

CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	02
A Note From <i>FIRST</i> ® Leadership	05
Proving The <i>FIRST</i> Theory of Change	06
Students Who Start with <i>FIRST</i> Gain the Skills and Confidence to Get Anywhere	10
Impact Spotlight: <i>FIRST</i> Teams are Making Waves	14
2024-2025 Season Highlights	20
<i>FIRST</i> ® LEGO® League	22
<i>FIRST</i> ® Tech Challenge	24
<i>FIRST</i> ® Robotics Competition	26
2025 <i>FIRST</i> Championship presented by BAE Systems Showcases a Sea of Student STEM Talent	28
Sponsors and Contributors	30
2025 <i>FIRST</i> Championship Sponsors	40
Program Delivery Organizations	41
Ripple Effect: 2025 <i>FIRST</i> Volunteers, Mentors, and Coaches	43
Financials	44
Leadership	46

INTRODUCTION

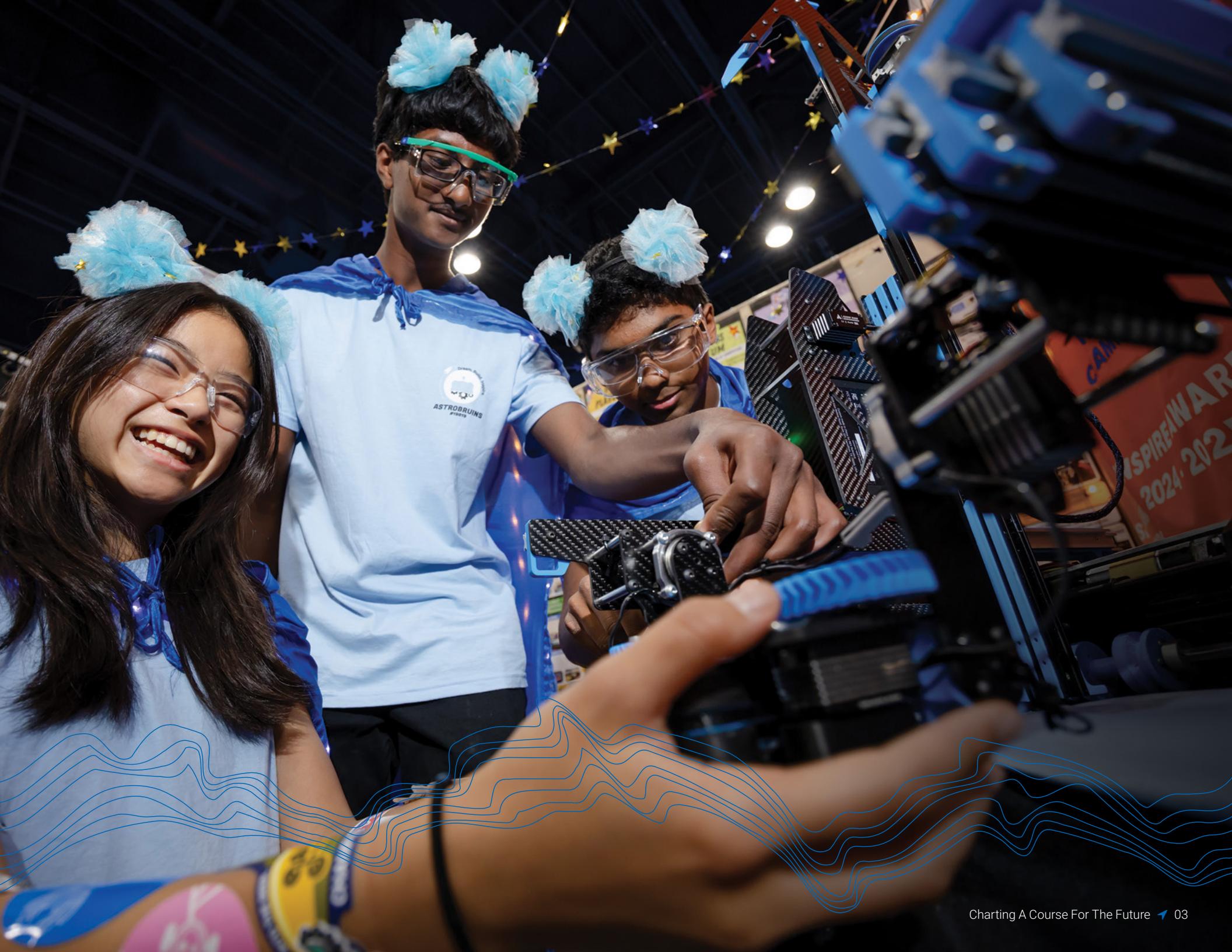
Since its founding in 1989, *FIRST*® has grown into a global network spanning more than 110 countries. As the world's leading youth robotics community, we empower young people to build a better world through STEM.

Today, our programs are equipping the next generation with the skills, confidence, and curiosity to explore new frontiers — **proving every student can get anywhere by starting with *FIRST*.**

Our mission took us deep beneath the surface with *FIRST* DIVE™ presented by Qualcomm. Throughout the 2024–2025 season, participants around the world embraced discovery, innovation, and teamwork as they explored the wonders of the ocean and uncovered what's possible when they dive deeper into STEM. Together, we uncovered insights that continue to strengthen our programs, expand access, and advance our mission.

This year's annual report reflects those discoveries with season highlights, impact data, and feature stories that show how, together, **we're helping young people chart their own course for the future.**

This Annual Impact Report covers the period of July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.





A NOTE FROM FIRST® LEADERSHIP

Every generation faces uncharted paths, but today's young people are growing up in a world evolving faster than ever before. Through *FIRST*®, they're not only learning to navigate change — they're learning to drive it.

Since 1989, *FIRST* has helped students turn curiosity into capability. Our proven programs ([see page 22](#)) combine the thrill of competition with the foundations of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). In classrooms, workshops, and arenas across the globe, students collaborate to solve problems, take applied risks, and learn to fail safely in an environment that values persistence as much as success.

Findings from the *FIRST* Longitudinal Impact Study ([see page 6](#)) show that participants significantly outperform their peers in long-term outcomes. Ten years after participation, 18 percent were in college, 17 percent in graduate school, and 60 percent in the workforce, with college degree attainment rates near 90 percent (far above the national average of roughly 55 percent). Participants were also roughly twice as likely as comparison students to show an increase in key STEM outcomes, including STEM interest, career interest, knowledge, activity, and identity.

This year's season, *FIRST* DIVE™ presented by Qualcomm, invited our community to look deeper, explore new challenges, and discover what's possible when innovation meets imagination. With your support, more than 853,000 young people worldwide participated in *FIRST* this season — a 9 percent increase over last year — and countless more students, families, and community members experienced the excitement of this sport.

