



## **NJDOE News**

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**For Release: June 7, 2000**

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### **State Board of Education Honors North Brunswick High School Students for Winning National Robotics Competition**

The State Board of Education today honored a team of student engineers from North Brunswick High School and its corporate partners from Bristol-Myers Squibb for winning the national competition in a program designed to encourage students to apply their knowledge of engineering. North Brunswick High School successfully competed against 380 schools in April to capture the FIRST Robotics Competition National Championship, held at Epcot Center, Walt Disney World.

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics is patterned after a concept pioneered by MIT Pappalardo Professor Woodie Flowers' engineering design course. It consists of a series of local and regional competitions of high school and middle school teams linked with corporate sponsors, who compete against each other on the local, regional and national levels.

"We are very proud of the accomplishments of these young engineers," said Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "The students of North Brunswick High School and their corporate team partner Bristol-Myers Squibb deserve all of our praise for their outstanding first place showing at the national FIRST Robotics Competition.

"We need young bright minds to take an avid interest in science and technology," said State Board of Education President Maud Dahme. "We also need to show them how they can use their knowledge in these areas in a career and in leading a more fulfilling life. Programs such as FIRST certainly accomplish these goals."

Members of the North Brunswick High School FIRST Team and representatives from Bristol Myers Squibb attended today's meeting where they were honored by Hespe and Maud Dahme.

New Jersey hosted this year's Johnson & Johnson FIRST Mid-Atlantic Regional Competition, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson and held in March at Rutgers University. Twenty-one New Jersey schools participated in the regional competition against teams from nine other states.

FIRST competitions revolve around teams of schools and corporations who accept the challenge of building a robot that can achieve certain objectives. After six weeks of preparation time, the teams compete against each other with all the energy and fervor of a sporting event, with fans cheering for their schools as the robots are pitted against each other in two-minute, gladiator-style rounds.

FIRST is a nonprofit foundation started in 1989 by Dean Kamen, an entrepreneur and inventor with more than 100 patents. Kamen's desire is that the FIRST Robotics Competition become the "NCAA of Smarts."

[Lists of the North Brunswick High School team](#) and the [New Jersey teams that competed in the 2000 Mid-Atlantic Regional First Competition](#) is attached.