

**Title of Session:** FIRST Robotics  
**Moderator:** Robyn Needel  
**Title of File:** 20060725robotics  
**Date:** July 25, 2006

Room: Robotics Group (K-12 Student Campus)

**BJB2:** Hi, Robyn!

**BJB2:** If we don't get a crowd, I have some stuff I want you to see

**RobynN:** Hi Bj - I don't think we will have a lot of people tonight

**BJB2:** summer vacations?

**RobynN:** probably

**BJB2:** during the Tapped In Festival we unveiled two new groups in the student campus. Have you seen them yet?

**RobynN:** I think so

**BJB2:** NASA and NOAA

**BJB2:** what I've done is placed featured passageways in the student reception room

**RobynN:** haven't seen them, sounds like fun

**BJB2:** what I'd like you and Pat to do is put a featured passageway in here to NASA and NOAA. You already have a passageway to student reception...let's go there, ok?

**RobynN:** yes

**RobynN:** ok, where do you want me to go?

**BJB2:** see the passageway under featured passageways to student reception?

**BJB2:** . o O ( above the chat window if you scroll down )

**RobynN:** SAC2 lobby?

**BJB2:** scroll down

**RobynN:** oh, got it

**RobynN:** I will go there

**RobynN** left the room.

**BJB2** left the room.

Room: SAC\_Reception

**BJB2** joined the room.

**RobynN:** hi there

**BJB2** waves.

**BJB2:** See featured passageways?

**BJB2:** let's go to NASA first

**RobynN:** be right there

**RobynN** left the room.

**BJB2** left the room.

Room: NASA\_Grp

**BJB2** joined the room.

**BJB2:** Sharon Bowers did this room

**BJB2:** and led an open house during the festival

**RobynN:** this looks like a great place, we should definitely let our kids know about this, some are NASA interns this summer

**RobynN:** so how do we link to this?

**BJB2** nods. I'll show you in a sec.

**BJB2:** click on Welcome on the blue menu to refresh your screen

**BJB2:** and look at featured passageways again

**BJB2:** see NOAA?

**RobynN:** yes

**BJB2:** . o O ( also just added Robotics to featured passageways )

**BJB2:** let's go to NOAA

**BJB2** left the room.

Room: NOAA\_Grp

**BJB2** joined the room.

**RobynN** joined the room.

**BJB2:** another great science resource!

**RobynN:** also looks like a fun room

**RobynN:** we have a young friend who graduated last year as a meteorologist, she is working for FEMA

**BJB2:** now, let's go back to robotics and I'll show you how to add a passageway

**RobynN:** ok, be right there

**BJB2:** feel free to invite your friend to come visit!

**RobynN** left the room.

**BJB2** left the room.

Room: Robotics\_Grp

**BJB2** joined the room.

**BJB2:** go to passageways on the blue menu

**RobynN:** k

**BJB2:** do you have moderator privileges?

**RobynN:** not sure, but I think so

**RobynN:** Pat set everything up

**BJB2:** if you do, you can add passageway

**RobynN:** ok, how do I do this?

**BJB2:** yeah, you're a moderator

**RobynN:** ok

**BJB2:** at the top of the screen when you click on passageways

**BJB2:** you should see a green link to add passageway

**RobynN:** I see you put the other passageways into our room

**BJB2** nods

**RobynN:** yes, got the description bar

**RobynN:** now what

**BJB2** . o O ( all part of the collaborative nature of TI )

**BJB2:** enter NASA

**RobynN:** ok

**BJB2:** when you get the group room check the box and go to next

**MarieMS** joined the room.

**BJB2:** then check the box to feature

**BJB2:** Hi, Marie

**MarieMS:** Hi all!

**RobynN:** Hi Marie!

**RobynN:** ok, got that one

**BJB2:** then click on add passageways again

**BJB2:** and enter NOAA

**RobynN:** Marie, we are adding NASA and NOAA links as featured passageways from our site

**RobynN:** will do, BJ

**RobynN:** done....that was easy

**BJB2:** I'm working on getting a literacy room and social studies rooms in the student campus

**MarieMS:** Sorry I'm late - too much going on - how are you??

**BJB2:** so teachers can bring their students to the rooms to collaborate or do research

**MarieMS:** that sounds terrific - NASA is so supportive!

**RobynN:** doing fine, Marie - so far I am the only one here. Tiffany told me that Pat probably doesn't have internet access tonight

**RobynN:** I think that's a great idea, BJ...how better to learn that to talk to people who know the subjects

**BJB2:** yikes! no internet access?!

**BJB2:** . o O ( that's like turning off life support )

**RobynN:** she is at her mother's in NY

**RobynN:** yes, I understand, I feel like that sometimes

**MarieMS:** OK - by the way - great kudos for getting Victoria involved so much with the cnn article

**RobynN:** btw, Marie, I found out this weekend (in conversation with a mentor from Dave Lavery's team) that Dave is on good terms with Sally Ride...I don't know Dave well, just enough to say hi...can we parlay this info into something worthwhile?