We also reached new audiences through storytelling that showcased our global impact. Our [Get Anywhere campaign](#) ([see page 10](#)), released in October 2024, celebrated how *FIRST* empowers young people to chart their own paths no matter where they lead. The March 2025 film premiere of "Rule Breakers" ([see page 16](#)), inspired by the *FIRST* "Afghan Dreamers" team, brought that message to screens worldwide — sharing a story of courage, innovation, and hope. In collaboration with *FIRST*® Global, LEGO® Education, and partners around the world, we continue working to bring the *FIRST* experience to students everywhere.

As we look to the horizon, our work continues to be guided by our four strategic priorities: fostering innovation, eliminating barriers to participation, amplifying global awareness, and building a sustainable organization. Together, these form the foundation of a future where every young person can discover their potential and use STEM to build a better world.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Chris Moore, Chief Executive Officer

Laurie Leshin, Ph.D., Chair, *FIRST* Board of Directors

Dean Kamen, Founder



Chris Moore is the chief executive officer of *FIRST*



Laurie Leshin, Ph.D. is the chair of the *FIRST* Board of Directors



Dean Kamen is the founder of *FIRST*

PROVING THE FIRST THEORY OF CHANGE





FIRST understands interest, rather than academic proficiency, is a greater predictor of children pursuing studies and careers in STEM fields. Our evidence-based programs use strategies known to increase student interest and engagement in STEM and develop holistic skills, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. These approaches, along with the *FIRST* Core Values, all lead to sustained STEM interest, attitudes, and actions post-high school, college, and into careers.

STRATEGIES



STRATEGY

Hands-On Learning

Hands-on experiences go beyond robot-building. Students learn other critical skills as they participate in our programs.



STRATEGY

Caring Mentors & Supporters

FIRST programs are powered by adult supporters who share knowledge, carry out the *FIRST* Core Values, and champion young people to think big.



STRATEGY

Teamwork With Real-World Relevance

Students collaborate as teams on thematic challenges relevant to their lives and the world around them.



STRATEGY

Celebratory Events

FIRST participants engage in culminating celebrations where students can showcase what they created and learned.



STRATEGY

Career Exposure

FIRST helps bridge the gap from curiosity to career confidence, helping students discover new career opportunities across industries.



STRATEGY

***FIRST* Core Values**

Teams learn to compete with integrity and kindness and to help others in need.

A SUITE OF HANDS-ON, STEM LEARNING PROGRAMS

FIRST combines the rigor of STEM learning with the fun and excitement of traditional sports and the inspiration that comes from community. Participants benefit from a suite of programs that have a proven impact on learning, interest, and skill-building inside and outside of the classroom.



FIRST LEGO® LEAGUE

Spark Early STEM Curiosity

Ages 4-16; Grades PreK-8

FIRST® LEGO® League introduces STEM to children through fun, exciting hands-on learning. Participants gain real-world problem-solving experiences through a guided, global robotics program using LEGO® technology, helping today's students, families, and educators build a better future together. *FIRST* LEGO League's three divisions inspire youth to experiment and grow their critical thinking, coding, and design skills and showcase what they learned.

FIRST TECH CHALLENGE

Turn Ideas Into Innovation

Ages 12-18; Grades 7-12

FIRST® Tech Challenge students work together with their mentors to design and build robots to compete in a dynamic and exciting challenge released every September. Teams program classroom-scale robots to follow autonomous commands before student drivers take control in two-on-two matches. On and off the field, students develop STEM skills, engage in community outreach, practice engineering innovation, and build confidence to help them succeed.

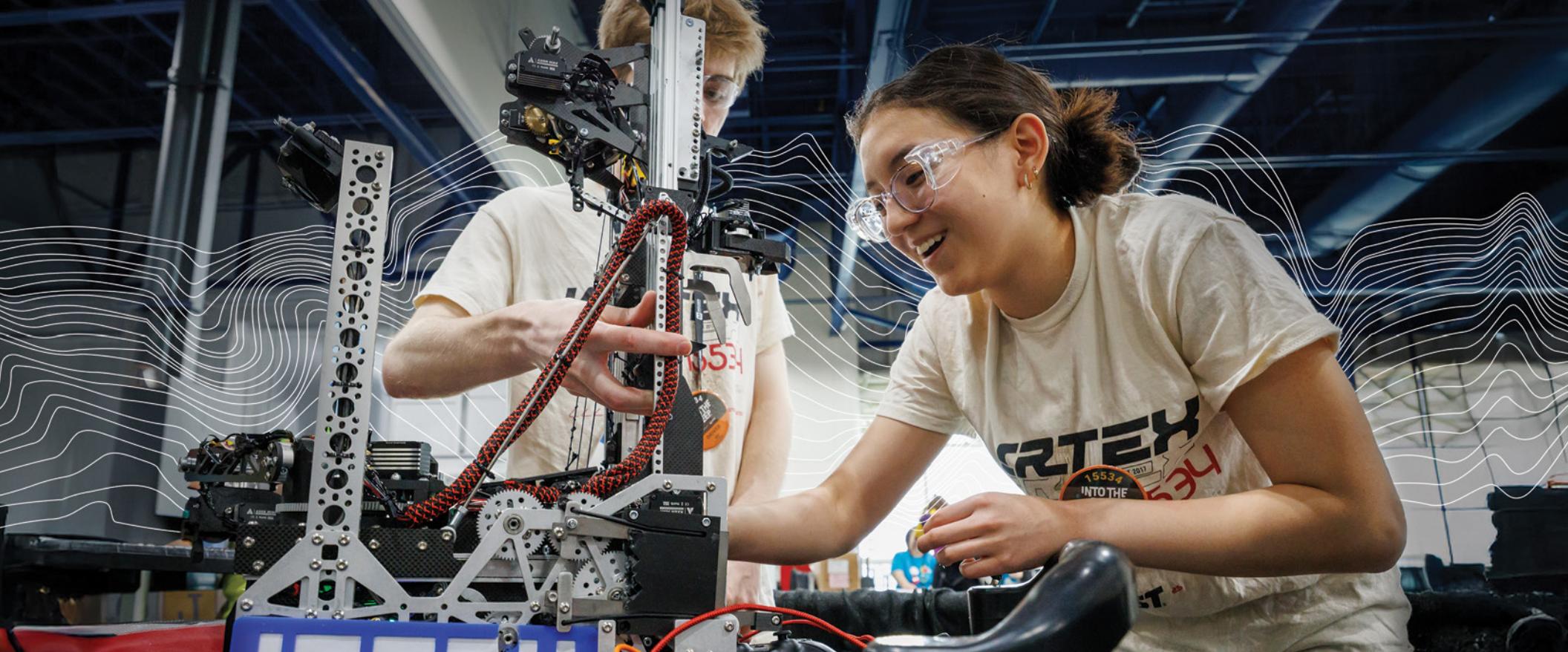
FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION

Engineer the Future of STEM

Ages 14-18; Grades 9-12

Each January brings a new challenge for *FIRST*® Robotics Competition teams. Starting with a Kit of Parts, they design, program, and build industrial-sized robots to play an action-packed game on a themed field as part of a three-team alliance. Guided by mentors and sponsors, students learn engineering and problem-solving skills as they compete for awards, create a team identity, raise funds, hone teamwork skills, and advance appreciation for STEM in their community.

