

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	03
Leadership Letter	05
FIRST® Longitudinal Impact	06
FIRST Programs	80
"More Than" a Campaign	10
FIRST Teams and Alumni Energize Their Communities	13
2022-2023 Season Highlights	18
FIRST® LEGO® League	21
FIRST® Tech Challenge	23
FIRST® Robotics Competition	25
FIRST Championship Energizes Record-Breaking Crowds	26
Sponsors and Contributors	28
Remembering Long-time FIRST Supporters	29
Thank You to our FIRST Championship Sponsors	40
Program Delivery Organizations	41
FIRST Volunteers of the Year	43
Woodie Flowers Award Recipient	44
Financials	45
Leadership	46



INTRODUCTION



This season, our youth robotics participants embraced problem-solving and innovation in energy-themed challenges during *FIRST*® ENERGIZE™ presented by Qualcomm. They gained the community, skills, and self-confidence to power up to their full potential.

Our FIRST® community electrified us, bringing together mentors, educators, event volunteers, sponsors, donors, families, and alumni to charge up our robotics programs.

Our foundational ethos grounded us in *Gracious Professionalism®* and *Coopertition,®* inspiring us to work collaboratively and inclusively.

Our global movement is energizing
the future – preparing young people today
to build a better world for tomorrow.

This Annual Impact Report covers the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.



LEADERSHIP LETTER



Chris Moore is the chief executive officer of *FIRST*



Kelly Ortberg is the chairman of the *FIRST* Board of Directors



Dean Kamen is the founder of *FIRST*

WE CHARGED UP OUR 668,000+ YOUTH PARTICIPANTS TO WORK TOGETHER TO POWER THEIR IDEAS FORWARD AND INNOVATE FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

What do young people need to prepare for success in an uncertain, unmapped future? They need transferrable skills, self-confidence, and the ability to persevere. They build all that and more with *FIRST*, the gold standard of youth robotics.

FIRST is the sport that allows all participants to "go pro" and find pathways to career success. Our impact-proven programs (see page 6) give students the thrill of competing on a team with the foundation of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and workforce skills development. The FIRST movement encourages and facilitates much-needed in-person social connection and hands-on skills development.

FIRST galvanizes students to produce high-quality work while giving them space to "fail" safely, recognize the value of others, and respect both individuals and community. They learn to persevere in the face of uncertainty. They learn to rely on collaboration and recognize that each team member brings individual strengths that, when combined, boost self-confidence, performance, and learning outcomes for everyone.

During our 2022-2023 energy-themed season, *FIRST*® **ENERGIZE**SM **presented by Qualcomm**, we charged up our 668,000+ youth participants to work together to power their ideas forward and innovate for a better future. The fuel behind their achievements? Our expansive community of sponsors, donors, program delivery partners, volunteers, mentors, educators, alumni, families, and other supporters.

These partnerships allowed us to grow our reach (we served 25% more youth participants compared to last season, see page 18), expand our resources, and deliver transformative experiences for young people. We are endlessly grateful to our global community for making this all possible.

We believe that STEM is for everyone and **continue to work strategically to remove barriers and ensure greater access to** *FIRST* **programs**. This past year, as our leadership team focused on strategic planning for the future, we reexamined the foundational principles that guide us and reaffirmed their meaning. In 2023, we released refreshed mission and purpose statements:

Purpose: FIRST exists to prepare the young people of today for the world of tomorrow.

Mission: The mission of *FIRST* is to provide life-changing robotics programs that give young people the skills, confidence, and resilience to build a better world.

The future of *FIRST* is bright, and these statements, alongside our vision and *FIRST* Core Values (see back cover), are a commitment to our community that we will continue to grow and improve. They encapsulate our promise to remain at the forefront of STEM education while ensuring *FIRST* stays true to our roots in robotics and our foundational ethos

Whether you're new to *FIRST* or a longtime champion, we hope these words and the transformational stories and impact you'll read throughout the report **energize you as we build the future – together**.

Sincerely, Chris, Kelly, and Dean

FIRST LONGITUDINAL IMPACT

RESEARCH SHOWS FIRST HAS LASTING IMPACT ON STUDENTS



At a Glance

- Nine years into data collection, the FIRST Longitudinal Impact Study provides ongoing evidence that *FIRST* is having lasting impact on participating students.
- Participants from communities who have been underrepresented in STEM are having gains in STEM outcomes and impact; gains continue to be greater for girls and young women in FIRST.
- STEM interest and attitudes are transforming into behaviors and actions beyond high school, where the majority of FIRST participants are majoring in STEM.

Detailed information can be found at www.firstinspires.org/impact

An Increase in STEM-Related Attitudes

108 months after enrollment in the study, FIRST students and alumni are still roughly two times more likely to show an increase in STEM-related attitudes than comparison group students.



1.9x

1.4x

1.5x

2.2X

STEM Knowledge

STEM Identity

STEM Careers

STEM Activity

STEM Interest

Higher Levels in STEM Outcomes for FIRST Female Students

At 108 months, FIRST female students and alumni are more likely to show significantly higher levels in STEM outcomes than comparison female students.

2.2X

2.0X

1.2X

1.8X

2.4X

STEM Knowledge

STEM Identity

STEM Careers

STEM Activity

STEM Interest

Pursuing College Pathways in STEM

By their fourth year of college, *FIRST* alumni are significantly more likely to pursue college pathways into engineering and computer science than comparison students. They are more likely to be interested in majoring in computer science, engineering, and robotics; to take computer science and engineering courses; and to declare a major in computer science or engineering.