**BJB2:** ohhhh...Sally Ride as a guest speaker?!

**RobynN:** just a thought....

**MarieMS:** that sounds wonderful - what a draw

**RobynN:** Marie's found out that NASA wants to charge for their astronauts speaking...but we may be able to pull this off

**MarieMS:** I had been down a similar path and ran into issues around nasa wanting to charge

**MarieMS:** Ah, you beat me!

**RobynN:** Marie, who knows Dave well enough to approach him about it?

**RobynN:** besides Dean and Woodie of course

**KathieK** joined the room.

**BJB2:** hi, Kathie!

**KathieK:** Hi all

**RobynN:** Hi Kathie! How's everything?

**MarieMS:** I also have a friend who works for Dave --- but that may not be close enough - it should probably be a peer

**KathieK:** Everything

**MarieMS:** hi Kathie!

**KathieK:** is good up here.

**KathieK:** Except my husband has discovered how to get Vex parts from various RS stores...

**RobynN:** I spoke to Jim...not sure of his last name, he's Dave's next door neighbor plus works with him

**RobynN:** I just met him, so don't know him well enough to ask

**RobynN:** ah, Kathie, I asked my brother to shop for us in Long Beach...my mom is returning tonight, so I'll find out if he got anything

**MarieMS:** I think it's important that if we ask for something - we know what we want, and we know the follow through can occur

**KathieK:** OK... we might be able to locate some stuff for you if you think you still need it.

**KathieK:** Now back to your discussion at hand..

**RobynN:** oh, and you will be interested. Greg was at IRI this weekend and hung out with Tony Norman...seems he plans to market the next version of VEX through all Target and WalMart stores

**KathieK:** COOL

**RobynN:** BJ - Tony Norman owns the company that makes all the electronic controls for FIRST robots, also came up with VEX, and owns the patent on Erector parts...which is how VEX got started

**KathieK:** and IRI is the biggest off-season competition that exists for the larger robots - it's held each summer in Indiana

**KathieK:** and was just held last weekend

**RobynN:** We hoped to take our team, but only 2 kids could go...Fred and I should have gone anyway, it looked like so much fun on the webcast

**KathieK:** yes, we really wanted to go last year and take the seniors and they all backed out at the last minute.

**KathieK:** I'm lining up some teambuilding workshops for the fall. Have two scheduled to do with two local FRC teams, and instead of NEMO workshops I may do tmbldg wkshps for mentors to bring back to their teams at Ramp Riot, Bash@ the Beach and at River Rage.

**RobynN:** Greg's CD pic was taken when he was at the Israeli regional in March....he is standing at the Lebanese border!

**KathieK:** And we are holding a FIRST Mentor fun night at a local outdoor concert in Springfield, MA next Thursday (In case you know of any mentors up this way...)

**KathieK:** I was thinking of that earlier this week...

**RobynN:** Kathie - I got us as the first team on the waiting list for Ramp Riot...Alan Ostrow said there will probably be a place for us

**KathieK:** great, then we will meet this fall (if I am still involved in FIRST!) and you can attend the teambuilding session (if I go...)

**KathieK:** BJ, is there a way we can publicize these chats more so that we get some people to our room?

**KathieK:** The last few weeks have been empty.

**MarieMS:** It's also summer

**MarieMS:** 'tis true

**RobynN:** so how are we going to get young women interested in empowering themselves?

**KathieK:** Yes, I know, not too many online I suppose. Yet this is a good time to get some people interested, before school starts back up?

**MarieMS:** so, I thought it was interesting to hear victoria's response to your post

**RobynN:** I think we need to have an initiative to grab the girls as soon as they are back in school....can we grab emails from CD or something?

