

First Lego League regional competition held in Würzburg for the first time



From left: Michael Stammberger (Manager Apprenticeship Brose Group), Bernd Sieke (Apprenticeship Location Würzburg), who organized the event, and Karl Kleylein (Principal, Wolfskeel-Realschule Würzburg) opened this year's First Lego League robots competition. For the first time, the event was held in Würzburg, with Brose as the main sponsor.

Würzburg (16. January 2015) What do schoolchildren think classroom learning should look like in a digital society? This was the focus of the 2014/2015 schools competition organized by the science education program First Lego League (FLL), which took place on January 16, 2015. For the first time, the event was held in Würzburg, with Brose running it and acting as the main sponsor. Brose is an automotive supplier with international operations. The headquarters of its electric motors business is in Würzburg.

“Our aim is to fill young people with enthusiasm for engineering as early as possible,” stresses Michael Stammberger, Manager Apprenticeship Brose Group. “At the same time, we want to use this platform to raise awareness of the international training available at Brose, with its wide range of technical job profiles.”

Fourteen teams from 14 schools in the region took part in this year's FLL competition. In the next stage, the winning team, the Robo-Bärchen from the Marktheidenfeld school, will travel to Regensburg for the FLL semi-finals.

The FLL robots and ideas competition is aimed at schoolchildren between the ages of 10 and 16 and consists of two parts: In the practical part, the teams built and programmed an autonomous robot from sensors, motors and Lego bricks to solve as many as possible of the ten missions set around the theme “classroom of the future”. For instance, the robot needed to be able to recognize colors or collect learning units in the form of colorful “knowledge bands”. In the theoretical part – the research task – the school teams

developed ideas for the best ways for children to acquire knowledge and skills in the 21st century. “We met twice a week for 45 minutes and wrote a modern play, which we are performing today with the entire team,” say Benjamin Noll and Julius Zinn (both 11) from the Robo-Geeks team at the Johann-Philipp-von-Schönborn school in Münnerstadt.

Each team consisted of between three and ten members and they spent at least eight weeks preparing for the robots competition with older coaches, and looking for the most creative ways to present their research task, e.g. in the form of poems and sketches. The project took them through all the stages of product development in a company – starting with a concrete task, moving on to ideas generation and eventually to implementation, with the restrictions of limited time and resources. “We couldn’t have done it without our coaches,” says Katana May (11), another member of the Robo-Geeks team.

FLL is part of a global education program and runs in over 70 countries with more than 23,000 teams. In Central Europe, the competition takes place under the patronage of the non-profit association Hands on Technology (HoT e.V.), based in Leipzig.

Further information can be found at www.first-lego-league.org.