DEARBORN, Mich., January 21, 2013 & #8212;SME

Society of Manufacturing Engineers

SME Education Foundation provides $50,000 to Michigan Engineering Zone (MEZ) to help Detroit High Schools compete at the 2013 FIRST Robotics Competition

DEARBORN, Mich., January 21, 2013 SME Education Foundation [1] is pleased to endorse and provide a $50,000 grant to the Michigan Engineering Zone (MEZ) [2], the U-M, College of Engineering, high school student support facility. The funding will help nearly 175 students, comprising 40 teams, from 12 Detroit Public Schools (DPS), and the surrounding community, compete in the 2013 FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition (FRC).

Participating Detroit schools include: Advanced Technology Academy, Cass Technical High School; Central Collegiate Academy; Cesar Chavez Academy; Denby High School; Detroit Edison Public School Academy (DEPSA) Early College of Excellence; Detroit Institute of Technology at Cody High School; Detroit School of Art; East English Village Preparatory Academy; Frederick Douglas Academy for Young Men; Southeastern High School, and Renaissance High School.

The Michigan Engineering Zone, created in 2010 by the University of Michigan for the purpose of developing students technical skills through activity on FIRST Robotics teams, is located within the UM Detroit Center. The STEM-based (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) program is designed to prepare students to compete in a global economy with advanced manufacturing education and the lucrative technical careers it offers.

Julian E. Pate III, director of the Michigan Engineering Zone (MEZ) and a member of the Board of Directors of the SME Education Foundation, is involved in providing direction and support for MEZ activities and is enthusiastic about the growing support for the Detroit teams. We need to demonstrate we care about our young people and help them explore career possibilities. The integrity of this spirited competition, which combines academics with hands-on learning, turns the light on for many students, says Pate, and establishes the much needed connection between the classroom lessons and the real world of engineering, information that is truly valuable to the students.

Jeanne Murabito, founder of MEZ, and executive director for Student Affairs at University of Michigan, College of Engineering, sees the potential for steady growth as students become involved and experience success they didnt think they were capable of. MEZ goes beyond helping students compete in FIRST, says Murabito, We are available to help them with many different education-related questions they

may have ranging from how to fill out college admission forms to finding out how to apply for financial support. We are a great resource in the Detroit community.

FIRST Robotics Competition, kicked off the 2013 season on Saturday, January 5 via a live NASA-TV broadcast and webcast featuring Dean Kamen, creator of the event, that went out to nearly 51,000 high school students worldwide. FRC teams were shown the Ultimate Ascent playing field and received a Kit of Parts made up of motors, batteries, a control system, a PC, and a mix of automation components with no instructions.

The 2013 Ultimate Ascent FRC game challenges contestants to build robots capable of scaling the rungs of a metal tower. Their assignment will be to fling flying discs at goals of varying value. Teams will buddy-up in teams of three, allowing the robots to work in unison and focus on specific tasks.

MEZ provides Detroit students with safe space and supportive forum with access to equipment, training, and mentoring necessary to design, build, and test their robots capable of playing three-on-three games of problem solving. Outfitted with computer labs complete with CAD software, a machine shop, robot testing area, and collaborative workstations, Detroits professional engineers and University of Michigan faculty, staff, students, and alumni provide technical training and mentoring.

Once these young inventors create a robot, their teams will participate in competitions that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration, and their determination. The State Championship will be held at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Mich., and culminate at the National 2013 FIRST Robotics Championship being held at the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis, Mo., April 24-27.

Students interested in knowing how to apply to the University of Michigan, other colleges and universities, or how to secure financial aid, can obtain the help they need through the Michigan Engineering Zone.

About FIRST®
Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen [3] founded FIRST [4]® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., FIRST designs accessible and innovative programs to help young people build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills, while motivating them to pursue opportunities in science, technology, and engineering. With support from three out of every five Fortune 500 companies and more than $16 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the FIRST® Robotics Competition [5] (FRC®) for students in Grades 9-12; FIRST® Tech Challenge [6] (FTC®) for Grades 7-12; FIRST® LEGO® League [7] (FLL®) for Grades 4-8; and Junior FIRST® LEGO® League [8] (Jr. FLL®) for Grades K-3. Gracious Professionalism [9]® is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about FIRST, go to www.usfirst.org [4].

About the Michigan Detroit Center:
The Michigan Detroit Center opened in 2005 in downtown Detroit, Mich., to serve as a gateway for University and Urban communities to take advantage of each others learning, research and cultural activities. In response to a local challenge, U-M created the Michigan Engineering Zone (MEZ) in 2010 for high school students in collaboration with Detroit Public Schools (DPS) and FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) to inspire students to learn and pursue careers in engineering. Visit www.detroitcenter.umich.edu/about [10]

About the SME Education Foundation:
The SME Education Foundation is committed to inspiring, preparing and supporting the next generation of manufacturing engineers and technologists for the advancement of manufacturing education. Created by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers in 1979, the SME Education Foundation has provided more than $33 million since 1980 in grants, scholarships and awards through its partnerships with corporations, organizations, foundations and individual donors. Visit www.smeef.org [11]. Also visit www.CareerMe.org [12] for information on advanced manufacturing careers, and www.ManufacturingisCool.com [13], our award-winning website for young people.

Note to Media:
Join us at https://twitter.com/mfgeducation [14] to stay up-to-date on SME Education Foundation developments.

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