Ages may vary by region.



PROVEN STEM OUTCOMES

From local classrooms to international competitions, *FIRST* transforms education and inspires the next generation of leaders. These results from the *FIRST* Longitudinal Study show the depth of our impact:

83%

of *FIRST* alumni pursue STEM majors by year four of college

51%

of female *FIRST* alumni declare a major in engineering or computer science by year four of college

63%

of *FIRST* alumni are currently employed in a STEM field

\$62,000

is the average salary of early career female *FIRST* alumni, compared with a \$43,000 peer average

Key Findings: 10-Year *FIRST* Longitudinal Impact Study

Brandeis University's unique, decade-long study followed *FIRST* participants and their peers over 10 years. The final report shows sustained *FIRST* impact, including increased STEM engagement, career interest, and college persistence among *FIRST* alumni.

- ✓ STEM interest and attitudes transform into behaviors and actions beyond high school, where the majority of *FIRST* participants major in STEM.
- ✓ STEM-related gains are even more significant for female participants in *FIRST* than male participants, opening pathways into male-dominated fields.
- ✓ Early career indicators show *FIRST* participants are significantly more likely to be employed in a STEM field when compared with the national data set.

Read the full Longitudinal Impact Study at www.firstinspires.org/impact

SOURCE: *FIRST* Longitudinal Study: 10-Year Final Report, Brandeis University, 2024

The study included 551 *FIRST* students and 371 comparison group students. The comparison group included students who did not participate in *FIRST* programs but were enrolled in science and math classes at the same schools. All students received a baseline survey and follow-up surveys each year. Overall, 72 percent of students remained in the study at year 10.

STUDENTS WHO START WITH FIRST GAIN THE SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE TO GET ANYWHERE

Gen Z is increasingly interested in STEM, but too many still lack the exposure, mentorship, and hands-on experiences that help them see a future in these careers. While 75 percent express interest in STEM, only 29 percent say STEM roles are their top career choice – a clear gap between curiosity and opportunity.

Misconceptions about STEM being narrow or only for highly specialized roles further discourage students from exploring programs that build the adaptable skills employers need today. Without access to these experiences, young people risk limiting their own potential in STEM and beyond.

How These *FIRST* Alumni Scored Their Dream Jobs – by Starting with *FIRST*

Introducing some outstanding *FIRST* alumni – successful leaders in product design, engineering, and innovation who exemplify the positive outcomes of *FIRST* programs. Their journeys highlight the range of opportunities *FIRST* can inspire, driving students to recognize their skills and envision exciting futures after high school. At a time when many young people are uncertain about their career paths, these alumni prove *FIRST* is a powerful solution – equipping students with the confidence, experience, and skills to get anywhere.

OUR “GET ANYWHERE” CAMPAIGN DROVE NEW AUDIENCES TO ENGAGE WITH *FIRST*

Launched by *FIRST* in October 2024, the “Get Anywhere” campaign was designed to reframe how students, parents, educators, and businesses think about STEM. The brand campaign translated these messages into storytelling efforts that elevated the importance of STEM education to a national audience, featuring *FIRST* founder Dean Kamen and *FIRST* alumni – including Sarah, Logan, and Erin – with roles in STEM career fields.

The “Get Anywhere” campaign, which reached tens of millions, was recognized with two Telly Awards (Not-For-Profit and Education & Discovery categories) and six Anthem Awards (Art & Culture category).

BY THE NUMBERS

41M+

media impressions

300K+

video views

2M+

social media impressions





“Some of the most important skills I learned from FIRST were the willingness and curiosity to learn. This not only helped me excel academically but also contributed to the success of my professional career as I branch into the agricultural technology side with John Deere.”



Sarah Heimlich, Senior Product Manager at John Deere

Sarah has been involved with FIRST for 20 years, beginning as a student team member and later giving back as a mentor and coach. Her long-standing commitment to the organization reflects not only her passion for STEM but also her dedication to help the next generation of innovators thrive.

Today, Sarah serves as a senior product manager at John Deere, a FIRST Strategic Partner, where she plays a key role in advancing agricultural technology. By applying the collaboration, problem-solving, and technical skills developed through FIRST, Sarah helps design and bring to life cutting-edge innovations like the autonomous tractor. This technology is transforming the way farmers and agriculturalists work and shaping the future of sustainable farming.



Logan Hickox, Design Engineer II at Nike

Logan's experiences with *FIRST* taught him the importance of creativity, collaboration, and perseverance — skills that have shaped his career path and remain central to his success today. Currently a design engineer at Nike's renowned Bowerman Footwear Lab, Logan applies the lessons he learned through *FIRST* to push the boundaries of performance footwear.

By blending engineering precision with imaginative design, he helps create innovative products worn by world-class athletes, including LeBron James and Serena Williams. Logan's journey proves the skills gained through *FIRST* can translate to unexpected and extraordinary careers, influencing global culture, sports, and design.



*“Above all, I think *FIRST* allows you to be yourself. It encourages positive growth and helps you get to that next step you want to achieve in life. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought I'd be working at Nike World Headquarters.”*



Learn more about
FIRST alumni at
firstinspires.org/alumni.



Erin Mitchell, Commercial Avionics at RTX

Erin has been part of the *FIRST* community for 15 years, beginning as a student team member before returning as a mentor and coach to help other young innovators discover their own potential. Through her *FIRST* experience, she developed a strong foundation in teamwork, problem-solving, and hands-on technical skills — all of which have served her career journey.

Today, Erin works at RTX, a *FIRST* Strategic Partner, in commercial avionics, where she plays an important role in advancing technologies that ensure millions of people can experience safe air travel every day. By applying the skills cultivated through *FIRST*, Erin contributes to building systems that make modern air travel possible, reliable, and safe. Her story shows students how the lessons learned in *FIRST* can take flight into impactful careers that touch people's lives all over the world.

“Joining *FIRST* really gave me a lot more exposure to what I could be when I grew up. My robotics coaches truly were the catalysts for me to say, ‘I think I can try anything.’ Through *FIRST*, I learned it was okay to be ambitious and to state my ambitions. People want you to be heard and they want you to feel valued.”

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TEAMS ARE MAKING WAVES

Every year, our community shows that being part of *FIRST* is *More Than Robots*.® It's about the growth you experience, the connections you build, and the positive change you help create in the world around you.

From innovators, to dreamers, to "Rule Breakers," our youth participants demonstrate what's possible when STEM meets passion, inspiration, and empowerment. Real-life testaments to the *FIRST* ethos of *Gracious Professionalism*® and *Coopertition*®, each season *FIRST* participants and alumni remind us that teamwork is the greatest catalyst for change and innovation.

These stories offer a glimpse of the powerful waves of positive change our community is creating.

