Celebrating Breakthroughs

2018 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT
Three decades ago, FIRST® broke ground on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) culture with a landmark robotics competition for high school students, evolving into a global movement by engaging millions of people with a proven game-changer for preparing kids of all ages to solve the world’s greatest challenges. Through our programs, young people discover a passion for STEM and develop both self-confidence and valuable, real-world skills that can open pathways to all types of career choices and outcomes. Join us in these pages as we celebrate breakthroughs — breakthroughs in innovation, personal growth, collaboration, community, and more — from our inspirational FIRST community.
From our start nearly 30 years ago, FIRST® was designed for achieving breakthroughs. It began with an ambitious vision: Transforming the culture to one where science and technology are celebrated and young people proudly dream of becoming true leaders, innovators, and changemakers.

To get there, we needed to build that culture into FIRST—and we have. Today and every day, our global community of business leaders, STEM professionals, educators, parents, and many others work together to mentor, support, and celebrate young people through FIRST.

Each time we encourage a team of students to persevere until they achieve the thrill of making a robot move, or we pack an event space with cheering crowds to celebrate young participants in a robotics competition, we are giving these students invaluable opportunities. They’re building self-confidence, unlocking new skills, and discovering passions that will change the course of their lives, preparing them to make breakthroughs of their own.

That inspiration goes both ways. Adults may aim to inspire young people, but it’s the youth who truly inspire the adults. Parent volunteers frequently stay involved long after their own children graduate. Employees of our sponsors often become more engaged at work after they begin mentoring FIRST teams. Many FIRST alumni become coaches, volunteers, and donors, dedicated to ensuring FIRST is available for generations behind them.

Look no further than President Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States, who spoke about being inspired by the young people in our program when we honored him at our FIRST, Inspire Gala this year: “You can’t help but want to support this program, and you can’t help but feel good about where we can go,” he said.

“YOU CAN’T HELP BUT WANT TO SUPPORT THIS PROGRAM, AND YOU CAN’T HELP BUT FEEL GOOD ABOUT WHERE WE CAN GO.”

—President Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States

We give our heartfelt thanks to those who have helped us build this culture: our Founding Sponsors and Strategic Partners, and all our sponsors, mentors, and volunteers who give freely of their experience, knowledge, time, and resources. We’re also grateful for the parents, educators, and community members who support our young people. You inspire us.

There’s more work to do. While we welcome greater numbers of young people into the FIRST community each year, there are still so many kids—especially those from disenfranchised communities and underrepresented populations—who don’t have access to the kind of STEM inspiration FIRST provides. We must continue to work toward greater access to our programs, and to keep breaking through until every kid, everywhere, has these game-changing opportunities.

To inspire an entire generation of leaders, innovators, and changemakers, we need your help. Will you join us?

Learn more at www.firstinspires.org.
Impact That Creates Breakthroughs

More than a decade of verifiable data shows that exposing kids to fun, exciting FIRST programs builds 21st century work skills and prepares young people for the future. Five years of data* from a rigorous longitudinal study of FIRST indicates that FIRST greatly increases students’ motivation to seek education and careers in STEM fields, and that girls in FIRST are significantly more likely to have even greater gains in STEM than their peers or boys in FIRST. No matter what path students choose after high school, FIRST is equipping them for success.

**ULTIMATE IMPACT**

**78%**

**OF FIRST ALUMNI ARE IN A STEM FIELD**

(student or professional)

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**STEM EXPOSURE**

**FIRST STUDENTS**

84% build the robot  
88% work on robot design strategy  
60% program/code  
77% learn about STEM jobs  
97% have FUN!

**GIRLS IN FIRST**

75% build the robot  
89% work on robot design strategy  
61% program/code  
78% learn about STEM jobs  
97% have FUN!

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**STEM INTEREST & SKILLS**

**FIRST STUDENTS**

88% more interested in learning about STEM  
88% better understand how STEM is used to solve real-world problems  
98% increase teamwork skills  
93% increase problem-solving skills

**GIRLS IN FIRST**

85% more interested in learning about STEM  
92% better understand how STEM is used to solve real-world problems  
99% increase teamwork skills  
98% increase problem-solving skills

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*Inspired to Learn More? [www.firstinspires.org/about/impact](http://www.firstinspires.org/about/impact)
EDUCATION, STEM CAREERS

FIRST STUDENTS
- 86% more interested in doing well in school
- 84% more interested in science classes (FIRST® Robotics Competition, FIRST® Tech Challenge)
- 94% embrace the importance of Coopertition®, Gracious Professionalism®
- 80% more interested in jobs that use STEM

GIRLS IN FIRST
- 83% motivated to take challenging math or science classes (FIRST Robotics Competition, FIRST Tech Challenge)
- 98% embrace the importance of Coopertition®, Gracious Professionalism®

FIRST ALUMNI*
- 2.3x more likely to be very interested in computer science majors
- 3.1x more likely to be very interested in engineering majors
- 4.2x more likely to be very interested in robotics majors
- 2.7x more likely to take an engineering course their freshman year

FEMALE FIRST ALUMNIAE*
- 3.1x more likely to be very interested in majoring in computer science
- 3.6x more likely to be very interested in majoring in engineering
- 3.1x more likely to be very interested in majoring in robotics
- 3.6x more likely to take an engineering course freshmen year

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES


*Than a matched comparison group
President’s Letter

This has been a breakthrough year in our FIRST movement. **Our power to make an impact is growing.** This past season, we:

- Reached **half a million active participants** in over 95 countries across the four FIRST programs.
- Welcomed a **record 70,000 people** to FIRST Championship, capping a season of over 2,900 official FIRST events.
- Provided over **$80 million in scholarship opportunities** from universities, colleges, and technical programs through the FIRST Scholarship program, enabling more FIRST alumni than ever to continue building their knowledge and skill set.

