

Title of Session: FIRST Robotics
Moderator: Patricia Chen
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Room: Robotics (K-12) Group

PatriciaCh: Melissa, did you attend kick off?

MelissaSt: no, I wasn't able to, but I did review the game

PatriciaCh: What do you think of it?

MelissaSt: I think it's a good game...though personally I liked last year's better

PatriciaCh: <http://robotics.nasa.gov/events/first/AimHigh-Lrg.mov>

PatriciaCh: This is the link to view this year's game

PatriciaCh: It is an interesting game... a lot to account for while playing the game

MelissaSt: yeah, it has a lot of factors that have to be considered

PatriciaCh: especially the offside call....it is totally new ..it helps if you have played soccer or hockey

RobynN joined the room.

PatriciaCh: Hello

BjB waves hi to Robyn

RobynN: Hi Pat

RobynN: I sent you a new member's info this afternoon...

RobynN: Hi BJ

PatriciaCh: We were discussing this year's game

RobynN: hopefully he will join us...William is a senior, very excited about this

RobynN: so....are we all AIMing HIGH?

PatriciaCh: hopefully he logs in when he gets home

RobynN: Pat, I told him to

PatriciaCh: this is good....we need excited students

RobynN: oh yeah...

RobynN: we missed you in Manchester

RobynN: I got to meet Marie and Nancy and Kristen

PatriciaCh: it would have been nice to go to Manchester

RobynN: well, maybe next year

RobynN: so, Melissa...are you ready for this?

MelissaSt: lol, yes

RobynN: we are all thinking that this game could either be very exciting or very boring

MelissaSt: I can't wait. Life seems so boring out of season

RobynN: yes, I know what you mean

RobynN: Did anyone let the CD crowd know that tonight was a chat? I didn't get the chance

PatriciaCh: I did send out the emails

PatriciaCh: We may have a small group....I know many teams are brainstorming the configuration of their robots

RobynN: yes, I am in our meeting room as we "speak" the kids just went home

PatriciaCh: my team is working on building the field as well as the software group

PatriciaCh: we meet at night

RobynN: and we mentors are meeting

RobynN: I think we are going to build goals, not sure about the whole field

PatriciaCh: I sent William his user id and password (for a student)

RobynN: thank you

RobynN: I hope he's able to join us tonight

PatriciaCh: Melissa..any ideas what your team is up to?

RobynN: I just got a half dozen team members to promise that they would join CD and get active

PatriciaCh: I haven't been on CD myself...at this time...my life wraps around preparing my students for the state exam besides robotics

RobynN: fun stuff...don't you love standardized exams?

PatriciaCh: I think we are building just the goals

RobynN: I haven't been on CD for a while either

PatriciaCh: Why don't we introduce ourselves

PatriciaCh: I'm Pat, 7th grade math teacher from Stuart, FL....one of the teachers for Team 180

JuliaSt joined the room.

MelissaSt: my school is working with ATC [Atlantic tech HS] in S. Florida, so currently we're helping them construct a field

PatriciaCh: where are you in S. Florida?

RobynN: I am Robyn, a NEM (non-engineering mentor) for Team 768 in Baltimore

RobynN: my hubby Fred is a mechanical team mentor

SusanR: I am Sue, facilitator for the K to 3+ Great Resources sessions here at TI

BjB smiles...you really keep everything in the family, Robyn!

RobynN: Hi Julia

RobynN: oh yeah

PatriciaCh: hello Julia

JuliaSt: I'm Julia- I'm a team member on Team 811 in NH.. Hi, everyone!

MelissaSt: Ft. Lauderdale

RobynN: our son is now interning at DEKA for Dean Kamen and helping to mentor Team 131, CHAOS, in Manchester, NH

PatriciaCh: Are you going to the Florida regional?

MelissaSt: Yes, the one at UCF

RobynN: Hi Julia....long time no see

PatriciaCh: Hope to meet you there...we are trying to get something going for the RCU there...I would love to have some help

MelissaSt: sure, I'd be more than willing to help out

DavidWe joined the room.