DIVING DEEP: THE ENERGY WIZARDS TAKE INNOVATION BENEATH THE SURFACE

During the 2024–2025 FIRST LEGO League SUBMERGEDSM season, Team 57531 “Energy Wizards” from Peoria, Illinois, consulted ocean experts to refine the details of their underwater innovation.

This team of young engineers developed the Underwater Sample Line (USL), designed to continuously send collected samples to a research vessel while a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) stays submerged and continues its mission. Using the existing tether between the research vessel and the ROV like a zip-line to bring samples to the surface more quickly could potentially save researchers significant time and money as they explore the vast expanse of what lies beneath the surface of the ocean.

The Energy Wizards have submitted an application to patent the Underwater Sample Line and are eager to continue this impactful work.

**“I LEARNED A LOT
THROUGH TEAMWORK
AND FIRST CORE VALUES,
WHICH WE USE IN
EVERYDAY LIFE.”**

— Tanishqa, an Energy Wizards student team member



THEIR UNSTOPPABLE SPIRIT: “RULE BREAKERS” FILM CELEBRATES FIRST TEAM AFGHAN DREAMERS

From building robots that captured headlines to developing low-cost ventilators in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the “Afghan Dreamers,” an all-girls *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* Global Challenge team from Herat, Afghanistan, have become a symbol of innovation and persistence in the *FIRST* community and beyond. While their path was far from easy, their story remains a testament to the power of STEM education in shaping brighter futures.

In March 2025, their journey reached the big screen – including more than 2,000 theaters in the U.S. – with the release of “Rule Breakers,” a feature film inspired by the team’s pioneering spirit. Written and directed by Oscar and Emmy award winner, Bill Guttentag, and executive produced by the team’s founder, Roya Mahboob, the film offers a fictionalized account that blends the thrill and technical challenge of *FIRST* competitions with broader social and cultural realities the team had to overcome.

The story follows Roya Mahboob (portrayed by Nikohl Boosheri) as she empowers a group of young Afghan girls to pursue science and technology. With limited resources and wavering support, Mahboob forms Afghanistan’s first all-girls robotics team to compete on an international stage during the 2017 *FIRST* Global Challenge. As their success draws international media attention, it also brings public scrutiny – leading the team to lean on one another and the ethos of *FIRST: Gracious Professionalism, teamwork, and innovation.*

Since its release, “Rule Breakers” has drawn widespread acclaim for its storytelling and honest portrayal of the obstacles girls face in STEM. The Hollywood Reporter called it, “inspirational in the best sense of the word,” applauding Guttentag’s thoughtful direction and the film’s well-timed release during Women’s History Month. The movie also received honors at the Justice Film Festival and recognition for its trailer in industry awards.

For the *FIRST* community, “Rule Breakers” serves as a powerful reminder of what’s possible when young people are given the tools, mentorship, and platform to lead. The film exemplifies the heart of the *FIRST* mission: education access, global collaboration, and the belief that every student deserves the chance to build a better future.

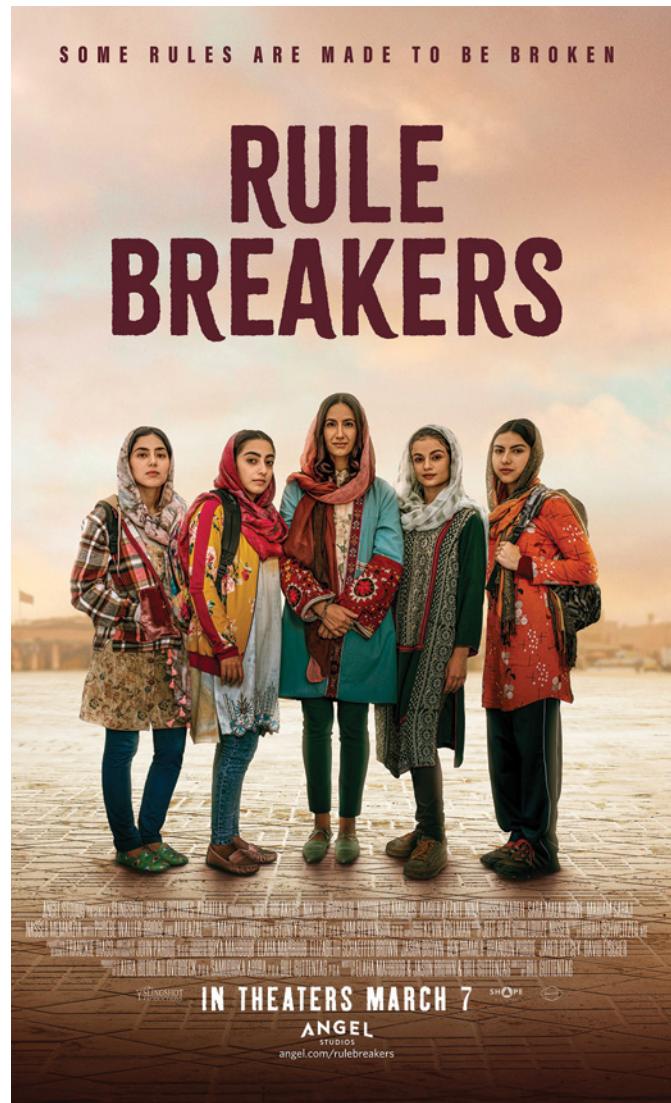


The Afghan Dreamers and their coach prepare for competition at the 2018 *FIRST* Championship with their *FIRST* Robotics Competition robot.

For streaming information, visit the Angel Studios website at www.angel.com/movies/rule-breakers.

**"INSPIRATIONAL IN
THE BEST SENSE
OF THE WORD."**

– *The Hollywood Reporter*



Afghan Dreamers co-founder and mentor Roya Mahboob (back row, center) celebrates the "Rule Breakers" premiere alongside the film's writers, producers, cast, and crew at the February 12 red carpet premiere event.



CONFIDENCE, COMMITMENT, AND CREATIVITY: THE JOURNEY OF TEAM HAMMERHEADS

FIRST LEGO League Team 61723 "Hammerheads" know a thing or two about perseverance and determination. Based out of Ron Joyce Children's Healthcare in Ontario, Canada, these students push the limits every season, inspired to outdo themselves year after year. What are they most proud of? Their consistency, confidence, and commitment.

"For many of these kids, FIRST is their only opportunity to be on a competitive team. And one of the reasons they are so competitive is because they know that if they fail and get back up and try again, they'll come out on the other side and succeed," said Mike Berube, team mentor for the Hammerheads.

Founded by a clinical leader for Hamilton Health Sciences' developmental pediatrics and rehabilitation program, Lindsay Bray, the intention behind Team Hammerheads was to provide the students with a fun and exciting challenge that they hadn't experienced before. When selecting FIRST as the STEAM program for her young patients, Bray focused on finding programming that would positively shape their futures, believing that hands-on STEM learning could inspire them to pursue exciting careers.

