

**For Immediate Dissemination:**

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**ALA and FIRST Enter Into Strategic Alliance to Support  
Young Scientists and Engineers Around the World**

**Multi-year Agreement Directs Unrestricted Funds  
to FIRST Programs Worldwide**

**Two Elite FIRST Robotics Competition Teams Set to Present Robots at LabAutomation2008  
Palm Springs Convention Center, Palm Springs, CA, USA, January 26-30, 2008**

**Listen to Dean Kamen Speak About Technology Education and FIRST on This ALA Podcast;  
Click Here: <http://www.labautomation.org/labsnap/podcast.cfm>**

**CHICAGO** – The Association for Laboratory Automation (ALA) is pleased to announce a \$100,000 donation to *FIRST* (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) to support young scientists and engineers around the world.

Founded in 1989 by renowned inventor Dean Kamen, the *FIRST* mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders. Combining the excitement of sport with science and technology, *FIRST* hosts robotics competitions that will reach more than 150,000 young scientists worldwide and engage more than 60,000 scientists, engineers and other professionals as teachers, mentors and judges in 2008.

“Our partnerships with innovative, leading scientific societies and sponsors such as ALA are a major reason that *FIRST* continues to thrive,” said Dean Kamen, founder of *FIRST* and President of DEKA Research and Development Corporation. “I am pleased that ALA and its community of members are graciously supporting our mission with financial and volunteer resources. Once again, through ALA, the global scientific community has come through for kids interested in science around the world.”

According to ALA President Reinhold Schäfer, Fachhochschule Wiesbaden, Germany – supporting *FIRST* simply reflects ALA’s mission – to educate scientists and engineers of all ages across all geographical boundaries.

**-more-**

## FIRST-ALA Partnership

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“Supporting *FIRST* is a natural extension of our mission,” said 2007 ALA President Reinhold Schäfer. “ALA’s ability to make this contribution is a testament to the vision and professionalism of ALA’s volunteer leadership and member community. Many ALA members are already engaged with *FIRST* as regional coaches or judges. We will always look to do our best when it involves inspiring students and their communities with an increased understanding, appreciation and application of science, engineering, mathematic and leadership skills.”

Two elite *FIRST* teams are set to present their robots at LabAutomation2008, Jan. 26-30, Palm Springs Convention Center, Palm Springs, CA, USA. Kicking off the calendar year, LabAutomation2008 is the platform conference and exhibition bringing together 5,000 scientists, engineers, business professionals and thought leaders focused on the science of automation strategies and technology in laboratories spanning multiple industries. *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams “Eagle Engineering” from Chaminade College Preparatory, West Hills, CA, and “Holy Cows” from High Tech High, San Diego, CA, will display their winning robots in the LabAutomation2008 Exhibition alongside more than 250 multi-national companies from over 40 countries.

*FIRST* President Paul Gudonis will participate in the LabAutomation2008 closing ceremonies on Wednesday, Jan. 30, featuring the ALA Innovation Award – a \$10,000 cash award to a scientist in recognition of seminal research and development contributing to the exploration of automation strategies and technologies in the laboratory.

For more information about *FIRST*, go to: [www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org) or call +1.603.666.3906 or +1.800.871.8326.

For more information about ALA, go to [www.labautomation.org](http://www.labautomation.org) or call +1.888.733.1ALA (1252).

For more information about LabAutomation2008, go to <http://www.labautomation.org/LA08/index.cfm>, or call +1.888.733.1ALA (1252).

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*The Association for Laboratory Automation (ALA) is a worldwide organization representing leaders in all aspects of laboratory automation. ALA seeks to provide a greater understanding of the importance and value of automation technologies in laboratory settings, to advance science and promote education related to laboratory automation by encouraging the study, advancing the science and improving the practice of laboratory automation across industries such as drug discovery and development, clinical diagnostics, food and agriculture, forensics and securities, energy, commodity chemicals and polymers, among others.*

*Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen founded FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, NH, FIRST designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology and engineering. With the support of many of the world’s most well-known companies and scientific societies, the not-for-profit organization hosts the FIRST Robotics Competition and the FIRST Tech Challenge for high-school students, FIRST LEGO League for children 9-to-14 years old, and Junior FIRST LEGO League for 6-to-9 year-olds.*