DECLARE A MAJOR IN STEM

FIRST ALUMNI

81%

COMPARISON GROUP

64%

DECLARE A MAJOR IN ENGINEERING OR COMPUTER SCIENCE

FIRST ALUMNI

59%

COMPARISON GROUP

24%

MORE LIKELY TO TAKE ENGINEERING COURSES OR COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES

2.1X

COMPUTER SCIENCE

2.7X

MORE LIKELY TO DECLARE A MAJOR IN ENGINEERING OR COMPUTER SCIENCE

ENGINEERING

2.0X

COMPUTER SCIENCE

2.1X

By their 4th year of college, compared to their peers, FIRST female alumni:

DECLARE A MAJOR IN STEM

FIRST FEMALE ALUMNI

70%

COMPARISON GROUP

46%

DECLARE A MAJOR IN ENGINEERING OR COMPUTER SCIENCE

FIRST FEMALE ALUMNI

48%

COMPARISON GROUP

16%

MORE LIKELY TO TAKE ENGINEERING COURSES OR COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES

3.5X

COMPUTER SCIENCE

2.5x

MORE LIKELY TO DECLARE A MAJOR IN ENGINEERING OR COMPUTER SCIENCE

ENGINEERING

3.3x

COMPUTER SCIENCE

2.0X

SOURCE: FIRST Longitudinal Study: Findings at 108-Month Follow-up, Brandeis University, April 2023.

The study included 570 FIRST students and 385 comparison group students. The comparison group included students who did not participate in FIRST programs, but were enrolled in science and math classes at the same schools. All students received a baseline survey and follow-up surveys each year. Overall, 74% of students remained in the study at year nine.



(THE) EMPHASIS ON LIFTING EVERYONE UP AROUND YOU, CREATING OPPORTUNITIES, AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE IS HUGE FOR ME. I APPLY IT DAY TO DAY IN WHATEVER I DO."

- FIRST alum

FIRST PROGRAMS

/ A SUITE OF HANDS-ON, STEM LEARNING PROGRAMS

FIRST combines the rigor of STEM learning with the fun and excitement of traditional sports and the inspiration that comes from community. Participants benefit from a suite of programs that have a proven impact on learning, interest, and skillbuilding inside and outside of the classroom.

FIRST® LEGO® League Divisions

FIRST® LEGO® League guides youth through STEM learning and exploration at an early age. From Discover to Explore and then to Challenge, students will understand the basics of STEM and apply their skills in an exciting competition while gaining productive learning habits, confidence, and teamwork skills along the way.



AGES 4-6 GRADES

PreK-1

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE DISCOVER

This playful introductory STEM program ignites children's natural curiosity and builds their habits of learning with hands-on activities in the classroom and at home using LEGO® DUPLO® bricks.



AGES 6-10

> GRADES 2-4

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE EXPLORE

Teams of students focus on the fundamentals of engineering as they explore real-world problems, learn to design and code, and create unique solutions made with LEGO bricks and powered by LEGO® Education SPIKE™ Essential.



AGES 9-16

GRADES 4-8

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE CHALLENGE

Teams of students engage in research, problem solving, coding, and engineering - building and programming a LEGO® Education SPIKE™ Prime robot that navigates the missions of a robot game. They also participate in a research project to identify and solve a relevant real-world problem.



Young Innovators Using Skills and Imagination to Solve Problems as a Team

THE CHALLENGE

Through a guided, global robotics program, students are introduced to STEM learning and exploration at an early age. Children can begin with Discover (ages 4-6) and progress through Explore (ages 6-10) and Challenge (ages 9-16), or join at any division based on their age or grade level.

THE JOURNEY

Young children are introduced to STEM concepts and develop habits of learning through engaging, fun challenges and competitions using LEGO® Education materials.

THE OUTCOME

Students gain real-world problem-solving experiences that inspire them to experiment and grow their critical thinking, coding, and design skills while building confidence, growing their knowledge, and developing habits of learning.





It's Way More Than Building Robots

THE CHALLENGE

Teams design, build, and program microwavesize robots using Java programming to compete alongside and against other teams in a themed game. Students are encouraged to create team brands and be an ambassador for *FIRST* and STEM in their communities.

THE JOURNEY

Teams compete at local and regional events, qualifying up to the *FIRST* Championship. They earn awards based on their teamwork, creativity, ingenuity, engineering design, and community connection.

THE OUTCOME

While developing their STEM skills and mastering engineering principles, students learn the value of persistence, innovation, teamwork, and the engineering design process. High school students have access to education and career discovery opportunities, connections to scholarships and employers, and a place in the *FIRST* community for life.

Grades 9-12 · Ages 14-18



An Exciting Sport Built Around the World of STEM

THE CHALLENGE

Under strict rules, with limited time and resources, high school teams use sophisticated technology to build and program industrial-size robots for a challenging field game. Each team creates a team identity, raises funds to meet its goals, and works to promote STEM in the local community.

THE JOURNEY

At district and regional events, cheering crowds root for qualifying teams as students compete with their robots for prestigious awards and a coveted spot at the *FIRST* Championship.

THE OUTCOME

As students learn real-world engineering concepts, they build their confidence and workforce skills, and connect with professional team mentors and sponsors who can help them succeed. Plus, participants and alumni have access to education and career discovery opportunities, connections to scholarships and employers, and a place in the *FIRST* community for life.





Showcasing FIRST as More Than Robots®

For many years, we've celebrated FIRST programs as More Than Robots® - a phrase that highlights the strong sense of community built into FIRST and the broad range of skills and experience built by our participants.

"More Than Robots" became the perfect title for a Disney+ documentary filmed in early 2020 that showed FIRST teams pivoting from building robots to using technology to help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The film, released in spring

of 2022, also highlighted how FIRST introduces students to new opportunities and can increase self-esteem, especially for underrepresented/ underserved populations and vulnerable youth.

Building off themes from the documentary, we launched a national brand campaign that showcased FIRST to new audiences and helped drive deeper connections within our robotics community.

"More Than" a Campaign

Rooted in proof from the FIRST community and external audiences, the More Than campaign set out to dismantle labels for young people and promote self-esteem through STEM. Mislabeling and underestimating today's youth leads to self-doubt and low self-esteem. FIRST is part of the solution, empowering parents and educators alike to be the catalysts and passionate supporters for uplifting students' dreams, while amplifying the young voices of today.