The team members of Hammerheads embrace the time and effort it takes to master STEM concepts, understanding the value of applying FIRST-learned skills to real-world challenges. Parents and coaches alike have praised Team Hammerheads' dedication, noting that their love of competition drives them to push forward through any hurdles. What stands out most in each team member is their confidence in their hard work and what they can achieve.

"I'm pretty excited; I'm really confident in what we have [built]," said team member, Oliver. "I think we're doing really well, and I believe in us."

"I'M PRETTY EXCITED; I'M REALLY CONFIDENT IN WHAT WE HAVE [BUILT]. I THINK WE'RE DOING REALLY WELL, AND I BELIEVE IN US."

— Oliver, a Hammerheads student team member



MORE THAN ROBOTS: CELEBRATING TEAMS THAT IMPACT AND INSPIRE

We get more of what we celebrate. To encourage *FIRST* teams to be *More Than Robots*, *FIRST* awards its highest honors to teams that go above and beyond building a robot for the game field. These judged awards are given to teams that serve as role models for others and help advance the mission of *FIRST*.



PROJECT BUCEPHALUS DELIVERS ON THE TEAM'S MISSION TO "CREATE OPPORTUNITY, TRANSFORM THE COMMUNITY."

FIRST Robotics Competition Team 5985 "Project Bucephalus" from Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia, won the *FIRST* Impact Award at the 2025 *FIRST* Championship. The team exemplifies how *FIRST* programs can strengthen communities by making STEM opportunities more available in meaningful, locally-driven ways.

Project Bucephalus delivers on the team's mission to "Create Opportunity, Transform the Community." For a decade, this team has run a formal "Teaching Program," traveling long distances weekly to deliver robotics classes to hundreds of students, many of whom face barriers to learning. Their "Unstoppable" initiative uses *FIRST* to help young people regain confidence, re-engage academically, and explore future pathways. Their work has sparked lasting growth of *FIRST* programs across the Wollongong region.

THROUGH THEIR GENUINE PASSION AND TIRELESS EFFORTS, THE TEAM MEMBERS SPREAD THE LOVE OF *FIRST*.

FIRST Tech Challenge Team 18139 "Rebel Robotics" from Norfolk, Nebraska, received the 2025 *FIRST* Championship Inspire Award, which recognizes excellence in teamwork, robot design, and community outreach in *FIRST* Tech Challenge.

By creating a vision system that seamlessly integrates hardware and software, Rebel Robotics overcame the game challenge of precision versus speed. The team's comprehensive playbook motivates students, coaches, and mentors, creating a pipeline of future engineers throughout Nebraska. Through their genuine passion and tireless efforts, team members spread the love of *FIRST* across their state, truly inspiring everyone they encounter. Rebel Robotics was invited to represent the U.S. at the *FIRST* Global Challenge in October 2025.

FIRST DIVESM PRESENTED BY QUALCOMM



Our 2024-2025 season theme, *FIRST*[®] DIVESM presented by Qualcomm, explored life beneath the surface of the ocean and encouraged our global youth participants to uncover their potential to strengthen their communities and innovate for a better world. The season's program challenges inspired *FIRST* teams to be curious and creative problem-solvers and build skills as they worked together to create innovative solutions through robotics.

A SEASON IN NUMBERS

853,000+

students impacted

5,400+

official *FIRST* events

114

countries with
FIRST programs

493,000+

volunteer, mentor, and educator roles

39 million+

volunteer, mentor, and educator hours

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

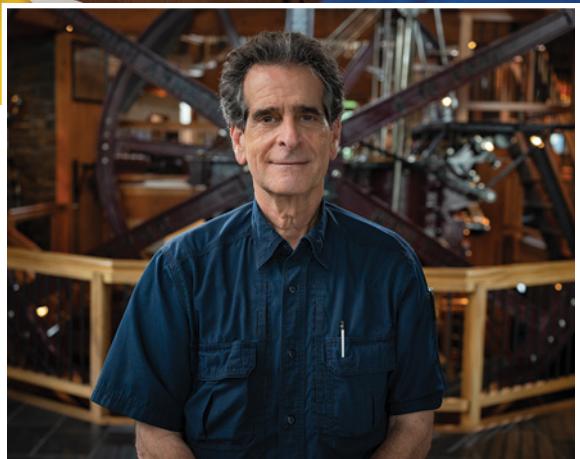
FIRST grew the number of young people the organization serves annually with life-changing robotics programs; **overall youth participation was up 9%** from the 2023-2024 season.

FIRST continued to influence culture as the leader in youth robotics, with appearances in media outlets such as Good Morning America, TODAY, Forbes, FastCompany, and Parents.com; and significant growth on social media: @first_official_ is now one of the top 5% most-followed Instagram accounts globally.

FIRST awarded five outstanding community organizations with STEM Community Innovation Grants, a competitive annual program that has granted more than \$3 million to community leaders since 2016 to develop innovative approaches to close the STEM education gap.

Global healthcare technology company **Medtronic**, a *FIRST* sponsor since 2006, grew its support by becoming a *FIRST* Strategic Partner to expand opportunities in robotics to all students through *FIRST*.

FIRST continued efforts to lower barriers to participation by developing educator and facilitator resources to support program implementation, including a **free Grades 7-12 Robotic Engineering Exploration Curriculum**.



FIRST® LEGO® LEAGUE





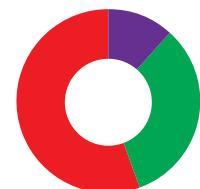
Season Participation

650,000+

students in **77 countries** explored STEM concepts and gained real-world problem-solving experiences through *FIRST LEGO League*.

95%

of *FIRST LEGO League* Challenge coaches indicated* students **increased their confidence in approaching problems in math and science.**



76,000+

Discover students

213,000+

Explore students

360,000+

Challenge students

In *FIRST LEGO League*'s **SUBMERGED**SM preK-8 participants explored the layers of the ocean, then put their STEM and collaboration skills to work to imagine and innovate. Younger students built a LEGO® model exploring ocean habitats, animals, vehicles, and places where research can be conducted and tracked what they learned, and some teams used code to bring their model to life. Upper-grade teams learned about how and why people explore the oceans and developed creative solutions related to the theme. They also identified a mission strategy and designed, created, and coded a robot to complete missions for the Robot Game.

Spotlight



To commemorate the **SUBMERGED** season, hundreds of teams made a splash at several multinational ***FIRST LEGO League Open Events*** around the world. At the *FIRST LEGO League Open Africa* Championship, 80 teams representing 39 countries came together in Cape Town, South Africa, from May 7-9, 2025, making waves with their creativity, innovation, and lots of *Gracious Professionalism*.

* Source: 2025 *FIRST LEGO League* Challenge end-of-season surveys

FIRST® TECH CHALLENGE



AGES 12-18 (GRADES 7-12)

Ages may vary by region.



Season Participation

109,000+

students in **81 countries** developed STEM skills, practiced engineering principles, and explored the value of teamwork through *FIRST* Tech Challenge.