We’ve come a long way from our humble beginnings, when 28 FIRST Robotics Competition teams competed in a high school gymnasium for the inaugural FIRST event. None of our progress would have been possible without the ongoing dedication of our community of mentors, volunteers, alumni, sponsors, donors, educators, and other supporters.

We know that FIRST is most impactful to those who may be least likely to seek us out. And we believe all young people deserve our programs and the inspirational, inclusive community we provide. Through intentional FIRST Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion efforts, we continue to be actively engaged in exploring, developing, and implementing strategies to make our programs more accessible and to reach more underserved, underrepresented, and vulnerable young people.

Assuredly, we are breaking through with one of those groups traditionally underserved in STEM: girls and young women. Over the past five years, female FIRST participation in the United States has risen steadily from 25 percent to 32 percent—a record. This is especially significant because of continued findings from our longitudinal impact study: While all FIRST participants are significantly more likely to show gains in STEM than their classmates, girls in FIRST indicate even greater gains in STEM than boys in FIRST or their peers.

**OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, FEMALE FIRST PARTICIPATION IN THE UNITED STATES HAS RISEN STEADILY FROM 25 PERCENT TO 32 PERCENT—A RECORD.**

As anyone who is part of our community already knows, the impact of FIRST is more than STEM. What we’re really creating is a generation of lifelong learners and strong global citizens. Whether they pursue higher education or enter the workforce directly after high school graduation, FIRST alumni are well equipped with the skills and confidence they need to tackle any challenge. And thanks to the values at the heart of FIRST, our alumni network is brimming with people using those hard-earned skills to truly make the world a better place—people like Chelsey Roebuck.

Chelsey is using the skills and passion he gained as a member of a FIRST team to profoundly impact the lives of black and Latinx students through FIRST programs and his Harlem-based youth development organization. This season, I had the honor of presenting Chelsey with the Evelyn Kamen Rising Star Award at the FIRST, Inspire Gala for his accomplishments in leveling the STEM playing field.

Every kid around the world deserves this opportunity to reach their full, fantastic potential. Will you help us reach for our next breakthrough?
A progression of four programs gets young people involved early, developing skills and building confidence, and keeps them engaged from kindergarten through high school.

**FIRST LEGO LEAGUE JR.**
Ages 6-10 (Grades K-4)
Teams explore today’s scientific challenges, and document what they learn in Engineering Notebooks. They also build a LEGO® model and code it to make it move using LEGO® Education WeDo 2.0.
- LEGO® Education WeDo 2.0
- Engineering Notebook
- Playful Learning
- Problem Solving

**FIRST LEGO LEAGUE**
Ages 9-16* (Grades 4-8)
Guided by FIRST Core Values, teams build and program autonomous robots using LEGO® MINDSTORMS® technology to solve a series of missions on a themed playing field. They also develop research projects based on a real-world theme that changes annually.
- Robotics
- LEGO® MINDSTORMS®
- Game Play
- Research

**FIRST TECH CHALLENGE**
Ages 12-18 (Grades 7-12)
Students learn to think like engineers. Teams build robots from a reusable kit of parts, develop strategies, document their progress in an engineering notebook, and compete head to head.
- Robotics
- Engineering Notebook
- Game Play
- Scholarships

**FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION**
Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Mentored by STEM professionals, teams compete with 120-pound robots of their own design, combining the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology. It’s a sport where every student can go pro.
- Robotics
- Learn from the Pros
- Game Play
- Scholarships

*Ages vary by country
Fantastic Facts

1989
FIRST is founded to excite young people about science and technology

Gracious Professionalism®
“Respect for others, being a good sport, sharing what you’ve learned”

530,000+
participants (ages 6-18)

250,000+
mentor/coach/volunteer roles filled

18,000,000
hours donated by volunteers

Coopertition®
“Competing teams help and cooperate with each other”

50
U.S. States

95+
countries

~200
scholarship providers

200+
Fortune 500 companies sponsor FIRST

$80M+
in scholarships

~45,000
robots constructed

22%
growth in number of FIRST teams (over 2017)

Limitless
opportunities for a meaningful experience
Season Highlights

Dual FIRST Championship events, presented by Qualcomm Incorporated, took place in Houston, Texas, and, for the first time, Detroit, Michigan.

The Boeing Company awarded a $1.5 million grant to support young innovators through FIRST programming, specifically among underserved and geographically diverse populations.

New Hampshire schools embraced groundbreaking state grants to start FIRST teams.

NI announced the extension of its supply agreement to accelerate STEM education and support the next generation of engineers and scientists through FIRST programs.