◆The New York Times PSA

Belief in Oneself is Nothing Short of Life-Changing

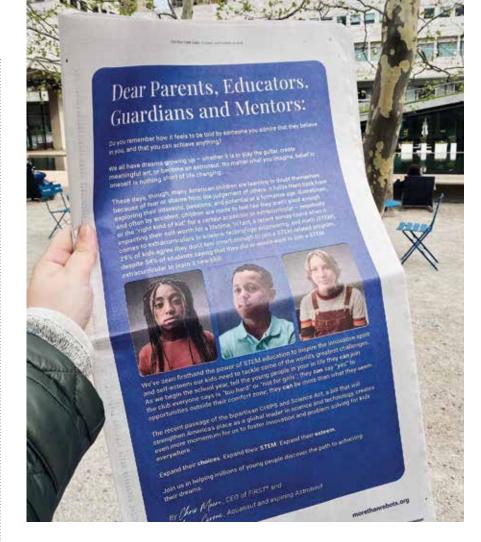
Through six months of listening to psychologists, parents, teachers, and mentors, we uncovered a self-esteem deficit among young people. Our research found that too often, children (especially young people of underrepresented and underserved populations) are excluded from extracurriculars like *FIRST*. They are burdened with internal and external factors that make them feel like they are "not smart" enough or that "STEM is for boys" or "it's too hard."

Parents and Educators Have Big Roles in Enabling Opportunities

New research released with the campaign, conducted by Allison+Partners Performance+Intelligence, showcased an interest in STEM but a hesitancy to join, unless encouraged by a parent or other adult.

- 54% of students say they did join, or would join, a STEM or robotics extracurricular to learn a new skill.
- 77% of kids say they would turn to a parent, schoolteacher, or school counselor for advice about joining an extracurricular activity.
- **29%** of kids say they don't feel smart enough to join a STEM-related program.

With these findings, we created a campaign to encourage parents and educators to support kids in exploring their interests and passions and trying new experiences – as told by the voices of young people themselves.



▼ Alyssa Carson



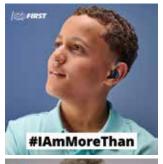
The Launch

The campaign launched in September 2022 with a public service announcement (PSA) video that aired on TV networks in the United States and an open letter in The New York Times calling for adults to encourage the young people in their lives to engage in new opportunities that might seem outside their comfort zone.

The PSA featured interviews with young people and their parents about what holds kids back and what makes them *More Than*, and highlighted research from the study. Watch the video at www.morethanrobots.org.

The open letter was co-signed by <u>Chris Moore</u>, chief executive officer of *FIRST*, and <u>Alyssa Carson</u>, *FIRST* alum, author, space enthusiast, and youngest person to graduate from U.S. Space & Rocket Center's Advanced Space Academy. "We've seen firsthand the power of STEM education to inspire the innovative spirit and self-esteem our kids need to tackle some of the world's greatest challenges," they wrote. "Tell the young people in your in life they can join the club everyone says is 'too hard' or 'not for girls'; they can say 'yes' to opportunities outside their comfort zone; they can be *more than* what they seem."

#IAmMoreThan

























More Than Drove New Audiences to Engage in FIRST

The campaign was spread further through digital, print, and broadcast integrations over several weeks, all driving audiences to FIRST. More Than was cobranded with sponsors RTX, Qualcomm, and Bosch, who helped spread the campaign to even more people.

By galvanizing global brands around the campaign, we were able to collaborate and gain support to develop even more emotive content, such as custom videos that dove deeper into critical threads of the campaign (equity, diversity, and inclusion; mentorship; resilience) that were mutually important to these sponsors and FIRST.

With influencer partner Alyssa Carson and RTX's Fazlul Zubair, a FIRST mentor, we conducted a satellite media tour of U.S. news outlets that reached an audience of 25 million – adding to the hundreds of millions of TV viewers who watched our PSA on network shows like TODAY, GMA, and Ellen.

More Than received industry-wide acknowledgment and accolades, including from the Los Angeles Film Awards, the International Film Festival, the Shorty Awards, and the Digiday Greater Good Awards.

The More Than Message

As a global robotics community preparing young people for the future, we want every kid to recognize their worth and abilities, and love who they are. Together with our sponsors, we know the power STEM education has in inspiring the innovative spirit and selfesteem our kids need to tackle the world's greatest challenges.

WHEN WE EXPAND STEM, WE EXPAND ESTEEM. AND SO, THE MOVEMENT CONTINUES ...







FIRST TEAMS AND ALUMNI ENERGIZE THEIR COMMUNITIES



More Than Robots, the FIRST community is energized by our foundational ethos of Gracious Professionalism and Coopertition, which we express through the FIRST Core Values.

Every season, our teams, participants, and alumni innovate and use their skills as a force for good to make an impact in their backyards and on a global scale. These stories of *FIRST* students and alumni are just a sample of the thousands in our community worldwide that exemplify what it means to be *More Than Robots*.

FIRST CORE VALUES

Our community personifies the *FIRST* philosophies of *Gracious Professionalism* (emphasis on high-quality work, the value of others, and respect for individuals and the community) and *Coopertition* (displaying unqualified kindness and respect in the face of fierce competition) through our Core Values:

- Discovery We explore new skills and ideas.
- Innovation We use creativity and persistence to solve problems.
- Impact We apply what we learn to improve our world.

- Inclusion We respect each other and embrace our differences.
- **Teamwork** We are stronger when we work together.
- Fun We enjoy and celebrate what we do!

FIRST LEGO League Teams Innovate with Sustainable Energy

FIRST LEGO League Team 58463 "The Galactic Bagels" and Team 54359 "The Robo Emperors" from Wapello Elementary School in Wapello, Iowa, recently innovated a way to reduce their school district's energy costs.

The teams began by meeting once a week for a few hours at a time to get their feet wet with FIRST and familiarize themselves with the SUPERPOWERED™ season challenge. Both teams were started from an existing 4-H club, so the students already had a unique knowledge base and skill sets to apply to the season challenge, which asked students to reimagine the future of sustainable energy.

The problem they decided to focus on solving was reducing the coal-generated electricity in their school building. After doing their research and learning about the building and how it uses energy, they created a proposal to install solar panels on the roof.

The team presented their findings and ideas to their local school board. One mentor said. "At first, the school board was polite and thanked the kids for coming, but when they realized that this was a well-researched and viable plan backed by professionals, their eyes widened and their ears perked up."

In March 2023, the school board voted to fund the installation of solar panels on multiple school buildings in the district.