97%

of *FIRST* Tech Challenge students say* they **learned to persevere despite challenges or barriers.**

*Source: 2025 *FIRST* Tech Challenge end-of-season survey



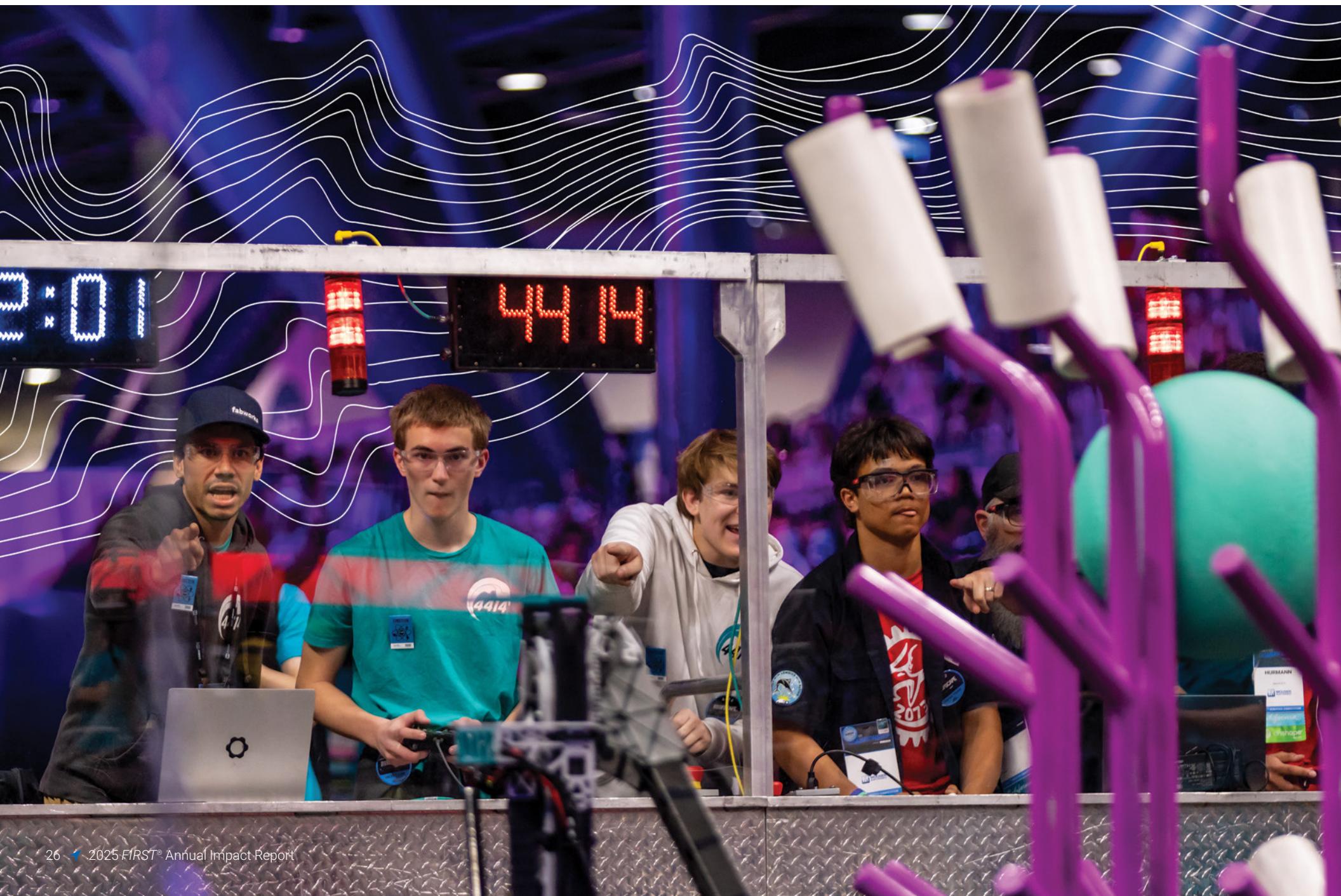
This season, *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams used their STEM and collaboration skills to explore the complex ecosystems in the depths of the ocean in **INTO THE DEEPSM** **presented by RTX**. Teams designed, built, programmed, and operated robots to compete in an ocean-themed two-on-two challenge. Over two-and-a-half minutes of game play with autonomous and driver-controlled sections, alliances competed to earn points by collecting and sorting samples into baskets, creating specimens, driving into the observation zones, and climbing the rungs of the submersible to ascend out of the deep.

Spotlight



This season, *FIRST* Tech Challenge piloted a **new event type, with eight Premier Events** hosted April-July, offering over 360 additional advancement opportunities for *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams to attend multinational events from their Regional Championships. At the European Premier Event, 98 teams representing 27 countries competed in Eindhoven, Netherlands, from July 1-5, 2025. Premier Events will continue next season.

FIRST® ROBOTICS COMPETITION



AGES 14-18 (GRADES 9-12)

Ages may vary by region.



PRESENTED BY



Season Participation

93,000+

students in **35 countries** unlocked real-world engineering concepts, self-confidence, and workforce skills in FIRST Robotics Competition.

92%

of FIRST Robotics Competition students say* they **increased their problem-solving skills**.

* Source: 2025 FIRST Robotics Competition end-of-season survey

In REEFSCAPESM presented by Haas, teams used their engineering skills to strengthen one of the ocean's most diverse habitats and make waves to build a better world. During game play, two competing alliances were invited to score coral, harvest algae, and attach to the barge before time ran out. Alliances earned additional rewards for meeting specific scoring thresholds and for cooperating with their opponents.

Spotlight



FIRST founder Dean Kamen and YouTube creator and engineer Mark Rober filmed a [video tour](#) of Rober's CrunchLabs showcasing the fun of innovating. The video aired during the REEFSCAPE season Kickoff at more than 160 live Kickoff events around the world on January 4, 2025.

FIRST®
2025
CHAMPIONSHIP
PRESENTED BY
BAE SYSTEMS



FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP SHOWCASES A SEA OF STUDENT STEM TALENT

2025 FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY BAE SYSTEMS HIGHLIGHTS

The 2025 FIRST Championship presented by BAE Systems brought together more than 50,000 students, mentors, volunteers, and supporters from 66 countries to celebrate innovation and collaboration. Across multiple days of competition in April at Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center, more than 1,000 FIRST robotics teams demonstrated the power of STEM to unite and inspire.

50,000+
attendees

19,000+
student competitors

66
countries
represented

1,056
FIRST teams

1,300+
event volunteers



▲ Chris Moore, chief executive officer of *FIRST*, tours the pits to connect with students, volunteers, and supporters and see the creativity and dedication behind their work.



"*FIRST* has brought competitive youth robotics to life for 36 years, transforming it into the only sport where every kid can go pro. The life-changing impact of *FIRST* has been on display all week at *FIRST* Championship. From their heart-pounding matches on the fields to inspiring displays of innovation and teamwork, our participants are building the network and the skills needed to take them anywhere they want to go in their career."