After receiving FIRST STEM Equity Community Innovation Grants, 18 communities reached more than 2,300 underserved and underrepresented students with hands-on learning and problem-solving opportunities. The 2017 grants were sponsored by Arconic Foundation, Qualcomm® Incorporated, Caterpillar, GM, GitHub, John Deere, and New York City individuals, among others.

The third annual FIRST, Inspire Gala honored President Barack Obama and FIRST alum Chelsey Roebuck for their efforts to promote awareness of, and expand access to, STEM education.

The FIRST Scholarship program exceeded $80 million milestone.

FIRST is honored to welcome new Strategic Partners Caterpillar Inc. and Lockheed Martin Corporation. Thank you!
Breaking Through Barriers to STEM Access

FIRST launched its STEM Equity Community Innovation Grants program in the 2016-2017 season to provide grants to underrepresented and underserved communities. Supported by generous sponsors and donors, the grants empower educators and community leaders to develop new, innovative approaches to address inequities in STEM education using proven FIRST programs. An evaluation was conducted to assess the implementation, impact, and practices around access, equity, and inclusion.

2017 STEM EQUITY COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANTS IMPACT SNAPSHOT

| 18 Sites | 2,336 Youth Reached | 308 Teams Started |

Tools to Create Equity in FIRST

In collaboration with the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE), FIRST created the “Strategies for Inspiring Success for All” online training modules for coaches, mentors, volunteers, and other key stakeholders who work directly with students. Through engaging and reflective activities on the power of culture on interactions with students, the three-part training modules equip the FIRST community with specific strategies to support community outreach, student participation, persistence, engagement, and success to create diverse, inclusive, and equitable teams.

firstinspires.org/inspiring-success
Grant Reaches Vulnerable Young People

**BOYS & GIRLS HAVEN—LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY**

As a residential school and community center in Louisville, Kentucky, the Boys & Girls Haven’s mission is to shelter, heal, and teach struggling young people to become productive and healthy members of their community. It serves vulnerable young people who have been removed from their families and often faced disruptive, chaotic living environments. A *FIRST* STEM Equity Community Innovation Grant funded two *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams, one for young people attending the campus’ school and the other for residents of Boys & Girls Haven who attend local public schools.

The grant created a stimulating, enriching environment for learning academic and life skills. The teams participated in career exploration outings to GE and Toyota, visited the Kentucky Science Center, and attended a local *FIRST* event to network with peers from other teams. This led *FIRST* Tech Challenge Team 8417 “The ‘Lectric Legends” to visit the school’s campus to share their experiences and hold a friendly scrimmage. By participating in hands-on, project-based learning, the students have experienced gains in teamwork, leadership skills, and confidence, all while becoming exposed to possible careers.

**FACTORS THAT RESULTED IN SUCCESS**

- **Removing barriers for students who lack resources:** Funding for snacks, after-school travel, and other expenses.
- **Connecting experienced and rookie teams for peer-to-peer or near-peer mentoring:** Linking new teams with established ones can build skills and generate enthusiasm for new programs, while reinforcing experienced peers’ skills.
- **Linking students to the larger community:** Building strong bonds with *FIRST* teammates, coaches, mentors, corporate sponsors, and partners can be rewarding—and open doors to jobs, internships, and higher education.
- **Providing training and resources to coaches:** In-person and digital learning experiences and resources build confidence for coaches and help new teams encounter fewer barriers.
- **Building coalitions in the local community:** Allowing with other organizations within the community brings in additional resources, leadership, and expertise to build *FIRST* programs.

“By working through real-world, hands-on challenges, our kids have been given a second chance at authentic learning.”

— Melissa Jackson, Grants Manager, Boys & Girls Haven
Cultivating STEM Skills and Fostering Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

THIRD ANNUAL FIRST, INSPIRE GALA
$1.8 million raised to expand diversity efforts and student access to STEM opportunities

To help expand diversity efforts and STEM opportunities for students in disenfranchised communities, hundreds of FIRST supporters gathered at Cipriani 55 Wall Street in New York City for the third annual FIRST, Inspire Gala.

The event celebrated work advancing the mission of FIRST and inspired further action to ensure that all children have access to creative, hands-on problem-solving opportunities that instill a lifelong love of learning and adaptability in the workforce.

The charity event also included a live auction and prominent speakers including Dean Kamen, founder of FIRST; Donald E. Bossi, president of FIRST; and many FIRST students, recognizing the impact that the organization has made in STEM education over the past three decades.

Proceeds from the gala further expand opportunities for more underrepresented, underserved, and vulnerable students to participate in FIRST programs.

Two honorees were presented with individual awards for their efforts to advance STEM education in under-resourced communities:

President Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States, received the “Make It Loud” Award for his significant contributions to raising awareness about FIRST among the general public and helping spread the mission and impact of the organization.

FIRST Alumnus Chelsey Roebuck, Executive Director and Co-Founder of ELITE (Emerging Leaders in Technology and Engineering, Inc.), received the Evelyn Kamen Rising Star Award for his accomplishments in leveling the playing field in STEM for underrepresented populations. (Pictured, lower left on facing page.)

Thank you to our FIRST, Inspire Gala sponsors who appear on page 46 of this Report.

“As a global community, we have a responsibility to help kids become well-rounded citizens and critical thinkers who can collaborate with people from diverse backgrounds and respect each other. As we look at where the world is headed, that work is just as essential as providing our kids with the hard skills they’ll need to secure jobs in the future economy.”

