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## **UNITED STATES, CANADA, CHINA AND NEW ZEALAND TEAMS REIGN SUPREME AT THE VEX ROBOTICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP**

*MYTHBUSTERS & HEAD RUSH Host Kari Byron Celebrates Future Innovators at the Ultimate Robotics Competition of the 2010-2011 VEX Robotics Season*

**Sterling Heights, Mich. – April 18, 2010 –** Participants of the 2011 VEX Robotics World Championship were joined this weekend by Kari Byron, host of the Discovery Channel's hit show *MYTHBUSTERS* and the Science Channel's *HEAD RUSH*, as winning alliances from the Middle School, High School and College competitions triumphed from United States, Canada, China and New Zealand, after outmaneuvering some of the world's best teams during the intense three-day tournament which took place on April 14-16 at Walt Disney World's ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex near Orlando, Fla.

Upon arrival, students were showered with confetti from bursting canons, welcomed by stilt walkers, a resident DJ, and entertained by a graffiti artist that painting the town robo-red in honor of the intense competition. The games kicked off on Thursday and continued Friday when teams from around the world poured into the stadium for the opening ceremonies, waving colorful flags from their respective countries and hailed by Mickey and friends. "There was so much energy and talent at this year's VEX Robotics World Championship that it inspired us both on and off the field," said Grace Hsieh of the winning high school champion alliance from team W.A.S.A.B.I. 2 hailing from Bellevue, Washington. "It was an amazing experience to meet and compete with some of the best teams from all over the world."

After a series of intense back-to-back matches and elimination rounds, the High School Champion alliance emerged with teams comprised of Massachusetts' Green Egg Robotics Club, Washington's W.A.S.A.B.I. 2 and Ontario, Canada's Simbotics teams. The Middle School Champion represented an alliance of China teams from Sichuan Chengdu Longjiang Road Primary School and the Shanghai Luwan Teenagers Activity Center. The College Championship title went to Massey University from New Zealand. In addition, one team from each of the three divisions was presented with an Excellence Award, the highest honor in the VEX Robotics Competition, given to the team with the most well-rounded VEX Robotics Program. Middle School, High School and College Excellence Award winners included, the VEXMEN: NightCrawler team from Downingtown Area Robotics in Downingtown, Pa., the Cheesy Poofs from Bellarmine College Prep in San Jose, Calif., and Massey University in New Zealand.

"As the fastest growing robotics program and largest middle and high school competition in the world, the VEX Robotics World Championship is a testament to the increasing interest in engaging kids in STEM education through robotics," said Jason Morrella, president of the REC Foundation, which stands for Robotics Education and Competition Foundation. "Robotics is a perfect model for workforce development, and it's critical that we prepare our youth to succeed in today's rapidly-advancing competitive world, by imbedding programs like VEX Robotics into daytime curriculum, and then enabling them to test their skills as an extracurricular activity in events like this."

The VEX Robotics World Championship was the pinnacle event of the 2010-2011 VEX Robotics Competition season, brought together by the non-profit REC Foundation, VEX Robotics, Inc. and their partners Autodesk, NASA, EMC, Northrop Grumman and Innovation First International. The event drew more than 10,000 middle school, high school and university participants representing 16 countries from around the world, and teams created customized robots built with the VEX Robotics Design System to compete against the best of the best playing the 2010-2011 season game *Round Up*.

In addition to the Excellence Awards and Middle School, High School and College Champion titles, several other technical and value based awards were presented to teams and individuals in each division for excelling in the following categories: Build, Community, Create, Design, Education, Energy, Future, Innovate, Inspire, Judges, Promote, Sportsmanship, Support, Teamwork, Think, Robot Skills Challenges, Mentor of the Year, Partner of the Year, Teacher of the Year and Volunteer of the Year.

BEST Robotics, a middle and high school national robotics program established in 1993, also hosted its second annual national championship alongside the VEX Robotics World Championship. The Boy Scouts of America were on hand to

award some of the first Robotics Merit Badges to more than 25 deserving scouts. Meanwhile, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy AROW hosted its water robotics competition.

Presenting co-sponsors of the 2011 VEX Robotics Competition World Championship include Autodesk Inc., NASA, EMC Corporation, and the FUTURE Foundation. Additional supporting partners include Robotics Education & Competition (REC) Foundation, Microchip, Intelitek, Robotics Academy at Carnegie Mellon University, the CREATE Foundation and Northrop Grumman.

The 2011/2012 VEX Robotics Competition game *Gateway* was unveiled after much anticipation at the tournament. The object of next year's game is to attain a higher score than your opponent by picking up colored balls and barrels and placing them in circular goalposts of varying heights.

For more information about the VEX Robotics World Championship and this year's award winners, please visit [RobotEvents.com/championship](http://RobotEvents.com/championship).

#### **ATTENTION TELEVISION AND WEB MEDIA**

VEX Robotics World Championship b-roll supplementing this release is available for local television and web use. Interested media can access the b-roll package and photographs at [vexroboticsworldchampionship2011.com/](http://vexroboticsworldchampionship2011.com/).

#### **About REC Foundation**

The REC Foundation, standing for Robotics Education and Competition, is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, supports robotics and technology events and programs that aim to inspire and motivate students to advance in STEM education. In addition to supporting competitions for some of the world's leading robotics platforms and organizations including VEX, TSA, BOTBALL and BEST, the foundation also provides program support and workshops focused on technology and professional development for educators – including the RobotEvents.com community portal website which helps promote multiple high quality programs and provides online registration and event pages for hundreds of events around the world.

#### **About VEX Robotics and Innovation First International**

VEX Robotics, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Innovation First International, is a leading provider of educational robotics products to middle schools, high schools and colleges around the world. The VEX Robotics Design System, winner of the 2006 Best of Innovations Award at CES, was built from the ground up and designed to be an affordable, accessible and scalable platform used to teach science, technology, engineering and math education worldwide. The company has over 250 man years of experience supporting educational robotics programs and extensive engineering resources on two continents dedicated to the VEX Robotics platform. For more information on the VEX Robotics Design System, visit [vexrobotics.com](http://vexrobotics.com).

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