

I am pleased to inform you that Pace University is in the process of becoming an affiliate of a great new high school robotics program in partnership with FIRST (*For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology*). The **FIRST Tech Challenge** (FTC) is an annual competition, now in its fourth year, for teams of up to ten students ages 14 to 18. Most teams are affiliated with high schools, but any group can form a team, and a school can have more than one team if it wishes. Last year, nearly 1,000 teams participated, and they expect significant growth this year.

In this program, teams design, build and program robots using the LEGO Mindstorms NXT system along with aircraft-grade aluminum building pieces and heavy-duty motors and servos. Each year there is a new challenge, but the base robot set can be reused and reconfigured endlessly. Teams typically compete in one or more regional tournaments, and the best teams are invited to a world championship held in April each year.

There are a number of events and workshops scheduled in order to assist prospective teams with learning about FTC, the programming, robot construction, etc. **At Pace we are holding an information session and season kick-off on Friday, October 9 from 4 - 6 pm at the Pace Pleasantville campus.** Veteran FTC teams and coaches will be on hand to demonstrate their robots and talk with anyone interested. All are welcome!

We are planning to have at least two other events at Pace during the school year, including a workshop for teams scheduled for Sunday, December 6. Competition tournaments are held in February and March in our region with the **Lower Hudson Tournament scheduled for Sunday, February 21, 2010 on the Pace University Pleasantville Campus.**

Since there is a large engineering component along with the technology, we are trying to recruit engineering professionals to mentor teams.

Across the country, there are over 100 colleges which offer over \$6 million in scholarships specifically to students who have participated in FIRST Tech Challenge, so that's an exciting benefit as well. (Pace is among those offering such scholarships.)

You can learn more about the program from FIRST:

<http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/ftc/>

This At A Glance site provides wonderful, specific information about the FIRST Tech Challenge:

[http://www.usfirst.org/uploadedFiles/Robotics\\_Programs/FTC/FTC\\_Communications\\_Resource\\_Center/2009\\_Archive\\_Assets/FIR045\\_FTCAtGlanceRND4.pdf](http://www.usfirst.org/uploadedFiles/Robotics_Programs/FTC/FTC_Communications_Resource_Center/2009_Archive_Assets/FIR045_FTCAtGlanceRND4.pdf)

This website provides general background information regarding FTC:

[http://www.usfirst.org/uploadedFiles/Robotics\\_Programs/FTC/FTC\\_Communications\\_Resource\\_Center/2009\\_Archive\\_Assets/FIR045\\_FTChowitworksRND5.pdf](http://www.usfirst.org/uploadedFiles/Robotics_Programs/FTC/FTC_Communications_Resource_Center/2009_Archive_Assets/FIR045_FTChowitworksRND5.pdf)

This video from FIRST is a pretty nice overview as well.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBHtQPWjQsM>

I'd be happy to speak more about this with you, and I hope you will consider coming to our campus on October 9th to learn more about the FIRST Tech Challenge.

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