PatriciaCh: Terrific

DavidWe waves

RobynN: Hello David

DavidWe: Hi

PatriciaCh: Hello David

PatriciaCh: We tend to keep things in the family... my daughter is mentoring 1369 in Tampa and my son is on the Boston Regional Planning Committee

PatriciaCh: Robotics is a terrific program

PatriciaCh: Susan do you have any questions for us

SusanR: not for the moment, Patricia

RobynN: Last year, our son was on the planning committee for the Rochester Regional...and he has been a judge, a ref, you name it, he's done it

RobynN: David, did you get a chance to see what this year's game is?

PatriciaCh: ok..ask away if you do...we tend to talk shop...and it is annoying to those who do not know what we are talking about

SusanR: many of our schools are involved in some type of robotics projects

RobynN: for younger students, there is FIRST LEGO League

RobynN: and now Junior FLL

RobynN: 1st through 3rd grade

DavidWe: I didn't see it, Robyn

PatriciaCh: http://robotics.nasa.gov/events/2006_kickoff.php

PatriciaCh: <http://robotics.nasa.gov/events/first/AimHigh-Lrg.mov>

PatriciaCh: <http://robotics.nasa.gov/events/first/AimHigh-Lrg.mov> this is a link to this year's game if anyone is interested

DavidWe nods

DavidWe: Thanks

KathieK joined the room.

RobynN: Hey, Kathie....how did your off-season event go?

PatriciaCh: There are many facets of robotics projects...but FIRST is the most competitive one that I am aware of until college

PatriciaCh: hello Kathie

KathieK: Thanks. After some stresses during the week it went well, thanks. Nearly 200 people there

RobynN: wow, that was great....

KathieK: Hi everyone, sorry I'm late

PatriciaCh: Terrific

PatriciaCh: we were doing introductions

RobynN: your hubby and I spent a lot of time talking on Friday at FIRST Place

RobynN: got the whole history of RAGE

KathieK: Oh yeah? I will have to ask him about that, wish I'd been up there.

BjB: if you're not a member of this group, click on ADD TO MY FAVORITES at the top of the screen. That will add this room to your favorite places menu

RobynN: it was fun

KathieK: Thank you, now I can find it easier next time

BjB nods to Kathie

KathieK: So are there non-FIRSTers here tonight?

PatriciaCh: Yes...this is not the RCU chat site..it is open to teachers, administrators or any interested parties

PatriciaCh: Susan. David and BJB are non-FIRSTers

KathieK: aha, soon to be converted FIRSTers?

SusanR: thanks..just added to favourites

PatriciaCh: lol

SusanR . o O (old timers)

PatriciaCh: Did you all get the chance to view the game

RobynN: hopefully

PatriciaCh: As a teacher...I can tell you that it is worth the time to investigate FIRST

RobynN: did you all think the human demonstration was live?

PatriciaCh: There is really more to this than building a robot

KathieK: Yes, I did. I think it will be a challenge this year to get autonomous mode working well for teams

RobynN: Pat, we always say it's about building kids who build robots

KathieK: Definitely.

PatriciaCh: yes..but non-FIRSTers do not realize that

KathieK: They are learning time management skills, project management skills, leadership skills, writing skills, etc

PatriciaCh: even the fact...there are non-technical aspects of the game exists...like writing,etc.

KathieK: They are learning how to approach adults and give presentations in seeking corporate sponsorships

PatriciaCh: beat me to it

MelissaSt: sorry everybody, but I have my ap calculus exam tomorrow and I would like to study early so I can get some rest. it was nice talking to everybody again.

JuliaSt: Good luck, Melissa- hopefully I'll see you in Atlanta!

PatriciaCh: Melissa I will be in touch about UCF...good luck on the test

MelissaSt: okay and thank you!

MelissaSt: goodnight everyone!

MelissaSt left the room (signed off).

PatriciaCh: I need to get us on the agenda at UCF....who do I contact?

KathieK: Another valuable skill they are learning is teambuilding

KathieK: which should start in the pre-season but becomes very important now that the build season is here - starting with the brainstorming - where everyone's contributions are valuable

PatriciaCh: I see kids build or improve their self-confidence over time... and believe in themselves

KathieK: and since many of the students and mentors on FIRST are introverts by nature, it is a difficult thing to get them to work together in groups

NancyJK joined the room.

PatriciaCh: hello Nancy

BjB: Hi, Nancy

NancyJK: Hello, I made it!

