

NYU-Poly receives Motorola Foundation Innovation Generation grant to promote STEM through robotics

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Students at robotics competition

Polytechnic Institute of NYU has received a \$50,000 Innovation Generation grant from the Motorola Foundation. The grant will provide critical funding for the Central Brooklyn Robotics Initiative (referred to as "CBRI"), led by Dr. Vikram Kapila, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and Dr. Noel Kriftcher, Executive Director of NYU-Poly's David Packard Center.

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Since its launch in August 2007, CBRI has inspired students from underserved schools to pursue science and math studies through an after-school club where students build robots. This is the second year in a row that NYU-Poly has received a \$50,000 Motorola Innovation grant to fund CBRI.

The Motorola Foundation's Innovation Generation grants support programs that engage students in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to build the confidence and skills they need for success both now and in the long-term. In 2009, the Motorola Foundation is providing \$5 million in grants to support out-of-school programming, teacher training, curriculum development, and other programs that spark students' interest in STEM.

"The goal of CBRI is to work with students and teachers in the Central Brooklyn area with a large minority population, often economically challenged, who lack exposure to real-world science and engineering events," explained Dr. Kapila.

"We strive to provide these middle and high school students with equity of opportunity and access to quality hands-on learning while they are impressionable and eager to learn science," added Dr. Kriftcher.

NYU-Poly engineering students (known as "CBRI Fellows") mentor middle and high-school CBRI participants for 5 to 6 months as they design and construct robots. The program culminates in CBRI students' participation in robotics competitions such as the FIRST Lego League Championship at which students from area schools go head-to-head to see whose robot can meet a series of challenges.

By motivating students to learn about math and science through concrete, practical applications of math and science, NYU-Poly is working with the Motorola Foundation to increase access to STEM education and equip students for successful future. Introducing students to real-world application of concepts they learn in the classroom strengthens problem-solving skills, increases knowledge retention, and opens their eyes to the possibilities associated with pursuing careers in those fields.

"Innovation Generation programs make science and math both real and fun for today's students, bringing to life what they hear from their teachers every day," said Eileen Sweeney, Director of the

Motorola Foundation. "The work NYU-Poly is doing to engage students in these subjects will help our next generation to succeed in a global, knowledge-based economy where critical thinking is no longer just a benefit, but a necessity."

Independence Community Foundation and JP Morgan Chase Foundation partnered to create CBRI in 2007. The Independence Community Foundation and JP Morgan Chase Foundation awarded grants of \$300,000 and \$110,000, respectively, to the CBRI project in its first 2 years.

Learn More

[Motorola Foundation's Programs and Grants](#)
[Central Brooklyn Robotics Initiative](#)