— Donald E. Bossi, President, FIRST
“What’s more optimistic than believing that we can science our way out of any problem?”
— President Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States
For two back-to-back weeks in April 2018, a record 70,000 people traveled to Houston and Detroit to celebrate young innovators, leaders, and changemakers at the thrilling 2018 FIRST Championship presented by Qualcomm Incorporated. Thanks to the support of FIRST sponsors, host cities Houston and Detroit, and thousands of pumped-up volunteers, coaches, and mentors, more than 30,000 students from 74 countries competed with team-built robots and showcased their innovation skills at the world’s largest celebration of STEM for students.

This global event inspired students and adults alike, with intense competitions, opportunities to create connections and share ideas, and hands-on fun and technology demonstrations at the FIRST Innovation Faire.

2018 FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

- **2** Championship Events
  - Houston & Detroit
- **36,000+** team participants (students, mentors, coaches, and adult supporters)
- **70,000** attendees
- **74** countries represented
- **70,000** attendees
- **2,300+** volunteers
“To all the participants, I want to thank you for what you’re going to do in the future. If you look at the world, a couple of things are happening. One, the world is only going to become more global. Two, the rate of change is only going to go faster and faster. To be ready to go faster and faster, we need the best people in the world excited about STEM, and that’s who you are.”

— Rick Snyder, Governor of Michigan and FIRST Championship Detroit Host Committee Co-Chair

2018 FIRST Championship Sponsors

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SUPPORTERS

Aptiv Arm Blue Origin J. R. Automation KUKA Robotics Miksa Honey Farms
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Approximately 99,000 6-10 year-olds participated on 16,425 teams in 55 countries, celebrating curiosity, imagination, discovery, and teamwork.

COMPETITIONS
Over 450 regional Expos; FIRST® LEGO® League Jr. World Festival Expo in Houston and Detroit.

NOTEWORTHY
■ Registered teams each received an exclusive LEGO Inspire Model to help start their journey.
■ New Getting Started video supplements were developed for teams in English and Spanish.
■ A grant from the LEGO Foundation allowed an additional 15,000 underserved children across six countries to join in the season.

Young children explored where water comes from and what happens on its way to us. They used their Inspire Set to create a team model and programmed it to make it move using LEGO® Education WeDo 2.0. They documented their journey in an Engineering Notebook and created a Show Me poster to represent what they learned at Expo events.
Students and Teachers Learn Together

COMPTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMPTON, CALIFORNIA

To bring FIRST programs to underserved and underrepresented students, a FIRST STEM Equity Community Innovation Grant funded 12 FIRST LEGO League Jr. teams in Compton, California. Teams of young people, many of whom had never worked with robotics or LEGO bricks, learned the basics of programming, working together, and solving challenges. Administrator Michael Kurinsky noticed the response in the children: “If the first graders saw me, they would light up and get so excited because they knew it meant they were going to work on FIRST LEGO League Jr. projects.”

In addition to the benefits to the students, the program made a noticeable impact on the teachers. With the help of FIRST Certified Professional Development, teachers gained confidence and learning tools to strengthen their facilitation skills for a project-based learning curriculum. “It has made STEM more accessible to those teachers who maybe shied away from it previously,” said Kurinsky. “I think it has increased capacity for leadership. Teachers are developing new skills, and they are finding niches and roles — opportunities for leadership — at their sites.”

“The teachers in our district coaching FIRST programs want what’s best for students, and they see these programs as improving the educational outcomes of our students.”

— Michael Kurinsky, Administrator of Educational Services, Compton Unified School District
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Approximately 280,000 9-16 year-olds* on 35,033 teams from 98 countries participated in this season’s Challenge.
*Ages vary by country

COMPETITIONS
1,248 Qualifying Tournaments, 169 Championship Tournaments, 4 Open Invitational/International; FIRST® LEGO® League World Festival in Houston and Detroit.

NOTEWORTHY
- Season Pass was introduced, bundling options to provide flexibility in bringing the program to schools while maintaining core components. New Robot Game scoring software was developed and tested at FIRST Championship.
- Off-season team engagement increased with release of a secondary “Secret Mission” Challenge in February, providing additional building and coding opportunities and the chance to share work online.

Teams explored how we find, transport, use, or dispose of water. Each team created an innovative solution to a problem they identified in the human water cycle—proposing answers to some of the world’s most pressing water issues.
Persevering After Hurricane Maria

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE TEAM 21109 “CSI CYBERNETIC LIONS”
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

HYDRO DYNAMICS™ hit home for students in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria devastated the island in September of 2017. FIRST LEGO League encouraged the students on team “CSI Cybernetic Lions” to help others and was a way to return some sense of normalcy to their lives.

The drinking water crisis inspired community-driven innovation for the team. For their Project, students researched ways to increase accessibility of purified water to communities more affected than their own. The team met with a nonprofit organization that distributed water filters to disadvantaged communities on the island and met with the U.S. military service to see how they purified water from rivers and lakes. They also took action, traveling to communities in need to deliver essential supplies and LEGO bricks, so the local children could play.

“FIRST LEGO League motivates kids to create a project that helps communities and people to have a better quality of life,” said team coach Alma Bertoni. “The program provides students with the opportunity to develop different skills that will help them in their daily and future lives.”

