

Contact:

Lindsey Carlin

(310) 967-2908

lindsey.carlin@cohnwolfe.com

Massachusetts & California High School Teams Dominate VEX Robotics Competition World Championship

*International Competition Stimulates Students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
through Competitive Robotics Challenges*

Dallas, Texas – May 4, 2008 – Innovation First International, creators of the VEX Robotics Competition World Championship, today announced that teams from Champs Charter High School, Crowther home school and El Camino Real High School were crowned as the world champion winning alliance. Nearly 300 hundred elite VEX teams from middle schools, high schools and university campuses from around the world competed at the Dallas Convention Center on May 1-2 with robots they built using the VEX Robotics Design System.

The teams triumphed executing the game “*Elevation*”, applying their programming skills and strategic thinking to defeat the opposition. The tournament was designed as a vehicle for students to develop critical life skills such as teamwork, leadership and project management, honed through building robots and competing with like-minded students from around the world in a fun, non-traditional environment. “We are committed to providing opportunities such as this worldwide competition to further motivate kids to be passionate about science and technology,” said Jason Morrella, senior director of education and competition for Innovation First International. “Our goal is to have these students apply the knowledge they acquire with VEX robotics to real-world challenges.”

The VEX Robotics Competition World Championship, the most esteemed VEX robotics competition, hosted teams from 10 countries including Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Hong Kong, Korea, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, for two days of non-stop pulse-pounding robotics challenges. Dennis Nevsky, the SPUR-FLYS captain from Champs Charter High School, one of the teams from the winning alliance said, “Competing with and against teams from around the world was an incredible opportunity and really fun. The competition was fierce but we triumphed because our alliance of three teams communicated as if we were one and we played off of each others strengths to defeat our competitor.”

“The winning alliance exhibited amazing teamwork and problem-solving skills in the final matches,” continued Morrella. “A lot of time and creativity went into the design of their robots and we congratulate them for their outstanding strategic thinking and engineering skills.” In addition to the robotics tournament, the Excellence Award was presented for the top overall robotics programs. Winner of the high school Excellence award was Team 1114a, the Simbotics from Governor Simcoe Secondary School in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. The winner of the Middle School Excellence Award was Team 2243a, Cybergenetic from Cupeyville Middle School in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, sponsored by PRIOR. They were one of 46 participating Middle School teams.

Innovation First International also premiered the pilot college challenge at this year's VEX Robotics Competition World Championship, marking its first competitive robotics program geared towards college students. The winning team from the college division was Massey University of New Zealand. "We are so excited that the VEX platform now applies to university students and we are honored to have won the college challenge pilot season," said Maurice Tipene, Massey University team captain. "One of the best parts of this experience is that we successfully used the VEXnet 802.11 wireless system, which doesn't require the use of crystals or cables and enables an endless number of robots to operate simultaneously."

Partnering with Innovation First, Inc. as presenting co-sponsors were returning supporters Autodesk Inc., NASA and FUTURE Foundation, as well as first-time supporters EMC, SolidWorks and iD Tech Camps. Massey University of New Zealand School of Engineering and Advanced Technology also offered participating students the opportunity to apply for the chance to win one \$5,000 scholarship towards their first year fees for a Massey Engineering degree.

Students competed playing the game *Elevation*, along with corresponding Programming Skills Challenges and Robot Skills Challenges that were incorporated to further stretch the competitive imagination of teams. "In addition to these in-person competitions, three Online Design Challenges pitted competitors against each other who submitted virtual entries via the internet," concluded Morrella. The VEX Robotics Competition World Championship culminated with Innovation First International unveiling the 2009 - 2010 VEX Robotics Competition game *Clean Sweep*. Registration for the 2009-2010 season is now open and game objects for *Clean Sweep* are available. For more detailed information about the new game visit [VEX Clean Sweep](#).

More information about the VEX Robotics World Championship is available at www.robotevents.com.

About Innovation First International

Innovation First International, a privately held corporation, was founded on the belief that innovation very early in the design process is necessary to produce simple and elegant product designs. Innovation First began producing electronics for unmanned mobile ground robots, and is now an industry leader in the hobby, competition, education and toy markets. The company's award winning VEX Robotics Design System, HEXBUG Micro Robotic Creatures and IFI Robotics span the education, consumer and business-to-business markets. Leveraging the company's core competency in electrical and mechanical engineering, the RackSolutions division works closely with all major computer OEMs to provide custom mounting solutions and industry-wide rack compatibility for data installations of all sizes. The company's United States operations include an advanced in-house metal fabrication plant, distribution center, and office located together in a 13 acre complex in Greenville, Texas. Poised to continue on a rapid growth path, the company also operates a sales office and distribution center in Warrington, United Kingdom. Please visit www.innovationfirst.com for additional information.

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