Overcoming Adversity - The Story of the Belize FIRST Community

In November of 2022, Hurricane Lisa hit the community of FIRST Robotics Competition Team 9244 and destroyed 75% of Belize High School. True to their persevering team spirit, students and parents helped clean up campus and created makeshift teaching spaces. This allowed the team to get through build season and finish their robot.

After intense troubleshooting and teamwork, the team arrived in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for their regional competition but unfortunately their robot was stuck in customs. The team used a kit robot that was lent to them and spent an entire day building and testing this new bot for competition the following day. Thankfully, their original robot was eventually cleared by customs – just in time; in the end, they were able to compete with their original robot and earn a spot at the 2023 FIRST Championship presented by BAE systems in Houston.

Following their regional competition, the team had only nine days to fundraise the registration fee, hotel, and airline tickets needed to attend FIRST Championship. The Belize community ran a historic fundraising drive that allowed for seven of the 15 team members to attend the event, proving that not even a hurricane can stop the Belize FIRST community from following their dreams.

"AT FIRST, THE SCHOOL BOARD WAS POLITE AND THANKED THE KIDS FOR COMING, BUT WHEN THEY REALIZED THAT THIS WAS A WELL-RESEARCHED AND VIABLE PLAN BACKED BY PROFESSIONALS, THEIR EYES WIDENED AND THEIR EARS PERKED UP."

- Wapello Elementary School mentor

"IT'S IMPORTANT TO SHARF INFORMATION WITH OTHER STUDENTS ABOUT *FIRST* AND STEM BECAUSE, IN ADDITION TO BEING INCREDIBLY FUN AND EXCITING, IT ALSO TEACHES YOU GREAT LIFE SKILLS AND GIVES YOU OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN ABOUT STEM CAREER PATHS."

Bella from Team KRASH

FIRST Tech Challenge Team KRASH: Inspiring a Community Through STEM

Howell, Michigan, is home to FIRST Tech Challenge "Team Krash" and students Bella (grade 8) and Maverick (grade 7). Bella and Maverick saw a need to bring FIRST and STEM to more kids and decided to take action. They realized that kids on Team KRASH have so much fun participating in FIRST that they raised the guestion, "How can we spread the word of FIRST and get more kids involved?" The answer: A new version of the classic "Little Free Library" project, which the team has named "STEM Box."

STEM Box is a centrally located box within the community that houses free STEM kits with activities geared towards elementary students.

Every few weeks. Team KRASH switches out the kits in the box to ensure that the activities are new, exciting, and engaging. Through their Instagram page, they have promoted STEM Boxes and made connections with teams both domestically and internationally to help start boxes in other communities.

"It's important to share information with other students about FIRST and STEM because, in addition to being incredibly fun and exciting, it also teaches you great life skills and gives you opportunities to learn about STEM career paths," said Bella.







FIRST Robotics Competition Team 2080 "Torbotics" Offers Child with Type 1 Spinal **Muscular Atrophy Greater Independence**

Five-year-old Makenzie was born with type 1 spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). Due to her genetic condition, Makenzie has the constant need of a wheelchair, nutrition, and breathing assistance, and communicates through her tablet and modified sign language.

Her family had been in search of a supportive device for Makenzie to help her use her arms with greater ease, but could not find one on the market that fit her needs. They contacted FIRST Robotics Competition Team 2080 "Torbotics" with a request for the students to design and create a supportive **device.** The team spent 14 months designing and prototyping fully functional supportive "robot arms" and in July 2023, Makenzie was able to take the arm supports home with her. Since then, she has been able to spend significantly more time doing physical therapy and is even able to get out of her wheelchair both during physical therapy appointments and

in her normal life. Both the Torbotics team and Makenzie's family continue to stay connected and support each other, redesigning and adding more features to help Makenzie live a more independent life.



FIRST ALUMNI ARE BUILDING THE FUTURE



Connor is a *FIRST* alum and electric drive development engineer at FIRST Strategic Partner, General Motors. His time in FIRST helped him see the infinite possibilities of STEM in energizing the future and the importance of perseverance.

"*first* taught me that it isn't ABOUT GETTING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME, AND YOU CAN'T BE AFRAID OF FAILURE BEFORE YOU START TRYING. YOU JUST HAVE TO START AND YOU WILL LEARN ALONG THE WAY."



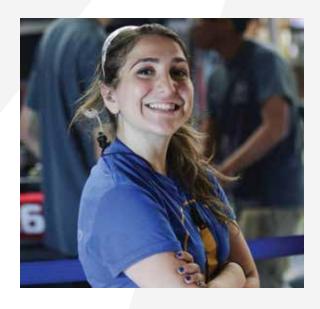
Rameesha is a FIRST alum and seven-year FIRST Robotics Competition mentor. As global gender lead at Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH), she fights for equal rights and opportunities for all in countries around the world

"MY EXPERIENCE IN *FIRST* IMPACTED ME IN APPROACHING PROBLEMS IN A CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE WAY. ALL THE SKILLS THAT I LEARNED, I USE **EVERY DAY IN MY JOB - TIME** MANAGEMENT, INTERPERSONAL SKILLS, COMMUNICATION, CONFIDENCE, INNOVATION, AND PROBLEM-SOLVING."