— Chris Moore, CEO, *FIRST*



"At BAE Systems, we believe in empowering the next generation of innovators to take on the world's most pressing challenges. The 2025 *FIRST* Championship was a celebration of the ingenuity, teamwork, and determination that will define the leaders and problem-solvers of tomorrow. We are honored to support this extraordinary event and the students whose talents and ideas are shaping a brighter future."

— Tom Arseneault, president and CEO, BAE Systems, Inc.



◀ The Gene Haas Foundation was the recipient of the Founder's Award, presented each year by *FIRST* founder Dean Kamen to one organization or individual for exceptional service in advancing the ideals and mission of *FIRST*.

Thank you to our 2025 *FIRST* Championship sponsors who appear on [page 40](#) of this report.

SPONSORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Our sponsors, suppliers, donors, and other contributors are the steady current moving *FIRST* and its global impact forward. Their generosity fuels our programs, expands access, and empowers young people to navigate their own paths with confidence. We are deeply grateful for the supporters recognized in these pages, each anchoring our mission and helping young people reach new horizons through *FIRST*.

2024-2025 STRATEGIC PARTNERS



BAE SYSTEMS



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Novelis



FIRST FOUNDING SPONSORS

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Boston Scientific
Advancing science for life™



DEKA



Johnson & Johnson

KLEINER PERKINS

 **MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS FOUNDATION**

xerox™

CORPORATIONS & FOUNDATIONS

\$1,000,000+

Apple
Apple Matching Gifts ♥
The Argosy Foundation
BAE Systems, Inc.
BAE Systems, Inc. Matching Gifts ♥
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SWEDEN FIRST Scandinavia ●●	ARIZONA Arizona State University ●● Coconino High School Robotics ●	FLORIDA – NORTHWEST DEFENSEWERX Inc. ●●	MAINE NE FIRST ● Robotics Institute of Maine ●	NEVADA FIRST Nevada ●●●●	OHIO WPAFB Educational Outreach ●●●
SWITZERLAND HANDS on TECHNOLOGY e.V. ●●	CALIFORNIA – CENTRAL Clovis Unified School District ●●	FLORIDA – SOUTH Cox Science Center and Aquarium ●●	MARYLAND FIRST Chesapeake ●● University of Maryland Baltimore County ●	NEW HAMPSHIRE FIRST New Hampshire Robotics ●●●	OKLAHOMA Oklahoma Science and Engineering Foundation (OKSEF) ●●●
THAILAND GAMMACO ●● The Prince Royal's College ●	CALIFORNIA – LOS ANGELES Next Careers ●	FLORIDA – WEST COAST State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota ●●	MASSACHUSETTS Boston Tech Initiative Corp. ● NE FIRST ●● WPI Robotics Resource Center ●●	NEW JERSEY FIRST Mid-Atlantic ● FIRST Tech Challenge New Jersey ●	OREGON FIRST Washington ● Oregon Robotics Tournament & Outreach Program ●●●
TUNISIA Edurobot Tunisia ●●	CALIFORNIA – NORTHERN Playing at Learning ●●●	GUAM SIFA ●●	MICHIGAN FIRST in Michigan ●●●●	NEW JERSEY – NORTH FIRST Mid-Atlantic ●●●	PENNSYLVANIA Pennsylvania FIRST Robotics ●
TÜRKİYE Bilim Kahramanları Bulusuyor (BKD) ●● Fikret Yüksel Foundation ●●	CALIFORNIA – SAN DIEGO Robotics Inspiring Science and Engineering Inc. ●●	HAWAII Hawaii FIRST Robotics ●●●●	MINNESOTA High Tech Kids ●●●●	NEW JERSEY – SOUTH Rowan University ●●	EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA FIRST Mid-Atlantic ●
		IDAHO Idaho Regional Robotics, Inc. ●●●●	MISSISSIPPI Center for Mathematics and Science Education/The University of Mississippi ● Robotics Alliance of Mississippi ●●	NEW MEXICO FIRST in Texas ● Land of Enchantment Robotics ●●●●	PENNSYLVANIA – CENTRAL Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 ●●
		ILLINOIS FIRST Illinois Robotics ●●●●		NEW YORK – EXCELSIOR Mohawk Valley Community College ●	PENNSYLVANIA – EAST FIRST Mid-Atlantic ●●●●

*Local Partner Representative ● FIRST LEGO League Explore ● FIRST LEGO League Challenge ● FIRST Tech Challenge ● FIRST Robotics Competition

PENNSYLVANIA – NORTHWEST

Penn State Erie, The Behrend College ●

PENNSYLVANIA – SOUTHWEST

BrainSTEM Learning ●●

PUERTO RICO

Eureka Enrichment Services, Inc. ●●●

RHODE ISLAND

NE FIRST ●

New England Institute of Technology ●

Rhode Island School of the Future ●●

SOUTH CAROLINA

FIRST South Carolina ●●●●

SOUTH DAKOTA

EmBe ●●

TENNESSEE

TNFIRST ●

TENNESSEE – CHATTANOOGA (NORTH GEORGIA)

Tennessee Valley Robotics (TVR) ●●

TENNESSEE – EAST

Tennessee Tech University ●●

TENNESSEE – WEST

NoBox ●●

TEXAS

FIRST in Texas ●

TEXAS – FIT

FIRST in Texas ●●●

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Technology/FIRST
South Africa ●●

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- FIRST LEGO League Explore
- FIRST LEGO League Challenge
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- FIRST Robotics Competition



PRESENTED BY
Qualcomm

RIPPLE EFFECT: 2025 FIRST VOLUNTEERS, MENTORS, AND COACHES

As part of our global robotics community, FIRST mentors, coaches, and event volunteers work side by side with FIRST participants to develop their leadership and problem-solving skills and foster self-confidence. When they share their skillset, champion participants, and demonstrate the FIRST Core Values, they are role models to the next generation of leaders and innovators.

At the [2025 FIRST Championship](#), we honored a few outstanding [event volunteers](#), mentors, and coaches from each of our programs for their contributions of time and talent to the FIRST community:

FIRST Robotics Competition**Volunteer of the Year Award**

Thad House (Pacific Northwest, U.S.)

Woodie Flowers Award

Francisco "Paco" Guerra (Monterrey, Mexico)

FIRST Tech Challenge**Volunteer of the Year Award**

Chris Silvano (Oklahoma, U.S.)

Compass Award

Patrick Mulcah (Minnesota, U.S.)

FIRST LEGO League**Volunteer of the Year Award**

Cameron Schriner (Georgia, U.S.)

Coach/Mentor Awards

Liia Tammes (Vaela küla, Estonia)

Sonja Fick (Oberkochen, Germany)

Daniel Bryant (Utah, U.S.)

Ciou Jyun-Yuan (Taichung, Chinese Taipei)

Sarah Cerra (New Mexico, U.S.)

Leigh Northrup (North Carolina, U.S.)

