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Texas Workforce Commission

TEXAS
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Press Release

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TWC Youth Robotics Grants Inspire High School Students to Pursue STEM Occupations

AUSTIN – Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) awarded more than \$2.3 million in grants for Youth Robotics programs, allowing more than 10,000 Texas high school students to participate in various events that lead to the world championship. This year, four applicants received awards: FIRST in Texas, Urban STEM, Collegiate Edu-nation, and BEST of Texas Robotics.

“Learning by doing is a tried and true educational strategy. These grants provide experiential learning opportunities for thousands of Texas students,” said TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel. “The STEM skills students can gain from youth robotics competitions will provide them a great entry point into the Texas workforce.”

The Youth Robotics Initiative encourages interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by expanding participation in robotics programs for high school students by developing new teams for robotics education competitions and supporting existing competitive teams. Additionally, this program removes barriers to participation for students from schools in underserved urban and rural communities. Each grantee also has teams comprised of students with disabilities.

“Texas employers are seeking the skills gained in youth robotics programs—from engineering and programming to soft skills like ingenuity and teamwork,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Aaron Demerson. “This is another example of how TWC provides early opportunities for youth to explore STEM and high-demand occupations sought by Texas employers.”

The four grants total \$2,335,830 and will enable 10,634 students to participate in youth robotics this upcoming year. The grantees include:

- Foundation For Inspiration & Recognition of Science & Technology in Texas (FIRST in Texas) received \$700,000 to serve 5,800 high school students in more than 350 teams—30 of those teams will be comprised of students with disabilities.
- Urban Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (Urban STEM) was awarded \$277,440 to serve 575 students in 25 teams—two of those teams will be comprised of students with disabilities.

- Collegiate Edu-nation was awarded \$699,290 for 140 students to participate in 36 teams—one team will be comprised of students with disabilities.
- BEST of Texas Robotics received \$659,100 to allow 4,119 students on 80 teams in their program—20 of those teams will be comprised of students with disabilities.

“Youth Robotics programs prepare high school students for a rewarding career in STEM-related industries across Texas,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Alberto Treviño III. “These grants create pathways by removing barriers for future Texans as we continue to focus on highly specialized training that will prepare the workforce for the future.”

Teams that advance to the State Championship for each program will have the opportunity to move on to the World Championship arena. Robotics competitions bring together the excitement of sports, science, and technology.

Photos from championships earlier this year, including TWC-sponsored teams.







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