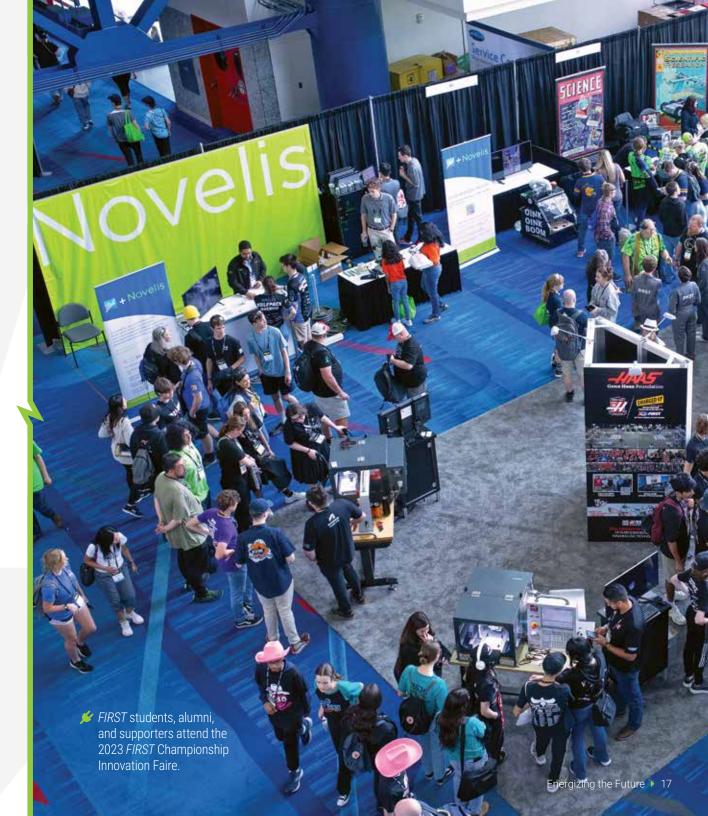
Tristan is a *FIRST* alum and volunteer across programs, mentoring students and announcing games. He is also a board member of The Rainbow STEM Alliance, an organization dedicated to helping make FIRST and other STEM spaces inclusive and safe for LGBTQ+ individuals. At his day job, Tristan uses his FIRST skills to translate highly technical information for people of all backgrounds as a benefits navigation specialist at Elder Law of Michigan.

"IT'S OKAY TO TAKE UP SPACE. BY THAT, I MEAN THAT YOUR VOICE, YOUR PRESENCE, YOUR SKILLS ARE NOT AN INCONVENIENCE. THE PERSPECTIVE YOU HAVE ON THE WORLD HAS VALUE."



Pauline is a *FIRST* alum and says that *FIRST* is the reason she became an engineer. She is currently a propulsion manufacturing engineer at Rocket Lab and works on building rocket engines. She advises students today, "Don't give up!"

"THERE WERE SO MANY MOMENTS WHERE I WANTED TO THROW IN THE TOWEL WHEN THINGS WERE GETTING DIFFICULT. I CONSTANTLY WAS ONE OF A FEW WOMEN IN THE ROOM AND I STRUGGLED TO GET MY VOICE HEARD. STICKING IT OUT AND BRAVING THROUGH THE TOUGHEST OF PROBLEMS MADE ME WHO I AM TODAY - A GREAT ENGINEER AND LEADER."





Our 2022-2023 season theme, FIRST® ENERGIZESM presented by Qualcomm, charged up our youth participants to reimagine the future of sustainable energy and power their ideas forward through program challenges that inspire young people to create innovative solutions through robotics. The season theme addressed global challenges related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #7 – focused on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

A SEASON IN NUMBERS

668,000+

students impacted

3,700+

official FIRST events

106

countries with FIRST presence

316,000+

volunteer, mentor, and educator roles

28 million+

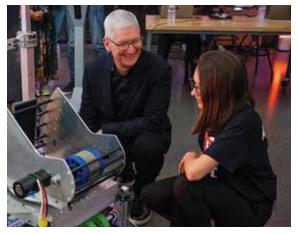
volunteer, mentor, and educator hours

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS



/ The 2022-2023 season grew by over 25%

- During FIRST ENERGIZE, FIRST engaged even more youth in our life-changing robotics programs. Overall, youth participation across programs for the 2022-2023 season grew by over 25% compared to the 2021-2022 season.
- Ten inspiring community organizations from around the world were awarded 2022 STEM Equity Community Innovation Grants from FIRST to provide equitable STEM engagement opportunities for underserved and underrepresented youth, and help community leaders develop new, innovative approaches to close the STEM education gap.
- In the 2022 family movie "Fantasy Football" from Nickelodeon, Marsai Martin starred as Callie Coleman, a FIRST participant who discovers she can magically control the performance of her football-playing father through her gaming console. The film earned Director Anton Cropper the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Directing in a Television Movie or Special.



Fim Cook (CEO, Apple) at the 2022 FIRST Inspire Gala

- At the <u>2022 FIRST Inspire Gala</u> in San Francisco, guest of honor Tim Cook (chief executive officer, Apple) shared uplifting words for the crowd of FIRST supporters and students in attendance, saying: "FIRST creates a space where technology and creativity intersect – and demonstrates just how powerful it is to bring those components together."
- Novelis expanded 10 years of support by signing on as a FIRST Strategic Partner, furthering their commitment to work together to inspire youth participants to be environmental stewards and champions of sustainability in their communities.
- FIRST completed its first year of new
 AmeriCorps grants, which deployed nine individuals to support four key work sites through the FIRST AmeriCorps Program.

 Members support the expansion of the FIRST mission through coaching and mentoring, program support, and school district support.



Recognizing the Class of 2023 at the FIRST Signing Day

- The Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) and FIRST announced a partnership to enhance STEM education and interest among students and bolster workforce development; with demand for highly skilled workers currently outstripping supply of U.S. STEM graduates, this partnership helps ensure the U.S. maintains its innovation edge in critical technologies, including semiconductors.
- The FIRST community recognized the Class of 2023 on FIRST Signing Day, sharing congratulations and celebrating next steps of graduating FIRST alumni, whether education, enlistment, or employment. The annual end-of-season celebration has continued to grow in recognition and integration into our community, and we look forward to celebrating our next graduates in 2024.





FIRST® LEGO® LEAGUE

GRADES PREK-8 · AGES 4-16

In **SUPERPOWERED,SM** participants explored where energy comes from and how it is distributed, stored, and used – and then put their superpowered creativity to work to innovate for a better energy future. Discover and Explore students built a LEGO[®] model based on their energy journey and tracked what they learned in an Engineering Notebook. Explore teams used code to bring their model to life. Challenge teams developed new, innovative ways to rethink and improve how energy is generated and used. They also built and programmed an autonomous LEGO robot to solve energy-themed missions in the SUPERPOWERED Robot Game.



Season Participation

497,000+

students in **92 countries** explored STEM concepts and gained real-world problem-solving experiences through the guided, global *FIRST* LEGO League program.

96%

of FIRST LEGO League coaches indicated* students increased their teamwork skills.

