Major Expansion Planned for Robotic Program in Brooklyn Schools
by Mary Frost (mfrost@brooklyneagle.net)

With Grant from Brooklyn Community Foundation

A highly successful robotics program in Brooklyn schools received a major boost this past Thursday when the Brooklyn Community Foundation (BCF) presented a whopping $500,000 grant to the Polytechnic Institute of New York University (NYU-Poly).

NYU-Poly’s popular robotics program has helped improve math and science grades in some of Brooklyn’s most challenged schools.

This year 13 winning Brooklyn teams in the program advanced to the citywide finals of the FIRST LEGO League robotics challenge.

Part of NYU-Poly’s Central Brooklyn STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) Initiative (CBSI), founded in 2007 with the BCF’s support, the program pairs the university’s graduate students with teachers in economically disadvantaged schools. Together, they create lessons using robotics to spark students’ interest in math and science.
BCF’s $500,000 grant could triple the number of elementary, middle and high schools in the program. More than 80 percent of students served are minorities, and half are females. A recent outside evaluation reported a major increase in participants’ grades and an increase in science and math careers.

“The Brooklyn Community Foundation’s long and deep commitment to CBSI has encouraged some of Brooklyn’s best young, diverse students in STEM studies and set them on a path to pursue higher education and rewarding technical careers,” said Jerry M. Hultin, NYU-Poly president.

* * *