



TechNews

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Illinois Tech Robotics volunteers at FIRST Robotics world championship

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Illinois Tech Robotics (ITR) is a student organization where members can learn new things and build exciting projects, as well as help others and make an impact by inspiring children to pursue an interest in science and technology fields. Each year, ITR members take part in a variety of outreach opportunities.

Over the past year, ITR students hosted a youth robotics competition, volunteered at 8 youth competitions, coordinated a season kickoff event for high school robotics students, and participated in a variety of public outreach events. Students in ITR have donated hundreds of hours of their time this year to help thousands of younger students learn about futures in science and technology. The vast majority of ITR's outreach and volunteer opportunities work closely with a youth robotics organization known as FIRST.

For Inspiration and Recognition of

Science and Technology (FIRST) was founded in 1989 by inventor Dean Kamen with the mission of showing students that science, technology, and problem-solving are not only fun and rewarding, but are proven paths to successful careers and a bright future for society. The organization achieves this mission by offering robotics competitions for students in elementary school through high school. The competitions value not only gaining engineering skills and creating useful machines, but also things such as good sportsmanship, cooperation, teamwork, and something FIRST calls "gracious professionalism," a way of doing things where students learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process.

This past weekend, ITR volunteered at the final event of the FIRST Robotics season, the FIRST World Championship held in St. Louis, Missouri. The event took place in several locations throughout the city, with different age groups competing at different venues. More than 15 thousand students attended the

event, as did thousands of additional parents, mentors, supporters, and volunteers.

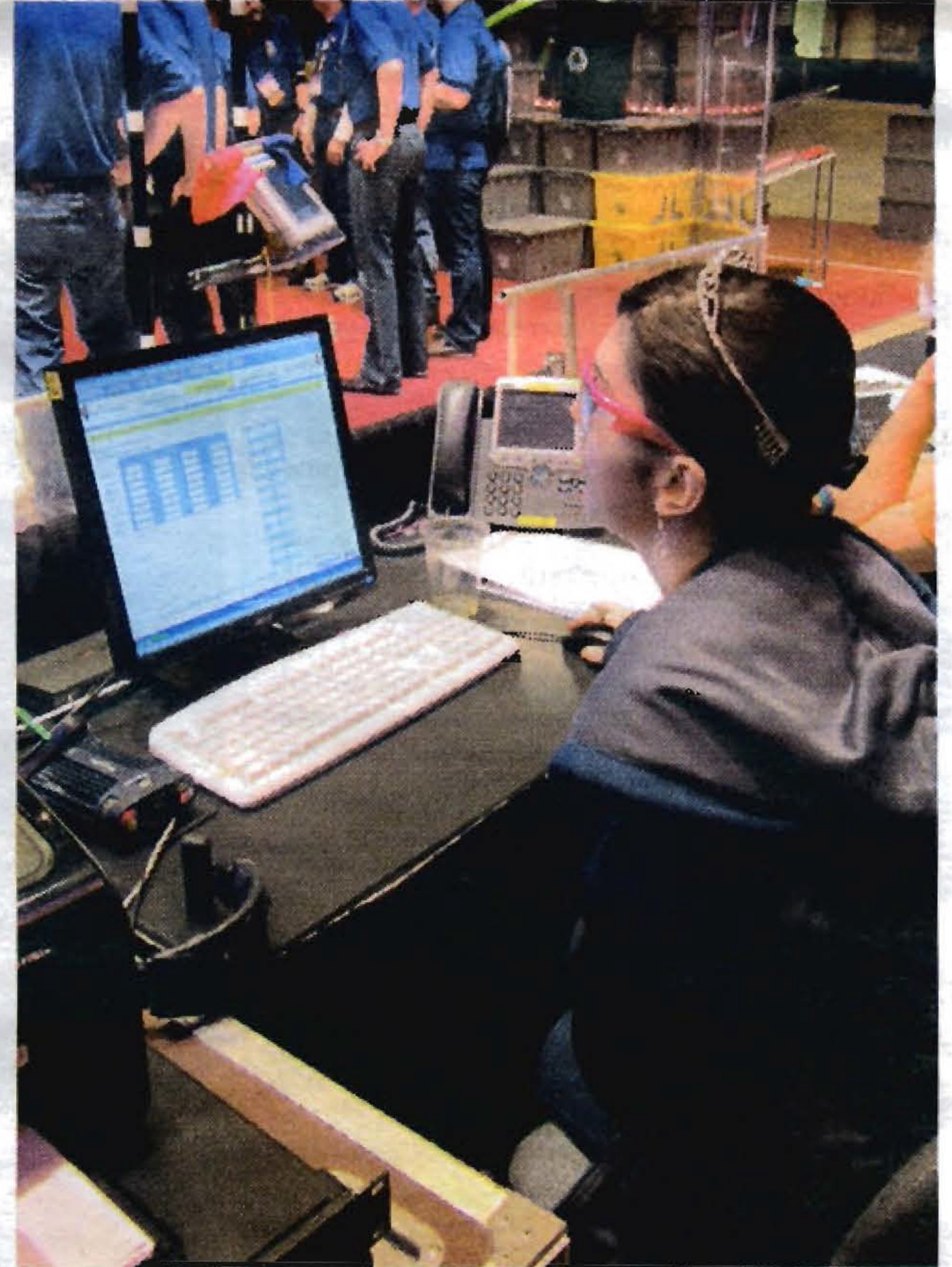
Illinois Tech Robotics sent a delegation of 7 members to St. Louis to volunteer at the event, which ran from Wednesday, April 22 through Saturday, April 25. Members volunteered in a wide variety of ways that helped further the program and allowed them to interact with hundreds of young STEM enthusiasts over the course of the weekend. ITR's volunteers primarily worked with the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) championship, the highest-level competition FIRST has available for high school students. In FRC, a game challenge is announced at the beginning of the year, and at competitions, teams of three robots compete against three other robots in a round-robin competition followed by a playoff competition where teams choose their teammates based on their ranking.

ITR volunteers included referees for the competition, field reset and repair crew, scoring system software operators, awards

assistants, and play-by-play announcers for competition matches.

As always, ITR members enjoyed volunteering their time to FIRST, and had a great time working with the increased energy and competition that comes with the world championship event. Many of the ITR students in attendance are alumni of the FIRST Robotics program, which allows students to give back to an organization that inspired them to pursue science or engineering at IIT. ITR students also get to meet high school students who might be interested in attending IIT and participating in ITR in the future.

Illinois Tech Robotics is a strong and vital force in helping give students all over the world opportunities to explore innovative and exciting futures in the science and technology fields. For more information about Illinois Tech Robotics, visit their website at illinoistechrobotics.org or join their organization on HawkLink.



Photos by Kori Bowns