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CONTACT: Rebecca Berggren
619.838.4860, outreach@sandiegoregional.com

Robots Come FIRST® at Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®

San Diego FIRST® Robotics Team Members and their Robot to Lead the 87th Annual Parade in New York City

San Diego, CA, Nov 13, 2013 -- [FIRST®](#) (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), a not-for-profit organization founded by inventor Dean Kamen to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology, announced that San Diego *FIRST* Robotics Team, [The Holy Cows](#), and their robot will have the honor of opening the 87th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® on November 28, 2013 in New York City along with four other award-winning teams from around the country.

For nearly a century, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has been the official kick-off to the holiday season. Every year, this Emmy® Award winning tradition is seen by more than 3.5 million people in New York and 50 million people at home, all tuned in to see giant balloons, one-of-a-kind floats, and now - robots!

Robots are no longer a sci-fi fantasy; in recent years, robots have become commonplace in many aspects of life, from cleaning floors to teaching in the classroom. Macy's recognizes the importance and relevance of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to their customers. Moreover, the company is sensitive to the need for STEM-workforce development, and understands that the key to expanding these fields is to inspire young people to take an interest in them.

"We are extremely excited and thankful for this unique opportunity that Macy's has given us," said *FIRST* Founder, Dean Kamen. "Tuning into the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is an American tradition, and this year the first thing people will see in the parade is *FIRST*. Thanks to Macy's, we have the chance to pique the curiosity of millions of young people, as well as potential Mentors, Sponsors, and Volunteers."

San Diego *FIRST* Robotics Team 1538, [The Holy Cows](#) from High Tech High, will proudly represent *FIRST* and its Progression of Programs with this trailblazing appearance, and will travel across the country to New York City to lead the historic parade. Their team's Director of Engineering, Danielle Patriarco, said, "I am excited that *FIRST* is getting recognized on a larger scale and I am honored to be able to be part of this once in a lifetime opportunity."

Southwest Airlines is the Official Air Travel Sponsor for this special appearance by FIRST teams, providing nearly \$14,000 in round-trip air vouchers for the student participants and their adult Mentors. The teams' robots will also travel for free thanks to complimentary roundtrip shipments from FIRST Strategic Partner, FedEx.

[The Holy Cows](#) were chosen to help kick-off the parade because they won *FIRST*'s most prestigious honor, the Chairman's Award, at the *FIRST* World Championship in St. Louis earlier this year. This award is given to the team that best demonstrates the greatest commitment to spreading passion about science and technology, best represents a model for other teams to emulate and best embodies the purpose and goals of *FIRST*. Their [Chairman's Award video](#) demonstrates how they've worked towards this goal.

Award-winning *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams leading the 2013 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade include:

- Team 1538, [The Holy Cows](#), from San Diego, Calif.;
- Team 1477, Texas Torque, from The Woodlands, Texas;
- Team 180, S.P.A.M., from Stuart, Fla.;
- Team 16, The Bomb Squad, from Mountain Home, Ark.; and
- Team 25, Raider Robotix, from North Brunswick, N.J.

At the beginning of each competition season, teams receive a "Kit of Parts" made up of motors, batteries, a control system, a PC, and a mix of automation components - with no instructions. Working with adult Mentors, student have six weeks to design, build, program, and test their robots to meet the season's engineering challenge.

The robots leading the 2013 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade were designed and built for the 2013 FRC ULTIMATE ASCENT season challenge, and have been modified by the students to perform tasks specifically for the parade. Texas Torque's robot, "SONIC," will cut the ribbon to signal the official start of the parade. Following the ribbon cutting, The Holy Cow's robot, "DAISY THUNDER", will shoot confetti along the parade route with 3 other robots. Students will then drive their 12v battery-operated, 150-pound robots down the entire 2.5 mile stretch, ending at Macy's Herald Square.

The 87th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Parade will be aired live from New York City on November 28, 2013 beginning at 9 a.m. ET on NBC.

About FIRST(R)

Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen founded FIRST(R) (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., 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 support from over 200 of the Fortune 500 companies and more than \$16 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the FIRST(R) Robotics Competition (FRC(R)) for students in Grades 9-12; FIRST(R) Tech Challenge (FTC(R)) for Grades 7-12; FIRST(R) LEGO(R) League (FLL(R)) for Grades 4-8; and Junior FIRST(R) LEGO(R) League (Jr.FLL(R)) for Grades K-3. Gracious Professionalism(R) is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about FIRST, go to www.usfirst.org.

About The Holy Cows, San Diego FIRST Robotics Team 1538

To learn more about The Holy Cows, go to www.team1538.com