

FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC)
Northeast Utilities FIRST Connecticut Regional
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**‘Hoops game of the mind’
to bring 64 high school robotics teams from six states
to Hartford March 30-31**

***Problem solving, teamwork, mentoring part of the
FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC)’s Northeast Utilities FIRST Connecticut Regional***

HARTFORD, Conn., March 16, 2012 — As March Madness continues to winnow down the list of NCAA hopefuls this month, another ‘hoops’ game — one that requires the kind of science, technology, math, engineering, problem-solving solving and teamwork skills coveted by today’s employers — will bring to Hartford more than 2400 high school students on 64 elite robot teams from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and Texas.

The Northeast Utilities [FIRST Connecticut Regional](#) robotics competition will be held Friday and Saturday, March 30-31 at the Connecticut Convention Center, 100 Columbus Blvd., Hartford, Conn. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on both days and is free and open to the public.

During the competition, teams will play [FIRST’s 2012 “Rebound Rumble”](#) game, where robots will face off three-on-three to shoot baskets at the ends of an eight-hoop field during a series of two minute, 15 second matches. Balls scored in higher hoops score teams more points. Teams’ alliances are awarded bonus points if, at the end of the match, their robots are balanced on bridges in the middle of the playing field.

The competition has been held for the past eighteen years in Hartford. High school teams will showcase their hard work after an intense six weeks of designing and building an original robot in the [FIRST® \(For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology\) Robotics Competition](#). With the support of technical mentors from sponsoring corporations and schools, teams in the competition will demonstrate their skill for science, mathematics, and technology. They will compete for honors and recognition that reward their design excellence, competitive play and sportsmanship. Teams are also recognized for the partnerships they form with schools, businesses and communities.

The Northeast Utilities **FIRST** Connecticut Regional will also be broadcast live through a webcast which can be accessed through the following link: www.shsrobotics.org/webcast.html.

The winners of the regional will advance to the [FIRST International Championship](#) in St. Louis, Missouri from April 25-28.

Founded by inventor Dean Kamen, who introduced the IBOT Mobility System and the Segway® Human Transporter, **FIRST** was created to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people, their schools, and their communities. Now in its 21st season, the **FIRST** Robotics Competition anticipates close to 2,400 teams from 49 states and nearly a dozen countries to compete in 52 regional competitions.

The Northeast Utilities **FIRST** Connecticut Regional competition and many teams receive support from

numerous sponsors, including title sponsor the Northeast Utilities Foundation. "Northeast Utilities is proud to have sponsored the Connecticut Regional since 2010," said Shirley Payne, president and executive director of the Northeast Utilities Foundation. "We share *FIRST*'s goal of creating a world where young people dream of becoming science and technology leaders for the benefit of themselves and their communities."

The Northeast Utilities *FIRST* Connecticut Regional is the oldest and longest continually running *FIRST* event in New England. It is organized by volunteers from some of the most highly regarded organizations in the area, including The Northeast Utilities Foundation, United Technologies, Stanley Black & Decker and Aetna, who also provide major funding. It also receives generous contributions from General Dynamics-Electric Boat, Covidien, Xerox Corporation, Ensign-Bickford, Burns & McDonnell, Webster Bank and McCormick, Paulding & Huber. Comcast, Konica Minolta Business Systems and XL Color make major in-kind contributions to Connecticut *FIRST* programs. The MetroHartford Alliance, the Connecticut Technology Council and the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA) also provide valuable resources including time and talent from professional mentors, services, equipment, financial contributions, and volunteers.

"I don't think any great innovator or technologist got up in the morning trying to do something really big, really innovative, because they wanted a job," said Dean Kamen, *FIRST* founder and president of DEKA Research & Development Corporation. "If we create a generation of passionate, smart, well-educated, informed kids willing to take educated risks as they try new things. If we create a passionate generation that understands the power of technology and how to apply it, trust me – they'll have jobs. That's a consequence of what they'll have. If *FIRST* succeeds, we'll have a rebirth of a society that believes in a future that can and has to be better than the past. We're going to make sure we build a 21st century, a future that's way more exciting than the 20th century."

Kamen founded *FIRST*® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., *FIRST* designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology and engineering. With support from three out of every five Fortune 500 companies and more than \$14 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the *FIRST*® Robotics Competition (FRC®) and *FIRST*® Tech Challenge (FTC®) for high-school students, *FIRST*® LEGO® League (FLL®) for 9- to 14-year olds, (9 to 16-year-olds outside the U.S., Canada, and Mexico) and Junior *FIRST*® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) for 6 to 9-year-olds. Gracious Professionalism™ is a way of doing things that encourages high quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about *FIRST*, visit usfirst.org.

[Connecticut FIRST](http://ConnecticutFIRST.org)® inspires young people ages 6-18 across Connecticut to be science and technology leaders through mentor-based programs supported by the state's leading corporations, that build science, engineering and technology skills, inspire innovation, and foster self-confidence, communication, and leadership. Young people in Connecticut [FIRST](http://FIRST.org)® [programs](http://FIRST.org) master science and technology concepts through robotics, while gaining valuable career and life skills that carry them to higher education and to science, technology, engineering and math professions. Students can join at any level based on their grade. Involvement and intensity increases as students progress through the various programs. Visit ctfirst.org.

For more information or to get involved as a team, sponsor or mentor, contact Susan Glasspiegel, *FIRST*® Regional Director, sglasspiegel@usfirst.org 860.651.9994.

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