*Source: 2023 FIRST LEGO League Explore and Challenge end-of-season surveys



60,600+
Discover students

156,500+ Explore students

280,300+ Challenge students

Spotlight



The *FIRST* **LEGO League Morocco Open Invitational 2023** held May 18-21 in Marrakech, Morocco, welcomed **48 teams** from **42 countries**. The event was **one of five international open events hosted by Program Delivery Organizations** during the SUPERPOWERED season as part of efforts to provide more teams opportunities to attend exciting, multinational events beyond *FIRST* Championship. Other opens were held in **Sydney, Australia** (48 teams from 42 countries) and three U.S. states: **Arkansas** (80 teams from 7 countries), **California** (80 teams from 17 countries), and **Massachusetts** (84 teams from 17 countries).

Ages may vary by region. Energizing the Future ▶ 21





FIRST® TECH CHALLENGE

GRADES 7-12 · AGES 12-18

For engineers, creators, and inventors, energy choice is a balancing act. In **POWERPLAY**SM **presented by Raytheon Technologies**, teams were challenged to make energy decisions and find innovative ways to unlock their robot's full potential as they raced to build circuits, testing the limits of power, performance, energy, and endurance. Over two-and-a-half minutes of game play with autonomous and driver-controlled sections, teams earned points by scoring cones in terminals, securing cones on junctions, and completing a circuit.





Season Participation

87,400+

students in **67 countries** developed STEM skills, practiced engineering principles, and explored the value of teamwork through *FIRST* Tech Challenge.

97%

of *FIRST* Tech Challenge students indicated* they increased their ability to **persevere despite challenges or barriers**.

*Source: 2023 FIRST Tech Challenge end-of-season survey

Spotlight

This season, FIRST Tech Challenge reached more than 87,400 youth participants, a program record that was driven by growth in teams and larger average team sizes.

To support more teams at the 2023 FIRST Championship presented by BAE Systems, FIRST Tech Challenge doubled the number of divisions to four and hosted over 190 teams in thrilling competition across eight playing fields.



Ages may vary by region. Energizing the Future ▶ 23





FIRST® ROBOTICS COMPETITION

GRADES 9-12 · AGES 14-18

The power of engineering can help make a meaningful difference. In **CHARGED UP**SM **presented by Haas**, teams were inspired to see the potential of energy storage in a new light as they competed to charge up their communities. Teams built and programmed industrial-size robots to compete in alliances. Their robots earned points during pre-programmed and driver-controlled periods across two-and-a-half minutes of gameplay, scoring cones or cubes on the grid, docking or engaging with their charge station, and parking in their community.



Season Participation

83,600+

students in **32 countries** unlocked real-world engineering concepts, self-confidence, and workforce skills, supported by professional team mentors and sponsors.

98%

of FIRST Robotics Competition students reported* they increased their ability to accept input and feedback from others.

*Source: 2023 FIRST Robotics Competition end-of-season survey

Spotlight

FIRST Robotics Competition Team 321 "RoboLancers" won the FIRST **Impact Award** (previously known as the Chairman's Award) at the 2023 FIRST Championship presented by BAE Systems, the highest honor of the FIRST Robotics Competition program, recognizing the team that best represents a model for other teams to emulate and best embodies the purpose and goals of FIRST. In 2023, the team supported 130+ Philadelphia FIRST teams through a combination of funding, mentorship, coach training, workshops, and competition resources. The RoboLancers aim to build bridges that cross the unique barriers to STEM education within their community and are dedicated to creating equitable opportunities in STEM.



Ages may vary by region. Energizing the Future ▶ 25

FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP ENERGIZES RECORD-BREAKING CROWDS

In April 2023, approximately 50,000 people from around the world came together in Houston, Texas, to cheer on hundreds of student robotics teams as they put their innovation, teamwork, and robotics skills to the test at the 2023 FIRST Championship presented by BAE Systems.



2023 FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY BAE SYSTEMS HIGHLIGHTS

attendees

student participants

robotics teams

countries

event volunteers

video views of FIRST influencer content

owned/organic social media impressions

We are committed to ensuring young people from all backgrounds learn critical STEM skills and inspiring them to become innovators in leading-edge industries like ours. At Championship, it's been exciting to see what students accomplished this *FIRST* ENERGIZE season, and we are proud to celebrate them."

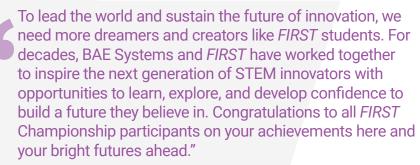
Angela Baker, vice president of corporate responsibility, Qualcomm Incorporated



Thank you to our 2023 FIRST Championship sponsors who appear on page 40 of this report.

FIRST founder Dean Kamen makes the rounds in the pits, visiting teams and sharing words of inspiration with students, volunteers, and supporters alike.





- Kari Karwedsky, technical director, BAE Systems' Electronic Systems sector





- "FIRST is about so much More Than Robots.
 It's about teamwork, compassion, friendship, learning new skills, and challenging yourself to do things you never dreamed you were capable of. You gave me hope, you gave me inspiration, and you are amazing and deserve to be celebrated."
 - Chris Moore, chief executive officer, FIRST

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We are wholeheartedly grateful for the electrifying generosity of our community of supporters. As a nonprofit more than three decades into our mission, we know we could not make an impact without the support of our sponsors, suppliers, donors, and other contributors. *More* than keeping our lights on, their partnership, acknowledged in part on these pages, enables our participants to have the tools they need to succeed and build pathways for their futures.

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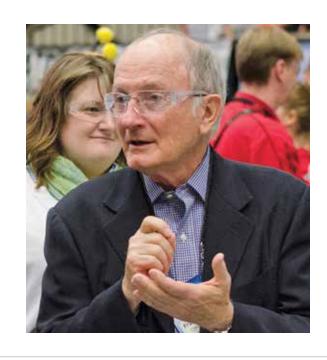




REMEMBERING LONG-TIME FIRST SUPPORTERS

François J. Castaing (1945-2023)

François J. Castaing, retired executive vice president, Chrysler Corporation, served on the FIRST Board of Directors from 1994 to 2013. when he became an honorary director. He was instrumental in introducing FIRST programs to Michigan, pitching FIRST to the Big Three automakers (Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors), starting the first team at Chrysler ("Killer Bees," still competing today), and serving as FIRST in Michigan chairman of the Board (2009-2020), helping FIRST grow to reach tens of thousands of students in Michigan. "In the very early days of FIRST, I searched for corporate chieftains that might support the organization. I connected with François Castaing, a legend in the auto industry," said FIRST founder Dean Kamen. "We all owe great thanks to François for significantly advancing the mission of FIRST."



