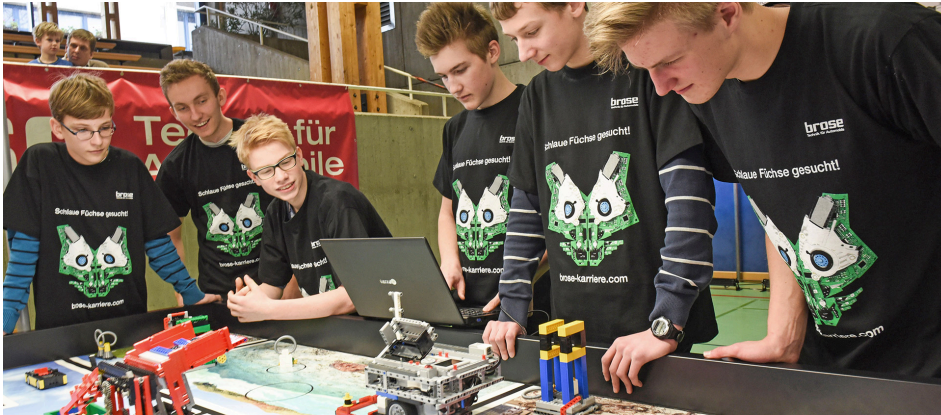


FIRST LEGO League robot tournament in Würzburg



Würzburg (15. January 2016) 14 teams from eleven schools brought their self-constructed robots to the tournament on 15 January 2016 at the Wolffskeel Realschule in Würzburg. 120 young people from the region participated in the FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL) scientific educational program. The goal is to get ten to 16-year-olds excited about science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). This was the second time the robot tournament was held in Würzburg. International automotive supplier Brose brought the event to the Franconian metropolis on the Main River for the first time last year.

“This tournament gives children and young adults the chance to have fun learning about complex technologies and compete in the exciting atmosphere of a sporting event,” explains Michael Stammberger, head of the Brose Group’s Apprenticeship and Training department. “This is why we campaigned to have the FIRST® LEGO® League held in Würzburg.”

Following last year’s premiere, Brose is also the coordinator and main sponsor of the development program at the regional level. The mechatronics specialist develops and produces electric motors and drives in Würzburg. “Our company is involved in a variety of educational programs around the world. The FLL gives us an opportunity to expose secondary school students to potential career paths, including engineering and computer science.

FLL teams comprise three to ten members. They spend at least ten weeks preparing for the tournament with the assistance of an adult coach. “We met for two hours once a week to prepare for the regionals,” reports 15-year-old Jens Ullshöfer of the “Alphabots” team from the Deutschorden-Gymnasium in Bad Mergentheim.

The teams use sensors, motors and Lego blocks to construct an autonomous robot. This robot is designed, tested and programmed to ensure that it can solve as many of the ten assigned tasks as possible on its own. “It’s fascinating to see how something as simple as Lego blocks can be used to build such complex systems,” says 14-year-old Hannes Oberndörfer, visibly excited.

The theme of this year's competition is: Trash Trek: Finding better ways to manage our trash. Examples include a robot that can activate a compost machine, secure valuables from a house that is ready for demolition or press a scrap car. In the theoretical portion of the competition students are required to complete a research project. They work together to develop innovative ideas on how the tons of refuse produced can be managed in the future. They use creative techniques to present the results of their research findings to a panel of judges.

"Team RoboSun" from the Leopold-Sonnemann-Realschule in Höchberg won the regional tournament in Würzburg. They qualified for the state semi-finals with their robots, as did the "X-Rays" from the Röntgen-Gymnasium in Würzburg, who came in second place. The semi-finals will take place on 6 February 2016 at Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule (OTH), a university of applied sciences in Regensburg. The participants will then battle it out in the European finals in Hungary on 19 and 20 March 2016.

Over 25,000 teams in 80 countries are participating in the educational program. Non-profit organization "HANDS on TECHNOLOGY" will host the tournament showcasing robots and ideas in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. In Germany, more than 6,500 boys and girls in 850 teams registered for the FIRST® LEGO® League.

For more information, visit www.first-lego-league.org.