PatriciaCh: anything you would like to add Julia?

RobynN: Hi Nancy!

PatriciaCh: Nancy: I emailed Kristin about getting the RCU on the agenda at UCF - Florida regional

NancyJK: We missed getting all the headbands and buttons to people at Kickoff so they will have to be mailed out.

PatriciaCh: Do you know how to get us on the agenda?

KathieK: Susan, David, BJ - did you have any questions about FIRST (I missed your earlier discussion)?

JuliaSt: Well.. I don't know if we want to discuss the basics of FIRST?

NancyJK: I don't know but I think Kristen would know or she can ask Karen Sullivan at FIRST

PatriciaCh: ok Please let her know that I emailed her

SusanR excuses herself .. to prepare for the K to 3 Group

JuliaSt: For example... We just started build season, which is 6 weeks of sleepless stress, where we build the robot to play the year's game- in this 6 weeks we have all of the brainstorming, design, building, programming, and driving practice that we'll get.

SusanR left the room.

KathieK: One engineer told me that in real life a project might take 10 years to actually come to market, but in FIRST it's condensed to 6 weeks

NancyJK: For all the comments I hear about sleepless nights, I would like to say some of our nights are sleepless not because we are building but from the on going brain trying to get a viable robot.

PatriciaCh: Yes....it is amazing how the teams are able to do it in 6 weeks where in life..it take years

KathieK: It's very addicting!

RobynN: that's for sure

KathieK: Many students who were on teams in high school have now gone on to college, and are in the workplace in technical areas, and are now back mentoring teams. They recognize the value of the program.

JuliaSt: You also get VERY close to the people you work with- if not for FIRST, I wouldn't have made so many friends in other grades.

KathieK: Julia, that is very true and when you are on a multiple-high-school team, you are also meeting students from very diverse backgrounds.

PatriciaCh: Also FIRST opens your eyes to potential careers...it helped several of our students when applying for college

JuliaSt: FIRST opens up countless opportunities- for me, scholarships, work opportunities, and its helping me figure out what to do in college

KathieK: The networking you make while in FIRST is incredible - meeting people from all over, even if online like this!

NancyJK: We have almost as many college mentors as we have students this year; college students that want to help high school students have and do what they did in high school.

PatriciaCh: For us....our kids are from multiple schools....we compete in every aspects academic or sports...but not in robotics...we are united

KathieK: I also think the partnerships formed with mentors who have diverse occupations is another benefit

KathieK: Yes, Pat, we have often said the same thing

PatriciaCh: The partnerships or friendships forged...bonds for life

KathieK: And then, the whole way the game is set up so that it is a "coopetition" as opposed to a competition is very unique

NancyJK: And in the workplace, even company against company, there is coopetition.

PatriciaCh: Extremely...gracious professionalism....is an odd concept for most...except for FIRSTers

RobynN: have you read the patent?

PatriciaCh: no

KathieK: No, I haven't

PatriciaCh: do you have the link?

RobynN: I found it online and read it...very interesting...

RobynN: let me see if I can find it

KathieK: http://appft1.uspto.gov/netacgi/nph-Parser?Sect1=PTO1&Sect2=HITOFF&d=PG01&p=1&u=%2Fnethtml%2FPTO%2Fsrc_hnum.html&r=1&f=G&l=50&s1=%2220040142774%22.PG.NR.&OS=DN/20040142774&RS=DN/20040142774

DavidWe . o O (yowza - long URL)

KathieK: Method and system for creating coopertition - Dean Kamen, US Patent application 20040142774

RobynN: I was at the pto website and got lost

PatriciaCh: sorry about that

KathieK: At most competitions you will find teams helping other teams fix robots that are not doing well.

KathieK: Everyone wants to win a competition, but not at the expense of another team's robot

RobynN: you will also find teams on Chief Delphi who will help anyone who asks for advice

RobynN: the way FIRSTers think is this: it's no fun playing a game if your competitors can't play well

PatriciaCh: Chief Delphi is a website/forum for robotics

KathieK: Teams mentor new "rookie" teams. and help international teams who travel here by "adopting" them when they arrive

KathieK: Teams open their practice facilities so that other teams who might not have a place to practice can come by

RobynN: engineers, mentors and students post on Chief Delphi, many write white papers to help teams

KathieK: The exchange of information is incredible

KathieK: Oftentimes freshman don't "get it" but they quickly learn that this is unlike other team efforts they may have participated in.

