

*September 2015*



Are you WASTE WISE? Registrations are rolling in for the 2015/16 season. 39 teams are in the process of registering their teams for this year's challenge. Encourage your friends to bring the excitement of Jr.FLL to their schools, organizations and neighborhoods.

The Jr.FLL Planning Committee is laying the groundwork to create a central registration process for all Jr.FLL Expos in Illinois. Through this process we hope to streamline the registration process for coaches, remove some of the administrative burden for Expo Coordinators, and have a consistent Expo experience for our students. Details will be revealed later this month.

We are currently putting together a new Jr.FLL Coach Training program for Illinois coaches. If you have a particular "hot topic" you'd like for us to address, email it to [jrfl-contact@ilfirst.org](mailto:jrfl-contact@ilfirst.org) or post it to the new Yahoo Group described below. The training will be in the form of a webinar and/or online information.

We encourage coaches and parents to join the new Illinois Jr.FLL Yahoo group to post questions about the Jr.FLL program or challenge, and to share coaching strategies and resources. Go to [Yahoo! Groups](#), search for jrfl\_illinois, and request a login.

Our Illinois Jr.FLL program partner, Mary Buchanan, may be reached at [jrFLL-contact@ILfirst.org](mailto:jrFLL-contact@ILfirst.org).



Trash Trek has been released and teams are excited about the challenge ahead.

FLL Illinois teams may continue to register for [Illinois qualifying tournaments](#) for the Trash Trek season [here](#). National registrations will remain open until all slots are filled.

We have recently updated information for many of the qualifiers. If your team would like to change your top 3 tournament preferences you may do so by going back into the registration system and accessing the team edit page on the Coach Dashboard. We may be adding more qualifiers so please check the website regularly for any new tournaments.

The assignment of teams to qualifiers will be made at the end of October. Teams will not be able to make changes to the qualifying tournament preferences after October 15<sup>th</sup>.

We anticipate there will be a number of scrimmages or scrambles being held throughout the state that teams may wish to attend. These are not 'Official Events'. However, we hope teams will take advantage of the opportunity to see what other teams are doing and practice before the qualifying tournaments. We will list the events on our website as they become known to us along with information about how to register for the scrimmages.

The coach training sessions held in Naperville and Southern Illinois in July and August were very well received. We have added details for additional coach training sessions in Champaign, Peoria and Southern Illinois. You must [register](#) to attend a training session. We hope many of you will take the opportunity to attend the training events.

We wish all of you the best of luck with Trash Trek and look forward to another exciting season!

Contact our Illinois FLL program partner, Diane Michalczuk, at [contactflillinois@gmail.com](mailto:contactflillinois@gmail.com).

**FIRST<sup>®</sup> Tech Challenge**



*FIRST* Tech Challenge 2015-16 game reveal is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. CDT, Saturday, September 12th. Season [Kickoff events and workshops](#) are planned around the state throughout September. Some will require teams to RSVP to attend. Look for information in upcoming Illinois FTC team blast, US FTC Events and Illinois FTC Event pages. The most recent email blasts from our Illinois FTC Affiliate Partners may be found on the [ILFIRST website](#).

Teams looking for more information on the [new required android technology system](#) and Java programming should be checking updates on the [FTC Technology Forum](#) on US *FIRST*. Manual currently being revised and will be available in the near future.

Java SDK Beta and MIT App Inventor Beta will be released by August 7 with competition versions released September 12th. Links will be on the forum page. You may find this [link](#) useful for the new platform.

We hope to invite 48 teams to the state championship which will require teams to check in and go through judging on Friday night. The tournament will start at 9 AM Saturday morning, if all goes according to plans.

Contact our IL FTC program partners, Sue Kunzeman and Jonathan Weiland at [FTC-contact@ILfirst.org](mailto:FTC-contact@ILfirst.org).

# FRC

*FIRST*® Robotics Competition



Most [regional event](#) dates and locations have been announced for the 2016 competition schedule, including Central IL (week 3) and Midwest (week 5). Event registration opens Sept. 24. Be sure to have identified both a main and alternate mentor in TIMS and allow time for YPP compliancy in order to be able to register.

Our WI neighbors are again inviting Illinois FRC teams to the Maker Faire Milwaukee [RoboFest](#) for a competition on September 26 and/or exhibition on September 27.

[IndyRAGE](#), an Indianapolis Robotics All Girls Event will take place on October 2-3 at Perry Meridian High School. This new off-season event has a negligible entry fee, and allows you to highlight the girls on your team, female mentors, and encourages female volunteers.

The [Gateway Robotics Challenge](#) will be held on Saturday, October 17, at Hazelwood Central High School in Florissant, MO. Teams that bring a pre-rookie team and robot will be given a 1/2 price discounted entry.



## 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 events or information may not necessarily be sanctioned by *FIRST* or Illinois *FIRST* but may be of general interest to our teams regarding fun events, fundraising, etc.

### FIRST AMERICORP VISTAS

We thank Mari Miller for her 2 years of service with Illinois *FIRST* and wish her well as she pursues another Master's Degree. Welcome Rebecca Janisch, who just

moved from Arizona to join our team. Katrina Adams begins her third year with us as a *FIRST* VISTA.

### FUNDRAISING TOOLKIT

*FIRST* has put together a collection of videos and documents they call the [Fundraising Toolkit](#). Be sure to check it out.

### FTC GRANTS

Thanks to Mari Miller for researching [FTC grants](#) ....

### FRC GRANTS

... and also for posting all the [FRC grant info](#).

### FIRST FUTURE INNOVATOR AWARD

The FFIA competition is open to all FTC and FRC members. The award recognizes creativity in solving a real world, complex problem through the invention of a unique solution. This year's entries must pertain to access to clean water, advancing health informatics, or engineering the tools of scientific discovery. The idea can be new or build on an existing idea or technology. Entries may be from a single individual, a team, or a group of students. First prize is \$5,000! Two runner ups receive \$2,500. Winners will be recognized at the 2016 Championship. [Submission](#) deadline is October 30.

### WANTED: FTC & FRC TEAMS FOR FIRST LADIES

*FIRST* Ladies is an expanding community, and they are seeing a need to involve more teams in planning and running events. The long term goal is to have a team available to help organize and run a *FIRST* Ladies event at every FRC Regional and FTC Super Regional/Championship event. If your team would be interested in joining the *FIRST* Ladies partner team, please submit an [application](#).

### TIMS

The Team Information Management System is open for registration for all *FIRST* programs. Teams are encouraged to verify the coach/mentor contact info is accurate. If there are additions to your mentoring staff, ensure they are acknowledged as a part of your team.

FTC and FRC teams affiliated with a school may want to consider inviting the guidance counselor as a scholarship contact to be kept informed of scholarships for our *FIRST* robotic students.

### NIU STEM FEST

Northern Illinois University's annual [STEMfest](#) will take place on October 17. Some teams will be present for demonstrations, as we have done in the past several years. This is a fun opportunity for K-8 to enjoy a day of hands-on STEM activities.

**Diane Cabiness, *FIRST* Senior Mentor – Illinois**  
[DCabiness@usfirst.org](mailto:DCabiness@usfirst.org)