

The FIRST™ LEGO® League:

The FIRST LEGO League program is an International program founded by famed U.S. inventor Dean Kamen. Maine has been participating in the program since 2000 and has seen tremendous excitement and growth within the program.

The season runs from September through the tournament, which in Maine has always been scheduled in the beginning of December. This year there will be one tournament at the Maine Maritime Academy on November 19th, and a second tournament in the Portland area the first weekend of December.

Groups that are interested should contact Tom Bickford at Maine Robotics for additional information (866-4340 or bickford@mainerobotics.org). Each team can have from 2 to 10 children ages 9 to 14. These children with the help of a coach/mentor build and program robots to perform missions on a playing field. The 2005 challenge is based on using robotics and technology to explore and conserve the oceans of the world.

Each team also researches how robotics can affect the topic for the year. This year they will use the Internet, local groups, invited guests, or any other source, to learn about the oceans and then come up with a possible robotic solution that could help solve a problem the team has identified. These children then put together a 3 to 5 minute presentation to give at the tournament which is then followed by a 5 minute question and answer period by the judges.

Together, the table top competition and the research/presentation competition make up the FIRST™ LEGO® League program. What makes the FLL stand out from others is the length of time the children are involved in the program. Usually spanning several months and on average 40-50 hours of contact time, the program is one of the most intense, rewarding, and challenging programs available.

For more information:

Maine Robotics home page: www.mainerobotics.org

FLL home page: www.firstlegoleague.org

FIRST home page: www.usfirst.org

MAINE ROBOTICS
167 BENNOCH ROAD
ORONO, ME 04473