RobynN: teams also go out into the community and pursue various projects...the highest award a team can win at the Championship is the Chairman's Award. This is given to the team who does the most to "make their grandmothers proud"

RobynN: it's more about having a positive impact on others and the world than about winning at the competition

KathieK: Many high school team members mentor FIRST Lego League teams (9-14 yr olds) as well

JuliaSt: Mentoring FLL teams can be one of the most rewarding experiences- it certainly was (is) for me!

RobynN: I would like our team to start a FLL team

KathieK: My son also agrees

RobynN: it looks like so much fun

KathieK: and then they host the local FLL tournament which is a blast - it puts them in a new role

KathieK: in between matches they teach the FLLers about team spirit, the cha-cha dance, etc. that are FRC favorites

KathieK: Cotton-eyed-Joe

RobynN: the FLL students can't wait to join a FRC team

RobynN: Cha Cha Slide

KathieK: I do that one in the car when I hear it!

KathieK: People must think it's odd when I "slide to the left" while driving

RobynN: lol....as long as you're not doing it with the car!

KathieK: nope!

KathieK: And now the new Vex program has opened more opportunities for students to participate - from rural areas where funding would be very difficult for an FRC rookie team

KathieK: or as a Jr Varsity-type program

RobynN: I haven't had a chance to play with VEX, can't wait though

JuliaSt: Well everyone, it was nice talking to you.. I'm going to leave you with my mother, so if you have any questions you want a student's POV about, just direct them at her! See you all later!

RobynN: bye Julia

JuliaSt left the room (signed off).

NancyJK: So, who here tonight is not a FIRSTER?

KathieK: We're hosting a Vex tournament here in conjunction with our FRC tournie

RobynN: cool

RobynN: BJ is not

NancyJK: Does BJ have questions? Or are our ramblings answering them?

PatriciaCh: Have you looked at some of the FIRST games..BJ?

BjB nods...I'm an outsider

BjB: no, I haven't done that, Pat

PatriciaCh: You should...you did not tell us much about yourself...well?

NancyJK: Are you in the science or math classroom, BJ?

KathieK: This year's FRC game involves locating an overhead goal using a camera which detects a colored light source and shooting balls into the goal.

BjB: I'm an art teacher...kind of teach a little of everything

KathieK: Are you in the northeast BJ?

RobynN: the game is sort of like basketball

BjB: yes, I'm in Pennsylvania

RobynN: but the robots have to shoot the baskets, driven by human players

NancyJK: I am not, I am a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher. We are having a hard time finding any teacher to start to learn how to take the team over when we retire.

PatriciaCh: do you have a team at your school?

KathieK: ah. If you can get up to Hartford, we're also hoping to hold an Art & Technology show in conjunction with the tournaments March 9-11

KathieK: (but shh! That's a secret still!)

PatriciaCh: ok ..mums the word

RobynN: that sounds like fun

RobynN: but I won't say a word

NancyJK: In the past, art teachers at my school have been involved. Umm, we are hoping to go to Hartford for the Vex competition.

MarieMS joined the room.

RobynN: Hi Marie!

KathieK: We are hoping to draw in more of the public

RobynN: sorry we couldn't connect Sunday

PatriciaCh: Hello Marie

MarieMS: Hi Robyn!

KathieK: hi

MarieMS: Hi everyone! - seems it's just us girls?

KathieK: Marie, where are you from? Have we "met" yet? I am from CT

PatriciaCh: Melissa ..one of the students left to study for an exam

NancyJK: Hello Marie, for right now it is us and BJ whom is new and an Art teacher in PA

RobynN: Kathie is a NEM for RAGE

KathieK: BJ, there are also two regional comps coming up in PA - one in Philly and one in Pitts.

MarieMS: Kathie - I thought we had met "online" - are you part of the NEMO?

RobynN: we NEMOS are everywhere

BjB: thanks for the information, Kathie

KathieK: Actually, I am no longer a mentor on RAGE, and yes, I am a co-founder of NEMO

RobynN: I thought you were still involved, sorry

KathieK: and also the school/team development and support coordinator for CT

KathieK: and that and \$1.50 might buy me a cup of coffee!