**KathieK:** I don't think you can get addresses from CD

**RobynN:** yes, she is an interesting girl, she sought me out at the RCU meeting to introduce herself

**KathieK:** unless they've included it in their profiles

**MarieMS:** I thought the interesting thing was that you just put out a situation, what you had done about it, and what your thoughts were - and let THEM engage in what their thoughts were related to it

**RobynN:** she's the kind of girl we need....maybe she has some ideas how to approach the others

**RobynN:** wonder if we can ask Brandon to do an email blast to all the girls for us...

**MarieMS:** maybe she should be on the leadership team?

**RobynN:** I would ask her

**MarieMS:** another go-getter is Neha - but she's going into college next year

**MarieMS:** so, should we ask Kristen as the founder about what the leadership team should look like?

**RobynN:** my mom had another idea, but I don't know how we could implement this and follow through - how about sending an information letter to all high schools (especially those with FIRST teams) explaining what we are trying to do, see if they can identify some girls who can be

**RobynN:** "ambassadors"



**MarieMS:** hmmm.... interesting - because Julia's school is instituting a "women in science and technology" student group.... maybe that exists elsewhere?

**RobynN:** well, Marie, we need to get the girls involved...if they

**MarieMS:** getting those distribution lists is sometimes difficult

**RobynN:** own the situation maybe something will get done

**MarieMS:** Robyn - you are right on - I agree with you

**KathieK:** Have you asked if FIRST will do an e-mail blast for you?

**MarieMS:** It depends on what it is for - there are some things that FIRST will do an email blast for - and others it won't what did you have in mind?

**KathieK:** I don't know, maybe just to get the word out to team leaders that the group exists, what its purpose is, etc.

**RobynN:** I was just wondering, Marie, if we could send out a blast announcing a major planning meeting online to map out a strategy for involving and encouraging our girls for the next school year and FIRST season

**KathieK:** Also, if you get more up on the website, you can ask FIRST to link to it from their website, <http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/usefulsites.htm> - NEMO's website has had 30+ hits from FIRST's website since May.

**MarieMS:** We need to have a plan a bit more formulated before they will take it. Let's take up the discussion around Sally Ride

**RobynN:** we need to get to Dave first....maybe that would be a good way to get girls to come into the chatroom

**KathieK:** I missed the discussion about Sally...

**RobynN:** EVERYONE thinks Sally Ride is great

**RobynN:** oh, Kathie, I found out this weekend that Dave is on a first name basis with her

**KathieK:** ah. My sister has been involved with the Teacher in Space program since its inception and knows the next TIS astronaut well.

**KathieK:** She also knows several others but I can only think of males at this point./

**RobynN:** but I don't know him well enough to contact him about it....we went to a VEX workshop on Saturday in DC and met one of the other mentors from 116, who happens to work with Dave and is his next door neighbor as well

**KathieK:** Just ask, all he can say is no.

**RobynN:** that's cool, Kathie....maybe we can hook in with TIS somehow

**RobynN:** Dave doesn't know me, except by sight...

**KathieK:** Barbara Morgan is the next one - she's been in training for a zillion years, due to fly next year I believe

**MarieMS:** So, this brings up a core issue for me - are we mentors to enable RCU leadership? Or are we women who are passionate about getting more women involved - if the latter, maybe we need to formalize and go forward with programs..... I've been hesitant because I did not want to take the wind out of the sails of our student leadership

**MarieMS:** Re

**MarieMS:** Re Dave Lavery - I know him and can talk with him - but I think we need a well formulated plan to talk with him about\

**KathieK:** agreed

**RobynN:** at this point, I think we are in the latter category, Marie - I don't know how much the girls can do for themselves

**MarieMS:** to which element Kathie?

**MarieMS:** I suspect you are right Robyn

**KathieK:** What if the adult mentors came up with a program plan and sought out help from students - perhaps leaders would emerge that way, too

**KathieK:** agree we need a plan before approaching Dave

**RobynN:** I think that's a good idea, Kathie....if we can give them a framework, they can work within it and become leaders of younger women

**KathieK:** yes, perhaps the task is too overwhelming to expect them to execute it, but if broken down they could run with it.

**RobynN:** definitely need a plan with Dave - he has a daughter who's now involved on the team, I think...maybe that would be a good conversation starter

**RobynN:** and we could work through Heidi

**MarieMS:** So, I was on the FIRST Girls advisory board for awhile - I have contacts across first from that - I'm happy to take that to another level. I have started to work with a couple of college professors who study this area - but due to time and focus, I haven't told anyone yet

**MarieMS:** so maybe between us we have the makings of a program?

**RobynN:** I would think we do...maybe we should map out an agenda of what we'd like to see accomplished with the girls, and engineer a weekly/biweekly/monthly calendar to get them together. The RCU newsletter is good, but I don't know how many girls are reading it, so we need to find a way to integrate that as well

**KathieK:** can you outline that program for me, Marie?

**KathieK:** The newsletter is great but I have found that is not the tool to use to reach many of today's youth.

**RobynN:** profs who are experts in this area could help develop a working program....maybe there is someone out there who needs a thesis and could use our group to implement it

