and has extended summer hours. There are opportunities for students ages 13-17 to volunteer!

The [Peoria Riverfront Museum](#) has extended hours for the summer. They are seeking volunteers for their Robo Rumble event on June 27, as well as student volunteers for summer camps.

Check out the Adler Planetarium's [STEM career Exploration Day](#) on July 13.

Non-FRC teams are welcome to come on Saturday, July 25 to our own [Rock River Off-Season Competition](#) at Rock Valley College in Rockford to watch the friendly competition.

[Gadget Girl Camp](#) at Triton College in July aimed at girls ages 12-16. Scholarships available.

Free and discount admission days may be found [here](#) for Chicago museums. Most Illinois museums offer free entry or discounts for military personnel ☺

GRANTS

New [grants](#) for all 4 programs! Thank you, John Deere.

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