

Title of Session: FIRST Robotics
Moderator: Patricia Chen
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Date: November 28, 2006

Room: Robotics Group (K-12)

JenniferPe joined the room.

BjB: Hi, Jennifer

JenniferPe: hello

BjB: here for the FIRST Robotics discussion?

PatriciaCh joined the room.

JenniferPe: is this the room we need to be in for the first robotics session

JenniferPe: yes

PatriciaCh: Hello

BjB: hi, Pat! Good timing

JenniferPe: hello Patricia

PatriciaCh: Jennifer...are you a teacher?

JenniferPe: I'm in the student teaching program at University of Houston

PatriciaCh: what grade level?

JenniferPe: I graduate in December

JenniferPe: I'm in kindergarten right now

JenniferPe: I really like second

PatriciaCh: are you in elementary ed?

JenniferPe: yes

PatriciaCh: are you familiar with robotics?

JenniferPe: no I'm not, I was wondering if this is the right session for me to be in

JenniferPe smiles

PatriciaCh: I am a teacher in middle school....I work with students in LEGO and FIRST Robotics

JenniferPe: can you tell me a little bit about robotics?

PatriciaCh: JFLL is geared for younger children...kindergarten to 3rd grade...FIRST Lego is geared for 4 to 8 grade...VEX and FIRST robotics is geared for high school...

PatriciaCh: Junior Lego and Lego...uses LEGO bricks....the students are given missions or problems to solve....they build the playing pieces....kids learn to work together and problem solving...

PatriciaCh: the website is www.usfirst.org You may want to check it out

JenniferPe: do you have any suggestions for lower level sessions I could visit?

PatriciaCh: What do you mean by lower sessions?

JenniferPe: I'm sorry, elementary level

PatriciaCh: this link will take you directly to the elementary level..
<http://www.usfirst.org/jrobotcs/flego.htm>

JenniferPe: ok thank you

PatriciaCh: <http://www.firstlegoleague.org/default.aspx?pid=18130> This one may be more appropriate for the K -3 level

PatriciaCh: FIRST was created to inspire high school students to study science, math and technology

BjB: helps if you plant the seed in elementary school!

PatriciaCh: about 10 years ago....middle school kids were targeted then now they have JFLL....

PatriciaCh: as BJ mentioned ...to plant the seeds ...

JenniferPe: Do you think that it will be introduced at an elementary level, having elementary students participating something like the high school students?

PatriciaCh: it is a lot of fun and work though.....this is my second year working with middle schoolers....I do not have to ask administration to announce meetings....the kids just come to my room....

JenniferPe: i can imagine the great feeling those students have when they complete the project.

PatriciaCh: elementary schoolers have the junior version...the students function like the high schoolers.....they are given missions to perform.....if you log into the second link...it will explain more of the junior league

JenniferPe: I'm going to check out the websites that you suggested, thank you for the resources

PatriciaCh: you can take the time and check it out now.....and come back with questions....

JenniferPe: ok

PatriciaCh: as a mentor.....I find it very rewarding on the middle school and high school levels

BjB: why is that, Pat?

PatriciaCh: middle school.....you really model to the students about cooperation, gracious professionalism....this is a big thing in FIRST... ..letting the kids thinkthe solutions are not black and white.....I know of some coaches or mentors that dictates to the students....I don't.....I am there to assist and guide....

PatriciaCh: on the high school level...it is the same but...now they can see how math and other content areas are utilized in real world.....the students use shop machines to built the robot....and for all the programs....high schoolers really have to learn time management skills....robotics eat up a big chunk of the time during built season

BjB: great answer. Thanks, Pat!

JenniferPe: wow that is neat. If I was teaching secondary I would LOVE to participate in that.

PatriciaCh: I think the kids really need more of the hands onnot all kids are meant to go to college.....the FIRST robotics...allow the average kid to be part of something and be successful

BjB: are elementary cognitive levels not ready for the concept?

PatriciaCh: Jennifer.....the high school program is awesome.....this is area where I have most of experience as a mentor....

PatriciaCh: I think it is more of a safety issue.....you don't really want a young child working with certain machinery....so they are given LEGOS....

BjB: Pat, a suggestion...could you contact some Robotics leaders at the different levels to be guest speakers for next year?

PatriciaCh: I do not know much about the Juniors....but my middle schoolers have to built a functioning robot using bricks and also program the robot

PatriciaCh: We tried to do that originally.....but there were no takers

JenniferPe: I plan on getting my secondary certification in the future

JenniferPe: I will definitely remember this program

PatriciaCh: I can mention that to Marie again.....she has more pull with Manchester than I do

PatriciaCh: Are you from the Houston area

JenniferPe: Yes I am

JenniferPe: I'm teaching in Pasadena which is right next to Houston

PatriciaCh: Houston hosts an regional event....you should go check it out.....it will have all the programs competing..

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PatriciaCh: Lone Star Regional

PatriciaCh: Reliant Arena Complex

PatriciaCh: Houston, TX USA

PatriciaCh: Dates: Mar 29-31, 2007

JenniferPe: ok thanks I will definitely check it out.

PatriciaCh: my suggestion is to go on either Friday or early Sat.....Saturday afternoon is final matches....for regional championship

JenniferPe: my nephew may know something about it. He's a senior this year in highschool.

PatriciaCh: what is the name of his high school?

JenniferPe: Jefferson Davis

PatriciaCh: is it in Houston?

JenniferPe: yes

JenniferPe: downtown Houston

PatriciaCh: His school is in the regional...their team number is 1480

JenniferPe: I'll have to ask him if he's going, maybe I'll check it out with him.

PatriciaCh: does he like doing hands on?

JenniferPe: When you work with your students in the completion, do you act as a facilitator and let them do a lot of the problem solving if something comes up?

JenniferPe: yeah he's really into computers and graphics, he was always taking electronic stuff apart and trying to figure it out or put it back together

PatriciaCh: with the middle school kids....I do.....on the high school level.....we have mentors that work with the students...on design and build....my role on the team is more of supporting the engineers and students

PatriciaCh: for the middle school kids....I am the only teacher/mentor....my style is more of a facilitator..

JenniferPe: Do you think that this program would be appropriate with fourth graders, granted that a few modifications were done.

PatriciaCh: the only program that you can do with 4th graders is the FIRST LEGO.....the organization would not allow you to participate in the VEX or FRC program.....so you really do not have to make any changes...it is grade level appropriate

JenniferPe: oh ok

PatriciaCh: they have the Junior for the k -3 students....

JenniferPe: Well I appreciate your time and information ya'll provided. Have a great evening! I will definitely keep an eye on this program.

JenniferPe left the room (signed off).