



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National 4-H Council Announces Alliance with *FIRST*[™]

Inspiring the Next Generation of Scientific Thinkers Together

Manchester, NH and Chevy Chase, MD - April 17, 2009 — National 4-H Council today announced it is creating a new Alliance with *FIRST* (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) to reach new youth across the nation and expand existing 4-H robotics programs. This exciting new alliance, which will be announced and celebrated at the *FIRST* Championship on April 16-18 at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, is designed to foster more opportunities for youth to explore science, engineering and technology (SET) careers by providing them with hands-on, team-based experiences through the designing, building and programming of robots.

Brought together by the shared pursuit of inspiring an appreciation of science and technology in young people throughout the nation, 4-H and *FIRST* will work together to promote scientific learning and the building of confidence and life skills among all K-12 youth. 4-H, through their *One Million New Scientists. One Million New Ideas.*[™] campaign is working toward the goal to engage one million new young scientific thinkers by the year 2013.

“Research shows that children reach their full potential through a combination of involvement within families, schools and community,” said Donald T. Floyd, Jr., President and CEO, National 4-H Council. “Providing 4-H youth with opportunities like *FIRST* to participate in friendly and educational competitions allow us to foster team-building skills and heighten interest in exploring future careers in science, engineering and technology.”

There are nearly 400,000 4-H youth throughout the nation already participating in university research-based robotics and engineering programs with 4-H clubs in nearly every state currently participating in *FIRST* programs. In addition, five high-school level 4-H teams will be competing at the *FIRST* Championship this year.

“The global economy is constantly demanding a more technologically competent workforce, and the value of practical application experiences like those 4-H and *FIRST* provide is immeasurable,” said Paul R. Gudonis, *FIRST* President. “The *FIRST*, National 4-H Council Alliance will help both organizations to provide many more youth with the opportunity to experience *FIRST* and open up new horizons in science, technology, math and engineering.”

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About National 4-H Council

4-H is a community of more than six million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. National 4-H Council is the private sector, non-profit partner of National 4-H Headquarters (USDA). The 4-H programs are implemented by the 106 Land-Grant Universities and the Cooperative Extension System through their 3,100 local Extension offices across the country. Learn more about 4-H at www.4-H.org.

About *FIRST*

Inventor Dean Kamen founded *FIRST* in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people, initiating robotics competitions in 1992. The Manchester, N.H. - based 501(c) (3) not-for-profit, designs accessible, innovative programs which build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). With assistance from 3,500 corporate sponsorships and 85,000 volunteers, *FIRST* organizes several competitions inspiring K-12 youth into STEM education and career exploration: *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC) and *FIRST* Tech Challenge (FTC) for high-school students, *FIRST* LEGO® League (FLL) for children 9-14 years old, and Junior *FIRST* LEGO® League (JFLL) for 6 to 9 year-olds. To learn more about *FIRST*, visit www.usfirst.org.

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