22 Brooklyn Elementary and Middle School Teams Advance to New York Regional Robotics Challenge

400 STUDENTS, COACHES AND CHEERING SUPPORTERS PACK NYU-POLY FOR BROOKLYN FIRST® LEGO LEAGUE ROBOTICS QUALIFIER

POSTED JANUARY 17TH, 2012

Taking the top spot in the 2012 FIRST LEGO League Brooklyn Qualifier was the team from PS 399, left to right: Sabiha Obaid, Janelle Delacruz, Janiya Coward, NYU-Poly grad student and mentor Andrew Cave and Denzel Stephen. Their teacher and coach is Sharon Holliday. Other students in the team are Shania Williams, Charles Sims, Nigel Wardally and Maximus Britton.

Nearly 400 Brooklyn youngsters and their teachers gathered in a gymnasium filled with cheering parents, coaches and fans, for the 12th annual Brooklyn qualifying round of the FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) LEGO League (FLL®) on Saturday, January 14. They presented months of serious research on food safety and the little robots they built and programmed to demonstrate food safety issues.

During long weeks of practice and research, FLL teams devise technological and robotic applications to real-world problems related to a topic selected yearly.

With Polytechnic Institute of New York University (NYU-Poly) as host to the event and FIRST's only New York City-affiliate partner, as well as a supporter of many of the schools' year-round robotics programs, the annual FLL

Brooklyn qualifier has grown to become the largest in New York City. Once again this year, the Brooklyn qualifying event was filled to capacity, with some Brooklyn teams competing in Queens.

Of the 42 teams of 9- to 14-year-olds who competed at NYU-Poly on Saturday, 22 advanced to the Citywide FLL Robotics final, which will be held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in Manhattan on March 18, 2012.

Long weeks of practice and research readied the FLL teams to devise technological or robotic applications to real-world problems related to a topic selected yearly. In 2012, the budding engineers and innovators were asked to solve issues related to the theme "Food Factor®: Keeping Food Safe." Coached by their teachers, as well as by NYU-Poly graduate fellows who conducted in-school lessons to complement the robotics program at 18 of the schools, the students produced such novel proposals as apps to monitor the soil conditions of gardens and plastic packaging that measures the amount of oxygen to which sliced chicken sold at groceries may be exposed. (The higher the oxygen, the higher the possible incidence of bacterial contamination.)

FLL is one of four robotics programs offered by FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), a not-for-profit that inspires students to get involved in science and technology via exciting, hands-on robotics competitions. This is the 12th year that NYU-Poly and FIRST have hosted FLL, which introduces elementary and middle school students to the thrill of hands-on robotics, research, teamwork and inquiry-based problem solving, in order to spark a lifelong passion for science and technology.

The winners of the FLL Brooklyn qualifier, by category and place, are:

Champions Award (top honor)
1. P.S. 399, Team: Gear Hawk
2. M.S. 113, Team: Falcon Robotic Allstars
3. I.S. 383, Team: Skybots

Robot Design – Mechanical Design
M.S. 821, Team: Lego My Eggo

Robot Design – Programming
1. P.S. 94, Team: Master Blasters
2. P.S. 11, Team: Mission 11

Robot Design – Strategy and Innovation
1. P.S. 94, Team: Megaminds
2. P.S. 256, Team: Banneker Bots

Robot Performance
1. P.S. 94, Team: Master Blasters
2. P.S. 821, Team: Lego My Eggo
3. P.S. 94, Team: Megaminds

Core Values – Gracious Professionals
Packer Collegiate Institute, Team: Swedish Chef2 2

Core Values – Inspiration
P.S. 9, Team: Bacteria Terminators

Core Values – Teamwork
team [x] object, independent team coached by Brooklyn parents

Project Research
1. Urban Assembly Institute of Math and Science for Young Women, Team: Super Novas
2. P.S. 58, Team: Brick Boyz

Project Innovation
1. P.S. 58, Team: Germinators
2. P.S. 321, Team: Lego-nauts

Project Presentation
P.S. 233, Team: LegoMinds

Judges' Award
St. Edmunds Elementary School, Team: The Nerd Herd

Against All Odds Awards
Fort Greene Preparatory Academy, Team: Nano Wolves

Rising Stars
P.S. 3, Team: RoboTigers

Also advancing to the finals:
P.S. 321, team #2
MS 366
PS 636, Team: Boogie Bots
PS 8, Team: Mission Masters

NYU-Poly supports in-school robotics initiatives in 22 Brooklyn elementary, middle and high schools as part of two affiliated initiatives, called Applying Mechatronics to Promote Science (AMPS) and Central Brooklyn STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Initiative (CBSI). Together, they send NYU-Poly graduate students into local schools to challenge students to design, build and operate robotic devices, teach science and engineering, and provide training to advance teachers' understanding of STEM subjects. The results are powerful: 65 percent of participating students increased their STEM grades by a half or full-letter grade.

AMPS/CBSI is a public-private partnership supported by The Black Male Donor Collaborative, theBrooklyn Community Foundation, J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation, XEROX Foundation, NY Space Grant Consortium and

White Cedar Fund, and the supporting graduate fellows program receives major funding from National Science Foundation's GK-12 Fellows Program.

NYU-Poly works with New York FIRST® on all four FIRST® programs, which engage kids from the age of six through high school. In 2012, FIRST programs will involve more than 293,000 participants.

In addition to the FLL, FIRST offers Junior FIRST® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) for 6- to 9-year-olds, and FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC®) and FIRST® Robotics Competition (FRC®), both for high school students. FRC, known as a "Varsity Sport for the Mind™," challenges teens to design, build, program and test a robot to meet a specific challenge. The FIRST contests at NYU-Poly are sponsored by Time Warner Cable and Con Edison.

About FIRST®

Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen founded FIRST ® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., FIRST designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, and engineering. With support from three out of every five Fortune 500 companies and nearly $14 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the FIRST® Robotics Competition (FRC®) and FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC®) for high-school students, FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL®) for 9 to 14-year-olds, (9 to 16-year-olds outside the U.S., Canada, and Mexico) and Junior FIRST® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) for 6 to 9-year-olds.Gracious Professionalism™ is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about FIRST, go to www.usfirst.org.

About Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Polytechnic Institute of New York University (formerly Polytechnic University), an affiliate of New York University, is a comprehensive school of engineering, applied sciences, technology and research, and is rooted in a 158-year tradition of invention, innovation and entrepreneurship: i2e. The institution, founded in 1854, is the nation's second-oldest private engineering school. In addition to its main campus in New York City at MetroTech Center in downtown Brooklyn, it also offers programs at sites throughout the region and around the globe. Globally, NYU-Poly has programs in Israel, China and is an integral part of NYU's campus in Abu Dhabi. For more information, visit www.poly.edu.

Note to Editors:

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Additional photos available upon request