“I am a coach because I want the students to live and learn from experiences beyond the classroom.”

— Alma Bertoni, Coach, CSI Cybernetic Lions
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Approximately 60,000 participants (ages 12-18, grades 7-12) on 6,021 teams from 18 countries; eligible for over $80 million in college scholarships.

COMPETITIONS
458 Meets and League Championships; 290 Qualifying Tournaments and Championship Tournaments; 4 Super-Regional Championship Tournaments; FIRST® Tech Challenge World Championship in Houston and Detroit.

NOTEWORTHY
- Expansion Hub electronics interface was introduced, reducing cost, increasing reliability, and decreasing complexity.
- Strong growth in participation continued, increasing 15 percent over the previous year.
Gaining a Career Head Start

FIRST TECH CHALLENGE TEAM 8808 “THE PONYTAIL POSSE”
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

When she was in fourth grade, Rose Lam and some friends started the all-girls FIRST LEGO League Team “The Ponytail Posse.” Over nine years, The Ponytail Posse progressed into a FIRST Tech Challenge team, becoming a close-knit group of hardworking and committed students.

Through participation in FIRST, Lam and her teammates developed problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, but they also gained confidence and learned how to collaborate. Over time, the team “began to realize how our robotics experiences were influencing how we thought about the future,” said Lam. “We could see ourselves going to college and starting a career in engineering, entrepreneurship, and other fields we had never considered before.” Lam feels that her experience in FIRST has given her and her teammates a “massive head start” in their careers.

Lam is now studying graphic design at the University of Minnesota and a member of the school’s FIRST alumni group. Her teammates are studying fields ranging from computer science to mechanical engineering to marketing—and plan to become lifelong FIRST volunteers. “Now we get to be the mentors who make a difference in students’ lives,” said Lam.

“It’s not just a path toward a successful STEM career, but a gateway to self-expression, confidence, critical thinking, and empathy.”

— Rose Lam, Team Member/Alumna, The Ponytail Posse
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
91,500 high-school students on 3,660 teams from 28 countries; eligible for over $80 million in college scholarships.

COMPETITIONS
85 District Events; 10 State/District Championships; 63 Regional Events; FIRST® Robotics Competition Championship for over 800 participating teams in Houston and Detroit.

NOTEWORTHY
- Animation for the 2018 game, FIRST POWER UP™, was viewed over 285,000 times.
- Program grew 21.8 percent outside the United States.
- Team retention rate reached a record high 94 percent.

FIRST POWER UP™
found teams trapped in an 8-bit video game. Alliances helped defeat the boss by tipping the scale or alliance’s switch in their favor to earn points, exchanging power cubes for power ups (Force, Boost, and Levitate) to gain a timed advantage during the match, and climbing the scale tower.
Breaking Stereotypes and Creating Hope

FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION TEAM 7329, “THE AFGHAN DREAMERS" HERAT, AFGHANISTAN

In 2018, “The Afghan Dreamers,” an all-girls robotics team formed to represent Afghanistan at the FIRST Global Challenge, traveled to Canada to participate in the FIRST Robotics Competition. Arriving in mid-January, the girls were able to complete their robot in just four weeks with the mentorship of Ontario-based all-girls FIRST Robotics Competition Team 771 “SWAT.” The team had a successful initial season, traveling all the way to FIRST Championship Detroit, where they received the Rookie Inspiration Award.

The team has traveled around the world for meetings with tech, media, education, and government leaders. In a country where only 40 percent of girls attend school, they have challenged perceptions about girls in STEM. Tech entrepreneur Roya Mahboob, a mentor to the team, says they are “bringing hope and happiness to the Afghan community, and it’s a means for our leaders to rethink the ability of the youth that was ignored for many years.” The students hope to take what they’ve learned to become role models in their country and empower more Afghan girls and women with technology and education.

“I will never stop believing in a brighter future for the next generation of girls in Afghanistan.”

— Fatemah, Team Member, The Afghan Dreamers (as told to CNN)
Sponsors

In addition to our sponsors, suppliers, and contributors acknowledged on these pages, FIRST extends its sincere appreciation to the hundreds of thousands of volunteers who generously devote their time and expertise to FIRST Robotics Competition, FIRST Tech Challenge, FIRST LEGO League, and FIRST LEGO League Jr. teams and events. FIRST could not achieve the impact it does without this tremendous support.
2017-2018 Contributors

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Each year, FIRST Founder Dean Kamen presents the Founder’s Award to an organization or individual for exceptional service in advancing the ideals and mission of FIRST. The U.S. Air Force received the award in 2018 for its dedication to making FIRST programs a success.

Since 2010, the U.S. Air Force has been a passionate supporter of FIRST. It has interacted with thousands of FIRST students, provided hundreds of event volunteers, and has sponsored over 30 FIRST Robotics Competition regional events.

One of its most significant contributions to FIRST is the annual Leadership Experience for FIRST mentors. The three-day experience provides mentors with hands-on leadership training provided by U.S. Air Force personnel. In the past seven years, more than 150 FIRST mentors have taken part in this unique experience.

