



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Over Half a Million Dollars for High School Robotics from Texas Workforce Commission

(Austin, TX) – The STEM Council at Skillpoint Alliance is pleased to announce that they have been selected to manage the FIRST® in Texas Foundation, a 501(c)3 foundation dedicated to funding, training and supporting FIRST® Robotics programs across the state of Texas. This fall, FIRST® in Texas is distributing more than \$550,000 from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to support high school FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC) and FIRST® Robotics Competition (FRC) teams in Texas; funds may cover team registration costs, equipment and materials.

The funds the FIRST® in Texas Foundation is distributing on behalf of the TWC are available to all **high school FIRST®** Robotics teams. To qualify for funds from the TWC, teams must participate in the state of Texas and all student team members must be in 9th-12th grades. **Unlike years past, ALL new and existing team can apply regardless of how many years they have participated.** In addition, the TWC has specific interest in reaching students enrolled in schools on military bases, students with disabilities, students who are homeschooled and students from economically disadvantaged families. TWC is also interested in allocating funds to teams in the West Texas and Panhandle areas.

"Foundations like FIRST® in Texas create opportunities for Texas students to get hands-on with engineering in an inspiring environment that encourages students' pursuit of post-secondary education in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) degrees that will qualify them to fill the growing number of high-tech jobs we have here in Texas," says FIRST® in Texas Board Chair, Ray Almgren of National Instruments.

Teams participating in these FIRST® Robotics programs can apply:

- **FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC)** is a hands-on robotics program where teams design, create, and program robots to compete and cooperate in an alliance format with other teams at tournaments throughout the season. Teams are required to develop strategy and build robots based on sound engineering principles with support from volunteer coaches and mentors.
- **FIRST® Robotics Competition (FRC)** is "the varsity sport for the mind," combining the excitement of sports with the rigors of science and technology. Under strict rules, limited resources, and time limits, teams and their volunteer coaches and mentors are challenged to raise funds, design a team brand, hone teamwork skills, and build and program robots to perform prescribed tasks against a field of competitors at tournaments.

APPLY FOR FUNDING TODAY AT www.FIRSTinTexas.org

FIRST® in Texas Foundation, a 501(c)3 foundation dedicated to funding, training and supporting FIRST® Robotics programs across the state of Texas. For more information: www.firstintexas.org.

Skillpoint Alliance, a non-profit community enterprise based in Austin, builds partnerships among industry, education and the community, leading to college and career success for Central Texans, while meeting employers' needs for a qualified workforce. For more information: www.skillpointalliance.org

The STEM Council at Skillpoint Alliance is a consortium of high tech executives and education leaders that address workforce and education needs of the engineering and high-tech industries in Central Texas through project-based robotics, green tech, and digital media programs that expose students to high-demand STEM career skills. For more information: www.skillpointalliance.org/STEM