

## **FIRST LEGO LEAGUE COMPETITION SHOWCASES KIDS' TECHNICAL INGINUITY**

**MINNEAPOLIS, MAY 26, 1999**—On May 22, 12 teams, more than 200 kids demonstrated their creativity, teamwork, and understanding of technology at Minnesota's FIRST LEGO League pilot program tournament. Each team of 9-14 year olds spent 6 weeks designing, building and programming a robot capable of meeting the common challenge—for this pilot competition, running an obstacle course as quickly as possible. The tournament, in the atrium adjoining the Science Museum of Minnesota, was a resounding success, judging from the decibel level generated by the enthusiastic crowd. Norm Coleman, Mayor of St. Paul, stopped by to cheer the kids on and deliver a rousing motivational message.

With the success of the pilot, FLL goes statewide this fall. Though events and organization are handled locally, teams must register through FIRST to ensure all participants are included in the League Web Community. Call FIRST LEGO League at 800 871-8326 ext. 429, or register on line at [www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org) . Registration is open through September 22 with teams from schools, boys/girls clubs, scout troops, youth groups, YMCAs, any local organization eligible. The 1999 Challenge will be announced September 22 followed by the 6-week design, build and programming phase. Local Tournaments run through November with state and regional tournaments during the first weeks of December.

FLL is a fun new twist on an old idea; involving students in practical application of learned concepts. "Kids are taught about circumference and diameter in math, distance and time in science. They learn about technology. But nothing drives the concepts home, makes them come alive like real world application. The growth I've seen in a few short weeks, in intellectual understanding, leadership, and teamwork skills blows me away. Just look at these faces—programs like FLL ignite kids." Said Tim Jump, the dynamic Benilde-St. Margaret's science teacher behind the launch of FLL in Minnesota.

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## FIRST LEGO League Competition Winners

**FIRST LEGO League Director's Award**—The competition's highest award goes to the team that best represents FIRST LEGO League guiding principles; the team that goes above and beyond the expected effort in enthusiasm, teamwork, professionalism, and problem solving.

A tie *Pillsbury Math and Science*, Minneapolis and *Benilde-St. Margaret's*, St. Louis Park

### Competition Winners

First—*Michael Dowling Environmental Learning Center*, Minneapolis

Second—*Benilde-St. Margaret's*, St. Louis Park

Third—*Kenny School*, Minneapolis

**Sportsmanship Award**—Voted on by other teams, this team was most encouraging to others, and most celebratory of other's success.

*Benilde-St. Margaret's*, St. Louis Park

**Against All Odds Award**—The team that overcame the most notable obstacles.

*Annunciation School*, Minneapolis

Annunciation came to the competition without a computer. After losing their program during a battery change, the team borrowed a computer and programmed their robot from memory.

**Most Distinctive**—The robot with the most unusual appearance.

*Kenny School*, Minneapolis

The Kenny team, three third graders, built a robot that resembled a boring drill

**Most Creative**—The robot that most contradicts expectations.

*Seward Montessori*, Minneapolis

**Most Elegant**—A functional, tasteful arrangement of components

*Tesseract School*, St. Paul

### Most Creative Name

*Capitol Hill Magnet Team #1*, St. Paul for Mr. Wigglesworth

**Best Program**—efficient, advanced and effective program

*Capital Hill Magnet Team #2*, St. Paul

**Best Mechanical Design**—Robust creative design with effective use of sensors and engineering principles.

*Barton Open School*, Minneapolis

May 22 competitors came from:

- Annunciation School, Minneapolis
- Barton Open School, Minneapolis
- Benilde-St. Margaret's School, St. Louis Park
- Capitol Hill Magnet, St. Paul (2 teams)
- Holy Name School, Medina
- Kenny School, Minneapolis
- Michael Dowling Environmental Learning Center, Minneapolis
- Parkvalley Catholic School, Golden Valley
- Pillsbury Math and Science, Minneapolis
- Seward Montessori, Minneapolis
- Tesseract School, St. Paul