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The REC Foundation Announces 2011 VRC Online Challenge Winners

Top Prizes Include Six Coveted Spots at the 2011 VRC World Championship & Thousands of Dollars in State of the Art VEX Equipment

STERLING HEIGHTS, MI – March 30, 2011 – Top VEX Robotics teams from around the world spent three months strategically crafting detailed submissions for the VRC Online Challenges. In advance of the highly-anticipated 2011 VEX Robotics Competition World Championship, the REC Foundation [announced](#) winners and finalists of the six sponsored online challenges. The top-ranking entrant in each of the online challenges received a coveted spot at the 2011 VRC World Championships, scheduled to take place on April 14-16 at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at the Walt Disney World® Resort near Orlando, Florida. Top finalists of each challenge were also recognized for their teamwork and achievements with gift cards to vexrobotics.com in values of \$250, \$500 and \$750. Students also entered the VEX-sponsored online essay contest, for which the top 10 entrants received \$50 gift cards.

“These Online Challenges activate the global VEX Robotics community and foster widespread participation from teams of all sizes and with varying levels of expertise and specific strengths,” said Jason Morella, president of the REC Foundation. “Thanks to our sponsors, students get the chance to apply themselves to one or more categories they most enjoy, whether it’s website design, communications and public relations, video design or written storytelling. Most importantly, these online competitions teach students the importance of presentation and the amount of time and energy that goes into creating a final, polished product.”

VEX Robotics, Inc, Autodesk¹, EMC Corporation, and the FUTURE Foundation sponsored the robotics and animation online competition, which challenged students to create a final product that related to furthering robotics and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in multiple applications. The majority of teams will be able to use their submissions in real-world applications, further enhancing the value of participating in the challenges.

“Our goal is to help students embrace STEM education through hands-on learning in the classroom, with hopes that they seek out higher education and careers in design and engineering,” said Joe Astroth, chief education officer for Autodesk. “We are continuously inspired by our students who push the limits of the Autodesk Inventor program to seamlessly transform an idea into a fully formed virtual prototype.”

In the Autodesk Inventor 2011 Digital Prototyping Challenge, the three dominating designs included a “VEX Urban Explorer” robotic prototype that could successfully navigate multiple types of terrain including stairs, “The Rookie” robotic prototype designed to dispose of bombs by getting the suspicious object out of the building quickly and efficiently, and the “Mars Sampler Rover” robotic prototype intended to collect samples and transfer specimens to a test tube.

Team Exothermic Haiku from Redmond, Washington received first place in the VEX Robotics Design a Game Animation Challenge for their game “Ring Rolled.” “This was a difficult challenge, and it drew on the talents of every member of our team. We worked together to invent a game, define the rules and scoring, and create the animation, music, and narration. It’s only a three-minute video, but it sure took a lot longer than that to produce,” said Adam Young, the 11th grade chief animator of team 575 from Redmond High School. “Now that the animation is done, we have to finish our real robot for the World Championship.”

The complete list of VRC Online Challenges included: The Autodesk Inventor 2011 Digital Prototyping Challenge, the VRC Promote Award, the VEX Robotics Design and Game Animation Challenge, the FUTURE Foundation Design Challenge, the EMC Robotics Team/Club Website Challenge, the RECF Team Educational Video, and the VEX Robotics Essay Challenge. Teams that qualified for the 2011 VRC World Championship came from San Jose, California; Lawrenceville, Georgia; Wallingford, Connecticut; Redmond, Washington; Guarulhos, Brazil and Auckland, New Zealand. For a list of all entrants, prize descriptions, finalists, and the winners, visit <http://forum.robotevents.com/design/>.

About REC

The Robotics Education and Competition Foundation, 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.

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