

December 2009



To our respected FLL Partners around the globe,

For those of you who know me, you know that I like to take a moment at the end of each calendar year to say thank you from *FIRST*, the *FIRST* FLL team and myself for all you do to help us spread the *FIRST* mission to children around the world. As the program and our Partner network grows, I have less opportunity to interact with you personally. Please know I am reminded and appreciative of what you do every single day. The end of 2009 is the end of the FLL 10 year anniversary celebrations. *How time flies!* During this year of celebration, we have had the distinct pleasure of thanking eight Partners from around the world for their 10 years of dedication. Yes, we have Partners who have been with the FLL program since the beginning! Although I wish there was enough time and money for me to travel the globe to thank each person individually, I did get a chance to thank at least one Partner in person. Through their 10 years of leadership in their region, this individual's contributions include oversight of:

- 20+ Championship Tournaments
- 118 Qualifying events
- 850 Volunteers (who keep coming back)
- 3,150 teams
- 30,000+ children

This is but one example from one region of the world of the kind of contribution that each of you make. Who would have known that a little program called *FIRST* LEGO League, with just a few hundred children from two countries in 1999, would lead to a program in over 50 countries with 150,000+ children participating this year? One of these children is going to do something amazing for the world through their experience with FLL. There is a very good chance an FLL graduate is going cure a major disease. The opportunities to contribute to the world are endless and the odds an FLL graduate will be responsible are high. And it all keeps coming back to you and what you do!

We are deep into planning for the next decade. With the Smart Move season well underway, we are wrapping up the design of the Body Forward Challenge that launches in September 2010. Topic experts are being recruited to participate in the 2011 Challenge Advisory Workshop to take place in early May. We've also confirmed the topic for 2012. You'll hear more about what we have planned for 2011 and 2012 in early January. *So much to do!*

You are always caught up in the whirlwind of necessary and never ending activity that allows the FLL program to grow and prosper, and always with the same goal in mind... *getting kids excited about the possibilities to do good things for humanity and the planet through science and technology. And things are looking good!* All of your efforts are making a difference. *You know.* You've heard them.... the hundreds of stories shared each year that reinforce what we

already know - FLL *is* working. And there is more formal documentation for the skeptics. The latest Brandeis University FLL Impact study, which was completed this past year across the United States and Canada, clearly shows the program is working. Although completed in the US and Canada only, I know we would all agree children are pretty much the same around the world. This is the third time the study was conducted and the results from year to year are pretty consistent. I hope you get a chance to read through the full report. The results are a great reminder that you and your local efforts are vitally important to the success of the program and our world's future. Yes, it all keeps coming back to you! The list of your accomplishments is endless and your dedication is priceless.

It all comes back to you and all you do to show children worldwide that they can believe in their own power as individuals *and* the power of a collective to change the world for the better. Dean Kamen really believes that the *FIRST* mission will change culture. After ten years of seeing it firsthand, combined with the power of your support, I know he is right. I look forward to another year... another decade of working together with you to change the culture and the world.

Respectfully,

Anna
Global Director, Jr.FLL and *FIRST* LEGO League