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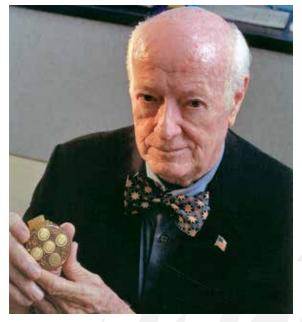






Dr. William P. Murphy, Jr. (1923-2023)

Dr. William P Murphy, Jr., who revolutionized the biomedical industry with his inventions, was an early supporter, serving on the FIRST Executive Advisory Board and as a senior advisor to the organization for many years. His engineering materials company, Small Parts, Inc., was key to the early days of the FIRST Robotics Competition Kit of Parts. In 1996, he founded the prestigious Woodie Flowers Award (see page 44) to recognize mentors who lead, inspire, and empower others within FIRST. "Dr. Murphy was inspirational to me in creating FIRST over 30 years ago and he has been one of the mission's strongest supporters ever since." said Dean Kamen. "His innovative work and his habit of keeping his father's Nobel Prize tucked away in the closet drove me to transform our culture."





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- Angela Baker, vice president of corporate responsibility. FIRST Strategic Partner Qualcomm Incorporated

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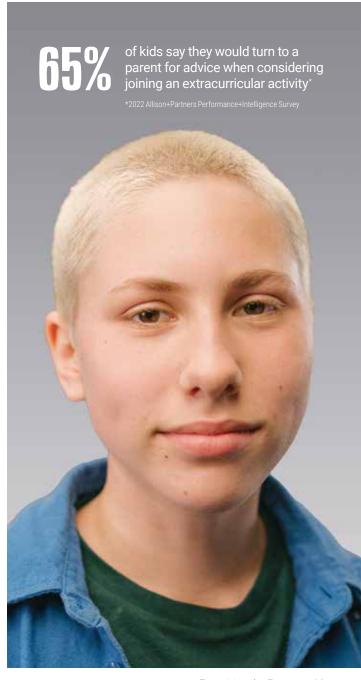
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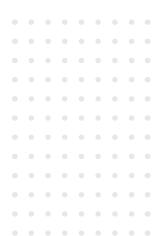
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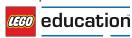


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TENNESSEE - CHATTANOOGA (NORTH GEORGIA) Tennessee Valley Robotics (TVR) ●● **TENNESSEE - EAST**Tennessee Tech University ••

TENNESSEE - WEST
The Children's Museum
of Memphis ●

TEXAS
FIRST in Texas

TEXAS - CENTRAL
FIRST in Texas •••

TEXAS - EAST
FIRST in Texas ••
San Jacinto College •

TEXAS - NORTH
FIRST in Texas •••

TEXAS - PANHANDLE
FIRST in Texas ••

TEXAS - SOUTH
FIRST in Texas •••

TEXAS - WEST
FIRST in Texas •

The University of Texas at El Paso – College of Engineering ••

UTAH

Southern Utah University •

Weber State University, College of Applied Science and Technology ●●

VERMONTNE FIRST

Norwich University ••
University of Vermont •

VIRGINIA

FIRST Chesapeake ••

James Madison University ••

WASHINGTONFIRST Washington ••••

WEST VIRGINIAFairmont State University ●●●

WISCONSINBadgerBOTS Robotics
Corporation ••

Milwaukee School of Engineering •

FIRST Wisconsin ••

WYOMING

Natrona County School District •••

URUGUAY
Plan Ceibal ••

VIETNAM
Viet Tinh Anh JSC ••

ZIMBABWE

Tshwane University of Technology/FIRST South Africa



2023 FIRST VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Every season, *FIRST* volunteers around the world go above and beyond to energize the *FIRST* community. Through their dedication, passion, and demonstration of the *FIRST* Core Values, they continuously serve as inspiring role models for *FIRST* students. At the culmination of every *FIRST* season, the Volunteer of the Year award is given to those who have made an extraordinary contribution to a *FIRST* program.

This year, the Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to

✓ Nicole Coulombe — FIRST LEGO League Explore

№ Nathan Coulombe — FIRST LEGO League Explore

✗ Teresa Lanum − *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge

★ Chris Johannesen – FIRST Tech Challenge

Ali Marinari — FIRST Robotics Competition

"As a FIRST [alum] myself, being able to volunteer allows me to give back to the program that had a meaningful impact on me when I was a student," said award recipient Ali Marinari. "I'm able to not only give back to the organization but have also made lifelong friends who know that we're all in this together."

Because of the positive impact of volunteers like these honorees, *FIRST* is able to continue to provide life-changing STEM opportunities that empower students to explore new paths and discover their potential and confidence.

2023 WOODIE FLOWERS AWARD RECIPIENT



66 WE ARE SMARTER THAN ME ANY DAY OF THE WEEK, AND WE ARE REALIZING **OUR POTENTIAL TO CHANGE THE WORLD."**

> -Mark Buckner, 2023 Woodie Flowers Award recipient and mentor for FIRST Robotics Competition Team 4265 "Secret City Wildbots"

Each year, the Woodie Flowers Award, named after the late Dr. Woodie Flowers, is awarded to an outstanding FIRST Robotics Competition mentor who leads, inspires, and empowers students through effective communication in STEM. The 2023 Woodie Flowers Award was awarded to Mark Buckner of Oak Ridge, **Tennessee**, a mentor for *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 4265 "Secret City Wildbots."

