



Spokane Area WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SPOKANE AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF FIRST ROBOTICS PROGRAM

SPOKANE, WA, January 26, 2009 - The Spokane Area Workforce Development Council recently announced a donation of \$5000.00 to the local FIRST Robotics program. The FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics program started in Spokane five years ago and brings teams of area high school together with industry partners to design and build robots that compete with other schools from across the country. Students and their mentors learn and apply diverse skills ranging from engineering and electronics to marketing and teamwork all within a six week period. This project helps students to become familiar with a myriad of career opportunities in the high technology world of advanced manufacturing.

“We are excited to support local projects that engage youth in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) career fields in order to help reduce the region’s skilled labor shortage,” says Mark Mattke, Workforce Strategy and Planning Director for the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council. “Although the economy is slowing down and we are seeing layoffs in some industries, skilled jobs in aerospace and advanced manufacturing are very difficult to fill and offer great pay and benefits. These career opportunities are here for the long term and will reward people with the skills and talents necessary for success in this vital sector.”

The Spokane Area Workforce Development Council funds a number of projects that engage students in relevant hands-on experiences in order to pique student interest in pursuing well-paying careers. In addition to funding programs for high school youth, the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council also funds the Next Generation Zone in WorkSource Spokane, a youth employment and education center located in downtown Spokane.