Major General Garrett Harencak proudly accepted the Founder’s Award on behalf of the U.S. Air Force, emphasizing how the U.S. Air Force and FIRST share the same values: a commitment to excellence, integrity, determination, grit, teamwork, and service above self.
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FIRST Robotics Competition mentor Gail Drake is the recipient of the 2018 Woodie Flowers Award. The award celebrates an outstanding mentor who demonstrates excellence in teaching science, math, and creative design.

Drake left a corporate career in IT to share her knowledge and enthusiasm with students. She transitioned from a university professor to a high school teacher after implementing dual enrollment curriculum at Battlefield High School in Haymarket, Virginia. Soon after, she co-founded FIRST Robotics Competition Team 1885, “ILITE Robotics.” As the head mentor to the team, she’s helped to create an environment that fosters communication and curiosity and allows students to rise as leaders.

Since 2005, there have been over 1,500 members on Team 1885, and they have impacted nearly 75,000 individuals through their outreach. Their community outreach includes advocating for FIRST with national legislators, mentoring local and international FIRST teams, holding STEM expos and summer camps, and hosting a leadership conference at FIRST Championship.

With Drake’s help, robotics programs are now available in all elementary, middle, and high schools within her county. Her goal is to “inspire kids to be the best that they can be, and to give them that feeling internally.”
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FIRST Robotics Competition mentor Monique Dituri is a DonorsChoose.org teacher ambassador who helps other educators get started with FIRST on the platform. She has galvanized her school in Clifton, New Jersey, to raise over $775,000 through DonorsChoose.org. Through her dedication to her students and getting them resources they need to realize their full potential, Dituri is leading a culture change in her community to one where STEM is as celebrated as athletics and more young people have access to life-changing programs like FIRST.
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2017-2018 FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION SPONSORS

SUPPLIERS

Crown Suppliers
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Bimba Manufacturing
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REV Robotics
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DS SolidWorks Corporation
Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL)

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Sager
ScreenSteps
Spencio Switches
TDK Corporation
Texas Instruments Incorporated
Vishay
Walt Disney Imagineering
Yageo

TOP TEAM SPONSORS

10 or more teams in 2017-2018 — Sponsors in this section are listed in descending order starting with the sponsor of the highest number of teams.

Arconic Foundation
DoD STEM
Lockheed Martin Corporation
The Boeing Company
John Deere
Monsanto Company
M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust
Caterpillar, Inc.
PTC, Inc.
Collins Aerospace
Leidos, Inc.
TE Connectivity
The Dow Chemical Company
Rockwell Automation, Inc.
Google, Inc.
United Technologies Corporation (UTC)
Motorola Solutions Foundation
Qualcomm Incorporated
Bechtel Group Foundation
Tennessee Valley Authority
United Therapeutics Corporation
Picatinny Arsenal

Apple
NVIDIA Corporation
Ford Motor Company
Rockwell Automation, Inc.
State of Florida
Qualcomm Incorporated
Medtronic Foundation
Google, Inc.
Leidos, Inc.
BAE Systems
Caterpillar, Inc.
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Raytheon Company
The 3M Company
Monsanto Company
Comcast NBCUniversal
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TE Connectivity
Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.
Bloomberg L.P.
Motorola Solutions Foundation
Bosch
General Electric Energy
Bezos Family Foundation
Delphi Foundation (Aptiv)
Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.
GE Healthcare
**FIRST**® prepares students for life beyond high school

- Create community
- Grow your network
- Find internships
- Inspire others

**ALUMNI**

**Highest degree expected:**
- 34% Bachelors
- 41% Masters
- 19% Doctorate

43% of alumni still involved in FIRST:
- 26% are mentor/coaches
- 18% volunteer at events
- 15% volunteer (other)

**FIRST**® alumni gained skills and attitudes needed in today’s workforce:
- 90% Problem Solving Skills
- 90% Teamwork
- 87% Innovative Thinking
- 85% Creative Thinking
- 85% Perseverance
- 79% Leadership

**FIRST strengthened post-high school success:**
- 83% more confident in leadership roles
- 78% more confident in time management
- 74% more prepared for college courses
- 72% gained access to mentors and peers in STEM

**College majors:**
- 54% Engineering
- 32% Computers/Programming
- 22% Science
- 11% Math

**78%** of all alumni:
- 68% of all female
- 82% of all male
- are in STEM fields

* Could select more than one option. **FIRST**® Alumni Study (2015)

www.firstinspires.org/alumni
FIRST Scholarship Program

In 2018, as part of the FIRST Scholarship Program, nearly 200 FIRST Scholarship Providers made available over $80 million in scholarship opportunities to high school FIRST participants and alumni.

The majority of FIRST scholarships are made available by specific colleges or universities for enrollment at their campuses; others are made available by corporations, associations, or foundations for use at a selection of schools.