RobynN: too bad Jenny didn't join us

NancyJK: Perhaps one of the best ways to get "sucked into" FIRST is through going to a competition. However, if you know a team involved you will definitely get pulled in.

PatriciaCh: BJ: it is true....it is hard to get teachers to mentor the teams

KathieK: There are two top concerns of every team NEMO meets with - fundraising/sponsorship and recruiting and retaining mentors

RobynN: we have found that too, Pat...but once they get hooked, they don't let go easily

BjB: It's hard to get volunteers for anything anymore

KathieK: yes, it is

KathieK: FIRST has THOUSANDS of volunteers involved every year

PatriciaCh: Tiffany's team...1369 has a teacher, but...no adult mentors

RobynN: wow, I didn't realize that

NancyJK: I am finding, with a support system, any teacher really can do a lot with a FIRST team.

RobynN: people think we are nuts, since Greg's been out of high school since 2002...and we are still there

PatriciaCh: As Nancy said...some of us will retire some day...and come back to mentor

KathieK: A strong parent group helps a lot esp with the NEM stuff

NancyJK: FIRST has also got regional mentors that will help a teacher out if they wish to start a team. I know for NH and maybe New England our mentor is Steve Creamer

KathieK: My whole family is involved

RobynN: I have to go, everyone....sorry. The teacher here has to lock up the room for the night....will talk to you all again soon.

KathieK: bye

RobynN: Kathie, I know what that's like

PatriciaCh: I didn't realized that there were regional mentors

KathieK: There are Regional Directors and FIRST Senior Mentors

PatriciaCh: bye Robyn

RobynN: keep in touch, let me know when the next chat will be

MarieMS: bye Robyn!

PatriciaCh: in two weeks

RobynN: bye all

RobynN: I will be there

RobynN left the room (signed off).

NancyJK: Thank you Kathie, I believe your titles are much more accurate than mine.

KathieK: The Regional Director oversees the area esp as it concerns the competitions in that area

PatriciaCh: thanks for info....I didn't know

MarieMS: Not all areas have senior mentors - check the website

KathieK: the FSMs deal with recruiting and retaining mentors mostly, although each defines his/her job based on the needs of their area

KathieK: the website is outdated. New ones joined in Oct

NancyJK: Yes, you have reminded me, Steve Creamer is a FIRST Senior Mentor for our area

KathieK: Steve does mainly Boston area, Mike Sperber is CT

KathieK: Brad Lauer is Reg Dir for Southern New England (www.nefirst.org)

PatriciaCh: Is your team going to the Boston Regional?

KathieK: Whose?

PatriciaCh: Both..since you are in CT

KathieK: LOL, well, I am teamless as I said before but RAGE is headed to Hartford of course (a 10 minute walk for them) and to Philly and Atlanta

KathieK: I am on planning committees for FVC and FRC comps in Hartford and will be driving up to watch Boston

MarieMS: I'm no longer with a team either

PatriciaCh: ok.....I know that there is a waiting list for Boston

PatriciaCh: I was thinking of going up there...like I said..Michael is on the planning committee....and it would be fun to go to a regional without a team

PatriciaCh: Being on a team...constantly running and doing things for the team, etc.

NancyJK: My team will do one competition for the big robots and we hope to do Hartford for the Vex team but my husband the advisor just got called for Jury duty which will take from mid February to mid March.

PatriciaCh: No way :{

KathieK: we have lots of openings for Vex in Hartford and are still actively recruiting teams

KathieK: BJ, are you familiar with the Vex program at all?

BjB: no, I'm not

PatriciaCh: We don't have a VEX team yet

NancyJK: This is where BJ would come in, it really takes two teachers to really keep a FIRST team in good shape.

KathieK: It's a pilot program for FIRST this year - Radio Shack is selling the kits

MarieMS: Kathie - we got a VEX kit for Christmas - and it's all over my family room

KathieK: I'm SO jealous

KathieK: It's an "erector set on steroids"

NancyJK: Vex is, I think a very good way to get started with only a little bit of money needed.

