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**Students First-**

***Inspire, Educate, Celebrate***

**McCollough Unis Will Host**

**State Qualifier Robotics Match**

***-Organizers seek volunteers and sponsors to help with the December 9, 2017 Competition.***

Dearborn Public Schools is pleased to announce that McCollough Unis School will host a FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Michigan State Qualifier Match on Saturday, Dec. 9. The school is seeking mentors, sponsors and 150 volunteers to lend a hand at this full day of family fun, STEM and robots as hundreds of elementary school students representing as many as 36 teams from schools across the region visit McCollough Unis to participate in the competition.

FIRST is an acronym For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology. FIRST is a world renowned robotics program that engages students from early elementary through high school in the application of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in exciting competitive challenges using robots.

Volunteers are trained on how to serve as referees, judges, inspectors, scorers, greeters, and several other positions. FIRST even offers a “Volunteer Matching System” to assist in lining up the right people for the job they are most suited to take on. Those interested in being a part of this exciting event can visit <http://www.mcubots.us/volunteers> for more information on volunteer opportunities and how to sign up.

Area restaurants are encouraged to showcase local cuisine by donating food for the volunteers and other businesses may support the student-centered competition through sponsorships. Sponsors will be recognized at the event in many ways including posters, T-shirts and on flyers, promotional materials and announcements.

About the Competition

FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) is a student-centered activity that provides students with the opportunity to work in teams and participate in a game that requires them to design, build, test, and program autonomous and driver-operated robots that must perform a series of tasks. Schools compete in matches that take place on a themed game field. Teams earn points by having their robots overcome obstacles and meet challenges. Students learn important lifelong skills while being guided by a code of gracious professionalism.

Since its humble beginnings at Fordson High School in 1989, robotics in Dearborn has increased by leaps and gears. Last year, Dearborn had five FIRST teams for students in grades 6-12. This year Dearborn boasts 26 teams for students in grades K-12.

Last May, McCollough Unis successfully hosted more than 20 teams in a FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Robotic Competition. The December event could draw as many as 36 teams from across the state.

“Our competition in May was a huge success, thanks to all of the great sponsors and volunteers. We are looking forward to that same level of support from individuals and businesses in our community ensuring our teams and students will enjoy a quality competition,” commented Kidada Simmons, teacher and McU-Bots Robotics Coach. “The stellar support from the surrounding area is a huge factor in why we were chosen to host the larger fall event.”

McCollough Unis School is located at 7801 Maples Street, Dearborn MI 48126.

For more information on FIRST Robotics visit [www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org).

The event also offers an opportunity to showcase local cuisine as area restaurants donate food for the event’s volunteers. Other local business can support the competition by becoming a team sponsor.

Anyone interested in becoming a team mentor or sponsor should contact Mrs. Kidada Simmons at (313) 827-8050 or email simmonk@dearbornschools.org or visit <http://www.mcubots.us/home>. Employees of Ford Motor Company, can give Ford’s team even more support with additional funding. Details are at <http://www.stem.ford.com/STEM/RoboticsOverview>.

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PR7 - Members of the McU-Bots practice pressing a beacon on a practice field between matches during the FIRST Tech Challenge in May 2017 at McCollough Unis School in Dearborn.

Photo courtesy of Dearborn Public Schools.