“The impact of *FIRST* on today’s youth is unparalleled. By supporting *FIRST* and helping students prepare for whatever lies ahead in their lives and careers, Haas is proud to play a vital role in shaping the talent and character of tomorrow’s leaders.”

— Kathy Looman, director of education, Gene Haas Foundation





FINANCIALS

FIRST reported an operating surplus for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. This positive result was primarily driven by strong interest earnings on cash investments, continued support from our generous sponsors, and modest program growth. Similar factors contributed to the surplus in FY2024.

In FY2025, *FIRST* served 9 percent more youth participants than in the prior year. Consistent with long-standing practice, we continued to direct the maximum possible share of funds to directly benefit *FIRST* participants. Delivering high-quality programs to as many young people as possible remains our top priority; however, economic pressures and inflation have presented ongoing challenges.

To address these challenges, *FIRST* actively pursued opportunities to manage expenses through disciplined cost control, strategic sourcing, and effective cash management – while continuing to benefit from the generosity of our sponsors. We also maintained investments in critical initiatives, including our Youth Protection Program, Information Technology, Program Evaluation, and Education Initiative.

Looking ahead, *FIRST* plans to leverage prior-year operating surpluses to support strategic priorities focused on expanding the reach and impact of our programs, reducing barriers to participation, and advancing global awareness and innovation.

As in past years, support from our contributors remained strong. Thousands of individuals, small businesses, corporations, and foundations worldwide sustained or increased their commitments to *FIRST*. Notably, many provided unrestricted donations, giving *FIRST* the flexibility to manage rising costs and address key organizational priorities. This continued generosity enabled us to provide meaningful, life-changing experiences to hundreds of thousands of youth participants across the globe.



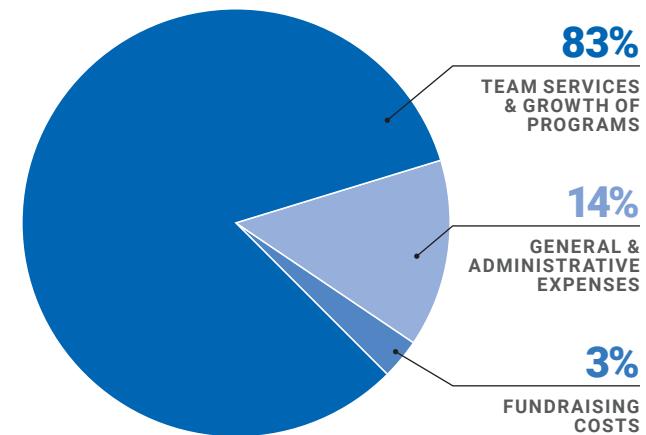
Charity Navigator Four-Star Rating

FIRST has a top-ranked four-star rating from Charity Navigator for consistently executing its mission in a fiscally responsible way.

SOURCE: <https://www.charitynavigator.org/ein/222990908>

Expense Allocation

See Financial Statements, [page 46](#).



STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES		JUNE 30, 2025		JUNE 30, 2024	
OPERATING REVENUES AND SUPPORT					
Program Revenue		\$ 36,656,430	41.04%	\$ 33,711,658	40.12%
Contributions and Grants		12,390,841	13.87%	15,366,461	18.29%
Other income, net of expenses		3,340,964	3.74%	2,625,564	3.12%
Net assets released from restrictions		36,927,824	41.35%	32,325,498	38.47%
Total operating revenues (losses) and support		\$ 89,316,059	100.00%	\$ 84,029,181	100.00%
EXPENSES					
FIRST Program Expenses		74,337,123	82.61%	71,663,083	86.07%
Net cost of building space occupied by unrelated not-for-profit organizations		299,419	0.33%	313,435	0.38%
General, administrative, and supporting services		12,493,902	13.88%	8,834,845	10.61%
Fundraising and Development		2,858,176	3.18%	2,447,985	2.94%
Total expenses		\$ 89,988,620	100.00%	\$ 83,259,348	100.00%
NON-OPERATING REVENUE					
Realized and unrealized gains		639,910	18.42%	175,243	7.12%
Interest income		2,833,812	81.58%	2,284,614	92.88%
Changes in Net Assets from Non-Operating Activities		\$ 3,473,722	100.00%	\$ 2,459,857	100.00%
Total Change in Net Assets (Surplus/(Deficit))		2,801,161		3,229,690	
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION		JUNE 30, 2025		JUNE 30, 2024	
ASSETS:					
Cash and cash equivalents*		\$ 13,963,295	19.12%	\$ 20,280,927	26.32%
Short-term investments*		9,955,220	13.63%	3,411,598	4.43%
Long-term investments		33,310,118	45.62%	28,882,408	37.49%
Pledges, receivables, program supply inventory, and other assets		9,996,555	13.69%	18,952,406	24.60%
Net property, plant, and equipment		5,796,793	7.94%	5,516,225	7.16%
Total assets, end of year		\$ 73,021,981	100.00%	\$ 77,043,564	100.00%
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS					
Total liabilities, end of year		\$ 7,612,331		\$ 8,322,517	
Net assets:					
Without restriction		39,451,414	60.31%	36,650,253	53.33%
With restriction - temporary in nature		25,958,236	39.69%	32,070,794	46.67%
Total net assets, end of year		\$ 65,409,650	100.00%	\$ 68,721,047	100.00%
Total liabilities and net assets, end of year		\$ 73,021,981		\$ 77,043,564	

For each of the two fiscal years summarized above, FIRST received unmodified (unqualified) opinions from its independent auditor, BerryDunn.

*NOTE: The cash and investments are comprised of both unrestricted funds and donor temporarily restricted funds. The total liquid assets balance available to FIRST, for operating purposes, at June 30, 2025, is equivalent to approximately five months of FIRST operating expenses.

The financial information presented here is condensed and does not include the value of all donated services and materials. Audited Financial Statements (AFS) are readily available on our website at firstinspires.org/about/annual-report.

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Learn more about FIRST Leadership at www.firstinspires.org/about/leadership

Listing current as of November 2025

FIRST® IS THE WORLD'S LEADING ROBOTICS COMMUNITY PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE FUTURE.

PURPOSE

FIRST exists to prepare the young people of today for the world of tomorrow.

VISION

To transform our culture by creating a world where science and technology are celebrated and where young people dream of becoming science and technology leaders.

MISSION

To provide life-changing robotics programs that give young people the skills, confidence, and resilience to build a better world.

CORE VALUES

Discovery
We explore new skills and ideas.

Innovation
We use creativity and persistence to solve problems.

Impact
We apply what we learn to improve our world.

Inclusion
We respect each other and embrace our differences.

Teamwork
We are stronger when we work together.

Fun
We enjoy and celebrate what we do!



Founded by inventor Dean Kamen in 1989, FIRST is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, headquartered in Manchester, New Hampshire.
200 Bedford Street, Manchester, NH 03101 | 800.871.8326 | www.firstinspires.org

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