MarieMS: We're building a chassis and four wheel drive this week - trying an armature later in the month

KathieK: LOL, it's a small kit that can be taken apart and re-used

PatriciaCh: VEX is an alternative way to get involved with FIRST...on a cheaper scale

KathieK: uses Easy C drag-and-drop programming and is radio controlled

MarieMS: It's also less machine shop centric and more autonomous mode centric

PatriciaCh: A new LEGO Mindstorms is coming out in August 2006

KathieK: To get the kit and accessories you need to compete can be around \$500 and then to compete is another \$500

KathieK: which is a pasta dinner fundraiser

KathieK: or a PTO/PTA grant

PatriciaCh: our PTA is not that generous

PatriciaCh: too bad :{

NancyJK: BJ what are your age groups?

BjB: I work with 11-18 year old male juveniles in a correctional facility

NancyJK: WOW! Just think what they could design with cardboard and then maybe they could redo the design in metal????

KathieK: so fundrasiing would be difficult for you

BjB nods to Kathie

MarieMS: Bj - there was this terrific article last year about a team in Arizona who were some poor, some juvenile delinquents - who ended up beating the MIT team in the underwater robotics competition - it was phenomenal.

NancyJK: Do you have any funding sources or are you state funded only?

KathieK: so Vex would be a better option since it is "affordable"

BjB . o O (besides the fact that I teach full time and am a part time staff for Tapped In...only so many hours in a day!)

KathieK: Even if you didn't compete, the kit can be purchased for around \$250-300 with teacher discounts

BjB: Nancy, we're state supported.

PatriciaCh: yes....the FIRST promo videos show how kids lives are changed by the program...

KathieK: Oh, cmon, we do FIRST round the clock, LOL

BjB smiles...I do Tapped In round the clock

KathieK: I hear ya

PatriciaCh: are there other staffers that may be willing to help?

KathieK: Well, speaking of the clock, I have work to do for both planning committees who are meeting tomorrow.

BjB: I'll check into that, Pat

PatriciaCh: good night Kathie

KathieK: BJ, if you go to <http://www.usfirst.org/vex/> you can see more about Vex, and to <http://www.usfirst.org/frc/public/> you can see the FRC comps listed incl Pitts and Philly

KathieK: Good night everyone

KathieK left the room (signed off).

PatriciaCh: Bj....it is a worthwhile effort.....I find that kids act up in class...because they are bored...what we do in class is not applicable to them...but this program does use real life skills

BjB nods. Our classes are pretty structured, but I know what you mean

BjB: I'll bring up the topic to a couple of our younger teachers

PatriciaCh: It is hard to change structure.....I am trying to revamp the way we teach math to the below level kids...the targets of NCLB....their skills are not there....so the book bores them....but it is worth the effort of trying

BjB: absolutely! 80% of our kids are special ed

NancyJK: We are in that position too as we are a failing school for the third year I believe.

PatriciaCh: please give my email address to them if they have questions...I mentor FLL and FRC teams

MarieMS: what is a failing school?

PatriciaCh: well ..our school is in an affluent area....we meet the state standards...scraped by last year on the Federal level because they change the rules

PatriciaCh: failing school means you do not meet the standards....state and/or federal

PatriciaCh: after so many years of F....the state takes over your school

MarieMS: oh, I am not familiar with that? - in business, you just go bankrupt, or make money!

PatriciaCh: The sticky point is....most schools meet the state standard but fail on the federal level

PatriciaCh: Federal level targets the ESE and English speaking as second language kids

PatriciaCh: I have ESE kids....who can't remember what I taught them last week...I mean kids who really try...not just occupy space and breathe in the oxygen...they have a memory issue

NancyJK: We are failing because our state scores have not increased the percentage they ask for.

NancyJK: BJ, what other issues can we share with you? We can go on and on about NCLB and etc.

PatriciaCh: That too.....they dictate how many % points you must increase....our math standards iseach students must increase by 45% from the previous year

BjB: I've got a pretty good idea of what you all do, Nancy...I've been recording the transcripts from these discussions since they started

BjB . o O (I edit them and they get archived at www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

MarieMS: Well folks - believe it or not, I am tired - if I can help, let me know!