To learn more about the FIRST Scholarship Program, or to make FIRST Scholarships available from your institution, please visit: www.firstinspires.org/scholarships

2018 FIRST SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDERS

PLATINUM ($500,000+)
- Capital Technology University
- Clarkson University
- Florida Institute of Technology
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- Kettering University
- Lawrence Technological University
- Macquarie University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Michigan Tech University
- Milwaukee School of Engineering
- Olin College of Engineering
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Stevens Institute of Technology
- Syracuse University College of Engineering and Computer Science
- Tecnologico de Monterrey
- Universidad Panamericana
- University of Advancing Technology
- University of Rochester
- U.S. Navy ROTC—St. Louis Recruitng District
- Webb Institute
- Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- Yale University

SILVER ($40,000 – $99,999)
- American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)
- Arizona State University
- Bahcesehir University
- Bradley University
- Campbell University
- Case Western Reserve University
- College for Creative Studies
- Farleigh Dickinson University
- Grand Valley State University
- Harvey Mudd College
- Horizons School of Technology
- Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)
- Johnson & Wales University
- Marquette University
- McKendree University
- Missouri University of Science and Technology
- National Fluid Power Association (NFPA)
- Northwest Nazarene University
- Engineering Pacific University
- Rice University
- Saginaw Valley State University
- Seattle Pacific University
- SUNY Polytechnic Institute
- Temple University
- The Raytheon Company
- University of Cincinnati—College of Engineering and Applied Science
- University of Detroit Mercy
- University of Hartford
- University of Kansas
- University of Massachusetts
- Lowell Engineering University
- University of Minnesota Twin Cities/PTC
- University of Portland
- University of Southern California
- Viterbi School of Engineering
- University of Texas Arlington
- University of Texas at Austin
- Washington State University—Vail College of Engineering and Architecture

BRONZE ($20,000 – $39,999)
- Adelphi University
- California University of Pennsylvania
- Canadore College
- Denwood College of Technology
- Eastern Michigan University
- Hofstra University
- Iowa State University
- NextEra Energy/Florida Power and Light Company
- Northwestern University
- Nuts, Bolts and Thingamajigs Foundation
- The Ohio State University
- Oklahoma State University College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology
- Pace University, Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems
- Rutgers University
- St. Clair College
- Saint Martin’s University
- Steve Sanghi Scholarship
- Texas Tech University
- University of Alaska—Anchorage
- University of Maryland, A. James Clark School of Engineering
- University of South Carolina, College of Engineering and Computing
- University of Tennessee, College of Engineering
- Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology
- Vermont Technical College
- Whitworth University
- Xavier University

GOLD ($100,000 – $499,999)
- Boston University
- Bucknell University
- College of the Atlantic
- The Dr. Bart Kamen Memorial FIRST Scholarship Fund
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University—AZ
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University—FL
- Hampshire College
- Hudson Valley Community College
- Indiana University
- Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)
- Jacksonville University
- McMaster University
- Merrimack College
- Northeastern University
- Northern Arizona University
- Randolph College
- Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
- Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)
- Tulane University
- University of Missouri–Kansas City
- University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee
- Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Engineering

BRASS (UP TO $19,999)
- Actobotics/ServoCity
- American Petroleum Institute
- Anoka Technical College
- Boise State University
- Cleveland State University
- The College of St. Scholastica
- DePaul University
- Eagle Robotics
- East Carolina University
- Farmingdale State College
- Ferris State University
- Gates Corporation
- George Fox University
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Industrial Arts Institute
- Itasca Community College
- Kansas State University
- College of Engineering
- Lake Superior State University
- Los Angeles Robotics/ Southern California Regional Robotics Forum (SCRRF)
- Make School
- Maryville University
- Mercer University
- Metropolitan Community College—Maple Woods
- Mineral Area College
- Minnesota State College Southeast
- Molloy College
- Murray State University
- New York Institute of Technology
- Nipissing University
- North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University
- North Carolina State University
- NYU Tandon School of Engineering
- Oral Roberts University
- Oregon Institute of Technology
- Oregon State University
- Pennsylvania State University
- College of Engineering
- Phil Clancy Memorial Scholarship
- Plymouth State University
- Portland State University
- Queen’s University
- Robert Morris University
- Ryerson University—Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science
- St. Louis Community College
- SME Education Foundation
- Society of Women Engineers (SWE)—Houston
- South Dakota School of Mines & Technology
- Southeast Missouri State University
- Southwestern Michigan College
- SpaceX
- Universidad Autónoma de La Laguna (UAL)
- University of Central Missouri
- University of Connecticut
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- University of Mississippi
- University of Nevada Las Vegas
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- University of New Orleans
- University of North Alabama
- University of Northern Iowa
- University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT)
- University of Southern Maine
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Windsor
- University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Viterbo University
- Wake Technical Community College
- Weber State University
- Western Carolina University
- Western Technical College
- Western University
- York University
- Young Harris College
- Youngstown State University
- College of STEM

New Provider
The following key organizations and volunteers in the field organize the FIRST LEGO League Jr. program in their respective regions.

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Macquarie University

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Brigitte van Helden
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ADDLESEED
The Institution of Engineering & Technology
Young Inventors Solve Global Problems

Across the FIRST Progression of Programs, team members are encouraged to ask questions, push their limits, and work collaboratively to solve problems and improve the world around them. By challenging students to think like innovators, FIRST is helping to create the next generation of changemakers, critical thinkers, and leaders.

The FIRST LEGO League Global Innovation Award is a forum that lets young visionaries take center stage. The competition is designed to showcase the solutions FIRST LEGO League teams create to real-world problems as a result of their Project. The award allows teams to further develop their solutions by considering possible barriers to implementation, documenting the evaluations of their invention, and validating their design with professionals.