**RobynN:** I agree, Kathie, it is only a supplement

**KathieK:** They want quick, short, bursts of information, easy to scan, etc.

**KathieK:** Good idea, Robyn

**MarieMS:** So, I suggest we do several things.

**MarieMS:** Poll our constituents if we can what do you want/need - but it needs to be in a very specific manner as I don 't think they yet have a vision beyond their own "borders"

**RobynN:** I think we need an active presence on CD, with new topics or conversations as often as possible

**MarieMS:** wonderful idea Robyn

**RobynN:** I agree, Marie, I think they are trapped by being high schoolers - they need to push themselves and their ideas

**MarieMS:** next element is experts - I have been "collecting" experts from across the country - but haven't formed them yet

**RobynN:** I haven't been on lately, but I was trying to keep up with new stuff every day or so, Marie

**KathieK:** Can someone post a "sticky" at the top of the RCU forum that explains the group and its mission?

**KathieK:** and how to join?

**RobynN:** good idea, Kathie

**RobynN:** Marie - do you think there's a way we could get RCU listed prominently on Google somehow...maybe as a link to the FIRST listing?

**MarieMS:** Interesting idea - I haven't even thought of it - I'd really like it if one of the students took that on as a project but....

**RobynN:** even though RCU is not an "official" FIRST entity, do you think we could get it listed on the website somewhere...maybe as a resource

**MarieMS:** Let me just offer something as an idea - not a commitment. Engage the experts in designing a grassroots organization that will resonate with our constituents

**KathieK:** that's an interesting thought...

**KathieK:** Robyn, did you mean on the FIRST website?  
<http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/usefulsites.htm>

**MarieMS:** I think we need to make RCU vibrant before we advertise it further

**KathieK:** Let me check my e-mails and see who did it for us

**KathieK:** Robyn, Jenny Beatty just asked Elisha Duffy to do it for us, because NEMO is a resource for volunteers... I guess you could ask Thelma Mayer (not sure of her role) or Dennis Howland

**KathieK:** Thelma was cc'd on the e-mail

**KathieK:** Home > FIRST Robotics Competition > Team Resources > Other Useful Websites

**RobynN:** I guess we could contact Dennis...he was helpful to our team when we had trouble registering for the season

**MarieMS:** cool = we could put rcu there

**KathieK:** Do you know Dennis?

**KathieK:** He's very nice.

**MarieMS:** I do have to go - but I do want to say - if you can help to identify programs RCU or a woman-led program might look like - I'd appreciate - then I can see who I can pull in to help.

**MarieMS:** thanks to all! you are wonderful people - hug - hug - hug

**KathieK:** Well, ladies, I think I will be going now myself. Take care everyone! Have a safe trip Marie and I will be praying for your mom.

**KathieK:** bye

**RobynN:** we are hoping to get our team to some off-season events this fall and maybe that will generate the interest we need. We have a new administrator and hopefully he will support us

**NancyJK:** Our administrators are all sports. But then we will have two new ones in the fall so maybe they will be supportive.

**RobynN:** I think it's easy to get burned out from FIRST, I am knocking myself out trying to talk to a couple of area school administrators about getting teams going

**NancyJK:** But funding is just not there and no matter how hard we try to find sponsors they are not being found. So the fundraising is left up to the student and any fundraising students do has to be accepted by the administration and everything goes in a circle.

**NancyJK:** You would think with the emphasis on academics and passing tests that administrators would love FIRST. I really don't understand the hesitation on their parts. It sure isn't because we are not enthusiastic.

**NancyJK:** Well, maybe Tapped In isn't the place for chats???? But it seems so good to me.

**BJB2:** thanks, Nancy

**BJB2:** turnout has been slow ....people on vacations

**RobynN:** I think Tapped In is great for chats. What we were all discussing is that it seems like we need to take the lead as women advocating for girls and provide a framework for them

**NancyJK:** You're Welcome BJ

**BJB2** . o O ( although the festival on July 19 was great )

**NancyJK:** Perhaps the "senior" girls need to schedule a chat for themselves to get stuff moving.

**NancyJK:** Is this a way they want to stay connected? Or do they only want to stay connected at regionals?

**RobynN:** I think Marie has in mind to ask the senior girls to be sort of like a leadership committee

**RobynN:** I get the feeling that the girls really don't know how to make connections...after all, look how hard it is for us adults

**RobynN:** I think that there should be meetings at each regional, for sure...and maybe a greater, more persistent presence on CD

**NancyJK:** Well, my daughter is a good example of making it to chats.

**NancyJK:** I don't know Chief Delphi that well. I did go to it to check out the thread that you mentioned in your email about the secretary.