PatriciaCh: Well....I really need to go and write out the strategies for solving word problems

PatriciaCh: I think we will get small crowds if any until built season is over

PatriciaCh: But I don't want to chance it ...if there are teachers who are interested

BjB nods. I'll keep the event on the calendar

PatriciaCh: Because you just never know

BjB: right

PatriciaCh: good night...and please give your teachers our email as contact.....you never know who you can change for the better...

BjB: will do, Pat

PatriciaCh: Call me the eternal optimist

ElijahL joined the room.

PatriciaCh: Hello Elijah

ElijahL: hello

PatriciaCh: I teach math in Florida...and you?

ElijahL: I'm a student

PatriciaCh: where?

PatriciaCh: Are you interested in science?

ElijahL: yes

PatriciaCh: what grade level?

ElijahL: 8th

PatriciaCh: What state are you from

ElijahL: Tennessee

PatriciaCh: Are you familiar with the FIRST organization?

ElijahL: I'm not.

ElijahL: familiar

NancyJK: Do you have FLL or FIRST LEGO League at your school?

PatriciaCh: this is the link www.usfirst.org

ElijahL: No but I'll check it out.

ElijahL: What is it?

PatriciaCh: please do.....there are different levels..Jll is Junior Lego League for elementary kids, FLL is for middle schoolers, VEX and FRC is for high schoolers

PatriciaCh: basically, the students build a robot to compete in pre-determined game

NancyJK: FLL is building robots with LEGOS with the mindstorms kits; FVC is building robots out of erector set type of pieces and FRC is building big robots out of parts allowable by the competition.

ElijahL: That sounds cool!

PatriciaCh: Every year, it is a different game...so you do build a robot just for that game

NancyJK: Nice meeting you BJ and good luck with your students. Pat, see you in two weeks.

PatriciaCh: It is a lot of fun...good night Nancy

NancyJK: Elijah check out the website above, it will give you some good information on all three.

PatriciaCh: Elijah: you should check out the website...we will be back in two weeks if you want to talk more about it

PatriciaCh: But you need a teacher at your school to sponsor a team

ElijahL: Some friends and I are currently working on our project for the ExploroVision contest.

NancyJK: Or you can work with a team at another school if they are close.

PatriciaCh: Nancy: Please ask Kristin about RCU on the Florida regional agenda

PatriciaCh: What is Explorovision

ElijahL: Our science teacher would be a great sponsor.

NancyJK: Whoops, sorry I was thinking you were asking about Atlanta for the RCU

NancyJK: You should give your science teacher the website also or visit the website together at school.

PatriciaCh: Nancy: no ..the Florida Regional

PatriciaCh: And ask your teacher if he or she can chat with us in 2 weeks

ElijahL: It's a contest where teams of two to three people must come up with a product that may be possible in twenty years.

ElijahL: Ok I will ask her.

NancyJK: Yes, Pat I forgot to suggest the chat in two weeks. I made a note for Kristen

PatriciaCh: That is very interesting.....Dean Kamen the founder of FIRST...he created the insulin pump

NancyJK: I will have to check out your program Elijah.

PatriciaCh: he did it when he was a kid....it is you kids that make things happen...for the better

NancyJK: I definitely need to get going. Talk to you in two weeks.

NancyJK left the room (signed off).

PatriciaCh: yes....please ask your teacher to join us...so we can explain things ...actually ask a few more teachers...if you can...team work is terrific

ElijahL: will the chat session be in this same room

PatriciaCh: yes...7 - 9 PM EST

PatriciaCh: also..you can invite your teammates too

PatriciaCh: we would love to talk to them

ElijahL: ok

PatriciaCh: <http://robotics.nasa.gov/events/first/AimHigh-Lrg.mov>

PatriciaCh: this is the site of this year's game.....FRC - students have to build a robot that cannot weigh more than 130 pounds.... and there are size specifications too....

PatriciaCh: It is a fun game this year..so check this out too

PatriciaCh: Do you have any other questions?

ElijahL: no but thank you

PatriciaCh: Check both sites....and ask away next time okay?

ElijahL: OK

PatriciaCh: Thanks for stopping in...it was a pleasure to chat with you. I need to get back to prepping for tomorrow.

BjB waves goodnight to Pat. Thanks for leading the discussion.

PatriciaCh: good night....I hope I did okay....we tend to verve off course

ElijahL: good night

BjB: no problem...good discussion