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Project Lead The Way Announces Innovative Partnership With VEX Robotics

PLTW to Offer Rigorous Hands-on, Project-Based Robotics Lessons for Middle School and High School Students -- Classrooms may Begin Using VEX Robotics Equipment in 2011-2012; PLTW Students Gain Access to VEX Robotics Competitions Throughout the Country

CLIFTON PARK, NY – Project Lead the Way (PLTW), the nation’s leading provider of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education, announced a new partnership with VEX Robotics, Inc. today that gives current and future PLTW schools new, exciting and cutting-edge opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

Under the agreement, the VEX Robotics Design System will be the exclusive robotics platform offered to PLTW schools by PLTW, bringing exciting new opportunities for students including the chance to take PLTW’s courses that have been updated with rigorous hands-on, project based robotics lessons. It is nearly impossible in today’s society not to come into contact with a robotics device and PLTW’s robotics lessons provide students with an introduction to this important STEM field and offer students more advanced and innovative solutions to their classroom projects. PLTW schools may begin using VEX Robotics equipment during the 2011-2012 school year.

In addition, every PLTW classroom will have access to participate in the VEX Robotics Competition, the largest and fastest growing middle and high school robotics competition in the world, allowing students to apply their robotics knowledge from the classroom in a unique, problem-solving environment.

“Robotics is not only an important field of study for students interested in pursuing careers in STEM related fields but also integrates the critical and innovative thinking skills that are the foundation for any intellectual pursuit,” said John Lock, CEO of PLTW. “The majority of robotics programs for students are either after school or during weekend competitions, but now PLTW students have the opportunity to experience the hands-on, project based robotics curriculum in the classroom just like math or science. These problem-solving skills are exactly what students have to develop to be successful in today’s 21st century economy. We are looking forward to working with VEX to create the world’s next generation of innovators.”

The PLTW program shows students the real-world relevancy of what they are learning in the classroom and gets them excited about solving the world’s grand challenges. PLTW is constantly looking to bring the most up to date materials, equipment and cutting-edge technology into the classroom so that students have the opportunity to design and create their projects with the same tools that the industry leaders use in the workplace.

“PLTW is engaging students in STEM education as effectively as any program in the country,” said Paul Copioli, president of VEX Robotics, Inc. “VEX Robotics is very proud to support PLTW’s mission of preparing students to be the most innovative and productive in the world. This partnership exposes

hundreds of thousands of new students to the VEX Robotics Design System both in the classroom and in after-school competitions and we look forward to working with PLTW to increase access to many more students in the years to come.”

About VEX Robotics and Innovation First International

VEX Robotics, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Innovation First International, is a leading provider of educational robotics products to middle schools, high schools and colleges around the world. The VEX Robotics Design System, winner of the 2006 Best of Innovations Award at CES, was built from the ground up and designed to be an affordable, accessible and scalable platform used to teach science, technology, engineering and math education worldwide. The company has over 250 man years of experience supporting educational robotics programs and extensive engineering resources on two continents dedicated to the VEX Robotics platform. For more information on the VEX Robotics Design System, visit www.vexrobotics.com.

The company also partners with the non-profit Robotics Education & Competition foundation to support the VEX Robotics Competition, the largest and fastest growing middle and high school robotics competition in the world. Started in 2007, the VEX Robotics Competition is designed to give a diverse group of students the chance to celebrate their accomplishments and share their passion for robotics with each other. In 2010, 2,500 teams from 20 countries participated in over 200 VEX Robotics Competition events worldwide. For more information on the VEX Robotics Competition, visit RobotEvents.com.

In 2010, Innovation First International added offices in Hong Kong, China, the United Kingdom and Canada to better serve the global marketplace. With an advanced in-house metal fabrication plant, distribution center and corporate office located together in a 13-acre complex in Greenville, Texas, the company is poised to continue on a rapid growth path. Please visit www.innovationfirst.com for additional information.

About Project Lead The Way

Project Lead The Way, Inc., is a national, non-profit organization that is the leading provider of rigorous and innovative STEM education curricular programs used in K-12 schools. The PLTW comprehensive curriculum, which is collaboratively developed by PLTW teachers, university educators, engineering and biomedical professionals, and school administrators, emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, innovation and real-world problem solving. The hands-on, project-based program engages students on multiple levels, exposes them to areas of study that they typically do not pursue, and provides them with a foundation and proven path to college and career success. PLTW began in 1998 in 12 high schools in upstate New York as a program designed to address the shortage of engineering students at the college level and has grown to a network of approximately 4,000 middle and high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. More than 350,000 students are expected to take a PLTW course during the coming school year. For more information, visit www.pltw.org.

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