In its eighth year, the 2018 FIRST LEGO League Global Innovation Award celebrated the inventions FIRST LEGO League teams created to improve the ways people find, transport, use, or dispose of water during the HYDRO DYNAMICS™ season.

Team “FSINGENIUM” from Pamplona, Spain took the top prize—a $20,000 cash award—for the HYDROBALL, a tennis-ball sized water conservation tool that gets buried in the soil and precisely measures how much water is available for crops. It provides the user with real-time data via smartphone technology. With a dual sensor and battery life of five years, the HYDROBALL measures both the moisture in the soil and the tension with which the land retains water—that is, the amount of water available for the plant.
GLOBAL PARTNERS

Their respective regions.

volunteers in the field organize the

FIRST LEGO League program in

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EduACT

Kostas Vasileiou

Puerto Rico

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SC FIRST LEGO League and Robotics Education, Inc.

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2017-2018 FIRST LEGO LEAGUE

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2018 Annual Impact Report
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2017-2018 FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION
The following organizations partner with FIRST to implement the FIRST Robotics Competition program in a specified region.

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CANADA
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ALBERTA
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The following organizations partner with FIRST to implement the FIRST Robotics Competition program in a specified region.

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Macquarie University

CANADA
Ontario FIRST Robotics Canada

ALBERTA
FIRST Robotics Society (FRS)

China
China Urban Youth Robot Alliance (OYRA)

Israel
FIRST Israel

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Turkey
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Arkansas
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Idaho
Rocky Mountain Robotics

Illinois
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Indiana
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Louisiana
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Oregon
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South Carolina
Palmetto Partners for Science and Technology

Texas
FIRST in Texas

Utah
FIRST Utah

Virginia, Maryland, Washington DC
FIRST Chesapeake

Washington
FIRST Washington
Financials

Our programs’ participation growth and mission successes continued once again in fiscal year 2018. We continue to have relatively balanced growth in both operating revenues and expenses, including additional investments in our Youth Protection Program, Information Technology, Program Evaluations, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, and our Education Initiative. Contributions remained strong, as many individuals, small businesses, corporations—including over 200 of the Fortune 500 companies—and foundations maintained or increased their support, while many new sponsors joined FIRST. This contributed support provided very meaningful experiences to approximately a half-million youth engaged worldwide in the FIRST Progression of Programs.

As noted in the pie chart, and in keeping with long-time practices, FIRST continues to apply the maximum percentage of funds possible to directly benefit FIRST participants. Included within the modest general & administrative expenses are several significant investments in infrastructure enhancements and program monitoring, including those noted above.

FIRST achieved its thirteenth consecutive four-star rating from Charity Navigator, certifying our continued commitment to accountability, transparency, and sound fiscal management. This consecutive rating places FIRST in the top 1 percent of the U.S. charities annually evaluated by Charity Navigator.

### STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JUNE 30, 2018</th>
<th>JUNE 30, 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenues and other support:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program registration fees</td>
<td>$31,029,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and grants</td>
<td>15,680,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income, net of expenses of $3,516 in 2018 and $102,065 in 2017</td>
<td>1,779,661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special event income, net of expenses of $404,980 in 2018 and $395,911 in 2017</td>
<td>559,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>27,968,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total revenues (losses) and other support</strong></td>
<td>77,016,882</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenses:** | | |
| FIRST Robotics Competition | 44,996,269 | 43,886,704 |
| FIRST LEGO League and FIRST LEGO League Jr. | 9,959,805 | 9,056,033 |
| FIRST Tech Challenge | 8,130,812 | 8,339,600 |
| Net cost of building space occupied by unrelated not-for-profit organizations | 320,596 | 268,304 |
| General, administrative and supporting services, and fundraising | 9,654,724 | 8,849,470 |
| Operation of FIRST facilities | 563,819 | 417,706 |
| Depreciation | 991,834 | 718,742 |
| **Total expenses** | 74,617,859 | 71,536,559 |
| **Operating surplus** | 2,399,023 | 800,088 |

### STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JUNE 30, 2018</th>
<th>JUNE 30, 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents*</td>
<td>24,324,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term investments*</td>
<td>9,740,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledges, receivables, program supply inventory, and other assets</td>
<td>14,215,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net property, plant, and equipment</td>
<td>5,179,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets, end of year</strong></td>
<td>53,458,927</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Liabilities and net assets:** | | |
| **Total liabilities, end of year** | 5,764,527 | 4,391,581 |
| Net assets: | | |
| Unrestricted | 27,833,922 | 25,434,899 |
| Temporarily restricted | 19,860,478 | 18,403,646 |
| **Total net assets, end of year** | 47,694,400 | 43,838,545 |
| **Total liabilities and net assets, end of year** | $53,458,927 | $48,230,126 |

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, 2018, is equivalent to approximately five 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 the website at www.firstinspires.org under “About/Annual Report.” Certain amounts reported for 2017 have been restated. For details, please refer to the accompanying notes which are an integral part of the AFS, at the above web address.
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FIRST

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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.”

— Dean Kamen, Founder FIRST

IMPACT

FIRST participation is proven to help students develop both self-confidence and valuable, real-world skills that can open pathways to all types of career choices and outcomes. FIRST programs encourage students to pursue education and careers in STEM-related fields, but they also inspire kids to become leaders and innovators in any industry.

MISSION

To inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.