Mark (pictured front row, 4th from left) was presented the award at the 2023 FIRST Championship by past recipient Christine Sapio (pictured front row, 2nd from left), who said Mark empowers his students to teach concepts to each other and grow their capabilities exponentially. "This mentor's students have been inspired to passionately pursue perfection and catch excellence"





FINANCIALS

FIRST reported an operating surplus in FY2023 following a modest surplus in FY2022 and two years of operating deficit in FY2021 and FY2020. The surplus in FY2023 is largely related to the organization's eligibility for the one-time Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC), which FIRST applied for near the end of FY2023 and accounts for 76 percent of our reported surplus.

In FY2023, *FIRST* served 25 percent more youth participants over FY2022. In keeping with long-time practices, *FIRST* continues to apply the maximum percentage of funds possible to directly benefit *FIRST* participants. Delivering quality programs to as many young people as possible continues to be our priority, but economic pressures and inflation have caused increasing challenges. *FIRST* continues to look for opportunities to manage our expenses through disciplined cost control and sourcing efforts. *FIRST* also seeks additional sources of revenue through team growth and other opportunities such as ERTC. These efforts combine with the generous donations of our sponsors to provide funding for all *FIRST* programs. Despite the economic pressures, *FIRST* was fortunate to continue to prioritize investment in important initiatives, such as our Youth Protection Program, Information Technology, Program Evaluations, Diversity & Inclusion Program, and Education Initiative. *FIRST* will leverage the receipts from the ERTC to enable the initial phase of significant Digital Transformation work within FY2024.

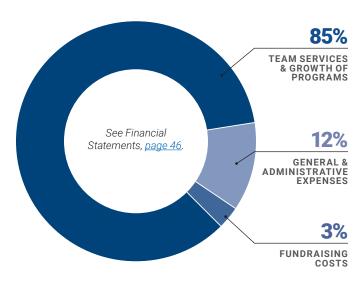
As with previous fiscal years, support from generous contributors remained strong, as many individuals, small businesses, corporations – including over 200 of the *Fortune* 500 companies – and foundations maintained or increased their support. In addition, many of our contributors also provided significant support in the way of unrestricted donations, providing *FIRST* with important flexibility to manage economic stresses and address our most important business needs. This contributed support continued to provide meaningful experiences to hundreds of thousands of youth participants engaged worldwide in *FIRST* programs.



Charity Navigator Four-Star Rating

FIRST has a top-ranked four-star rating from Charity Navigator for consistently executing its mission in a fiscally responsible way.

SOURCE: https://www.charitynavigator.org/ein/222990908



STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES	JUNE 30, 2	JUNE 30, 2023		JUNE 30, 2022	
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT:					
Program registration fees	31,432,688	36.54%	17,420,896	23.12%	
Contributions and Grants	11,235,979	13.06%	12,668,485	16.81%	
Other income, net of expenses	2,580,660	3.00%	711,726	0.94%	
Special event income, net of expenses	-	0.00%	-	0.00%	
Employee retention tax credit	3,796,478	4.41%	-	0.00%	
Net assets released from restrictions	36,974,858	42.98%	44,555,695	59.13%	
Total revenues (losses) and other support	\$ 86,020,663	100.00%	\$ 75,356,802	100.00%	

Operating surplus (deficit)	4,977,100		403,361	
Total expenses	\$ 81,043,563	100.00%	\$ 74,953,441	100.00%
Fundraising and Development	2,398,960	2.96%	1,961,338	2.62%
General, administrative, and supporting services	9,226,630	11.38%	8,927,776	11.91%
Net cost of building space occupied by unrelated not-for-profit organizations	321,525	0.40%	387,932	0.52%
FIRST Program Expenses	69,096,448	85.26%	63,676,395	84.95%
EXPENSES:				

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION	JUNE 30, 20	JUNE 30, 2023		JUNE 30, 2022	
ASSETS:					
Cash and cash equivalents*	27,364,744	36.84%	32,474,351	50.53%	
Short-term investments*	20,308,745	27.34%	14,950,000	23.26%	
Pledges, receivables, program supply inventory, and other assets	22,649,527	30.49%	12,548,523	19.52%	
Net property, plant, and equipment	3,956,671	5.33%	4,297,070	6.69%	
Total assets, end of year	\$ 74,279,687	100.00%	\$ 64,269,944	100.00%	

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:				
Total liabilities, end of year	\$ 8,273,348		\$ 5,369,371	
Net assets:				
Without donor restrictions	33,420,564	50.63%	28,443,464	48.29%
With donor restrictions – temporary in nature	32,585,775	49.37%	30,457,109	51.71%
Total net assets, end of year	\$ 66,006,339	100.00%	\$ 58,900,573	100.00%
Total liabilities and net assets, end of year	\$ 74,279,687		\$ 64,269,944	

For each of the two fiscal years summarized above, FIRST received unmodified (unqualified) opinions from its independent auditor, BerryDunn.

*NOTE: The cash and short-term investments are comprised of both unrestricted funds and donor temporarily restricted funds. The total liquid assets balance available to FIRST, for operating purposes, at June 30, 2023, is equivalent to approximately four months of FIRST operating expenses.

The financial information presented here is condensed and does not include the value of all donated services and materials. Audited Financial Statements (AFS) are readily available on our website at firstinspires.org under "About/Annual Report & Financials."

LEADERSHIP

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Independent Law Practice Professional

Cate Prescott

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Senior Vice President, Chief Technical Officer, The Coca-Cola Company

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Vice President, Program Delivery

Learn more about FIRST Leadership

at www.firstinspires.org/about/leadership

Listing current as of December 2023

FIRST is a global robotics community preparing young people for the future.

PURPOSE

FIRST exists to prepare the young people of today for the world of tomorrow.

VISION

To transform our culture by creating a world where science and technology are celebrated and where young people dream of becoming science and technology leaders.

MISSION

To provide life-changing robotics programs that give young people the skills, confidence, and resilience to build a better world.

5 CORE VALUES

Discovery

We explore new skills and ideas.

Innovation

We use creativity and persistence to solve problems

Impact

We apply what we learn to improve our world.

Inclusion

We respect each other and embrace our differences.

Teamwork

We are stronger when we work together.

Fun

We enjoy and celebrate what we do!



Founded by inventor Dean Kamen in 1989, FIRST is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, headquartered in Manchester, New Hampshire. 200 Bedford Street, Manchester, NH 03101 | 800.871.8326 | www.firstinspires.org