

# NASA News

National Aeronautics and  
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## **THE 2012 FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION KICKS OFF SATURDAY**

CLEVELAND --The FIRST Robotics Competition kickoff marks the beginning of the season for high school students to design and build a robot to compete in a tournament against a field of competitors. NASA, the largest sponsor of the FIRST Robotics Competition, will broadcast the kickoff for over 100 local students at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 7, at Cuyahoga Community College, Unified Technologies Center. The event will air nationwide on NASA Television from Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester.

FIRST, or For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology, is a long-standing challenge to inspire curiosity and create interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics among high school students. The event gives students the opportunity to design and compete a robot that can perform specific functions. FIRST also gives students a crucial mentoring experience with professionals, who help them explore solutions to robotics problems and understand real-world challenges faced by engineers and researchers.

During the broadcast, FIRST founder Dean Kamen and designers of the annual challenge will reveal the competition scenario for 2012. This kicks off a six-week design and building frenzy for more than 2,000 teams, or 50,000 students and engineering mentors in this year's competition.

Each year, FIRST presents a new robotics competition scenario with twists and nuances to challenge both rookie and veteran teams. Each team receives a kit of parts (a common set of parts) and has six weeks to construct a robot based on the team's interpretation of the game scenario. Other than dimension, weight and safety restrictions, the look and function of the robots is up to each individual team.

After six weeks of creating a functional robot, the students will remotely control the robots in competition rounds on the field at the FIRST Buckeye Regional Robotics Competition, March 22-24, 2012, at the Wolstein Center in Cleveland, Ohio.

This year, 20 teams are registered to attend the kickoff, they are:

Amherst Steele High School	Amherst, Ohio
Avon High School	Avon, Ohio
Beachwood High School	Beachwood, Ohio
Berea High School	Berea, Ohio
Cleveland Metropolitan School District	Cleveland, Ohio
East Technical High School	Cleveland, Ohio
EHOVE Career Center	Milan, Ohio
Erie School District	Erie, Pa.
Girard High School	Girard, Ohio
Hathaway Brown High School	Shaker Heights, Ohio
Highland High School	Medina, Ohio
Knox County 4H Council	Corbin, Ky.
Lorain High School	Lorain, Ohio
Midpark High School	Middleburg Heights, Ohio
Orange Schools	Pepper Pike, Ohio
St. Edward High School	Lakewood, Ohio
St. Ignatius High School	Cleveland, Ohio
Tallmadge High School	Tallmadge, Ohio
Williams County Family YMCA	Bryan, Ohio
Chaney STEM High School, Youngstown Early College Robotics and Youngstown City Schools	Youngstown, Ohio

NASA Glenn engineers and scientists participate with many of these teams as technical participants and mentors to the students. Through these mentoring activities, Glenn engineers are able to directly share their expertise and experiences to the nation's next generation of technical leaders.

This year, 45 regional competitions will take place across the country, along with four additional international competitions in March and April. The FIRST Championship competition will be held in St. Louis, Mo., in April.

The program was founded in 1989 by Kamen to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people, their schools and communities. Based in Manchester, N.H., FIRST is a non-profit organization that designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge and life skills while motivating young people to pursue academic opportunities.

News media wishing to attend the kickoff at the Unified Technologies Center should contact Jeannette Owens to register at (216) 433-2990 by 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 6.

For more information on the Buckeye Regional FIRST Robotics Competition, visit:

<http://www.oai.org/firstbuckeye/kickoff.html>

For additional information about FIRST, visit:

<http://www.usfirst.org>

For the NASA Television downlink, schedule and streaming video information, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/ntv>

For more information on NASA and agency programs on the web, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov>

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