



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Braunfels LEGO™ Teams Qualify for Regional Event

New Braunfels, Texas —Six teams, sponsored by the Friends of the New Braunfels Public Library, will compete in the Alamo Regional *FIRST* Robotics tournament on Saturday, March 30th at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. This is the largest regional *FIRST* Robotics tournament in the United States, with teams attending from all parts of Texas, other states, and Mexico. More than 2,800 students age 6-18 are expected to compete in four different divisions: Junior *FIRST* LEGO™ League, *FIRST* LEGO™ League, *FIRST* Tech Challenge, and *FIRST* Robotics.

FIRST Robotics is a worldwide 501(c)3 founded in 1989 to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology. Through the *FIRST* family of programs, kids team with local engineers, professors and business people to solve real world engineering challenges. Students develop technical expertise, and gain self confidence, knowledge and skills to face life's challenges.

Three local *FIRST* LEGO™ League (FLL) teams qualified to advance to this regional competition by earning awards at previous tournaments. FLL team members are between ages 9-14, and work to build an autonomous computer-controlled robot that solves missions in a robot game. They also research engineering solutions related to issues in their community. Unicorn Robotics won the Strategy and Innovation trophy for their high-scoring solutions to the robot game, while the Dracheneers won the Presentation trophy for their engineering project presentation and The Robo Alliance won the programming trophy for the computer programs controlling their robot.

Three Junior FLL teams will present a project to judges during the Expo event. The Mini-Drachs, Robo Colts, and Lego Legion researched changes in technology from the mid-20th-century to the present with the help of their mentor, Dave Dean. They created motorized LEGO™ models to illustrate their findings. Junior FLL teams are designed to help youngsters get ready to compete in the older age groups and are composed of children ages 6-9.

The FLL opening ceremonies are at 8:30 a.m., with match play and judging beginning at 9 a.m. and continuing through the afternoon. The awards ceremony will be at 3:45 p.m.

The Junior FLL Expo is open from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with a celebration ceremony following. In addition to these events, attendees can watch the final rounds of the *FIRST* Robotics competition, in which teams of high school students compete with 120-pound custom-built robots. In this year's game - Ultimate Ascent - robots must throw flying discs and climb a pyramid to score points in three-on-three alliance gameplay.

The regional tournament is free and open to the public.

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