

Sport for the Mind: LEGOS Much More than Child's Play for Rivermont 5th Grade

Written by Brittany Marietta

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The fifth grade class at Rivermont Collegiate is discovering it's more fun to design and create a robot than it is to play with one – and having the hardest fun they've ever had! Rivermont's fifth graders have formed 2 teams to participate in the FIRST LEGO League (FLL) robotics program! Team Masterminds and Team Technical Difficulties are applying real-world math and science concepts to design, build, program, and test a fully autonomous robot capable of completing pre-assigned missions! Teams will be competing at the FLL Regional Qualifier at the Putnam Museum on Saturday, December 10th. Top performing teams at this local tournament will be invited to state and international tournaments.

FIRST LEGO League is a robotics program for children ages 9-16 designed to get children excited about science and technology, while teaching them valuable employment and life skills. FIRST LEGO League 2011 features 19,800 teams from over 50 countries competing in 560 Qualifying Tournaments, which will be followed by 117 Championship Tournaments, 3 Open Championships, and 1 World Festival. Teams, composed of up to ten children with at least one adult coach, program an autonomous robot using the Lego Mindstorms set to score points on a thematic playing surface. Teams also create an innovative solution to a problem, which is different every year and based on a real-world scientific topic. This year's "problem" – also referred to as the Challenge – is titled "Food Factor – Keeping Food Safe" and challenges teams to identify points of contamination our food encounters and develop an innovative solution.

Rivermont fifth graders and their families and volunteer coaches have made a big commitment to this ambitious challenge, with scheduled weekly robotics practice and assignments, as well as a presentation to families in December before the regional competition at the Putnam. In

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addition, the class is tracking lessons and progress, including photos and a blog, at www.RivermontRobotics.com

– follow their exciting progress!

For additional information on the FIRST LEGO League, visit www.FirstLegoLeague.org .

Rivermont Collegiate, located in Bettendorf, is the Quad Cities' only private, independent, nonsectarian college prep school for students in preschool through 12th grade.

For additional information on Rivermont Collegiate, contact Cindy Murray at [\(563\) 359-1366](tel:(563)359-1366) ext. 302 or murray@rvmt.org

and visit us on the web at

www.rvmt.org

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