



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NBA Legend Gives Pep Talk to Over 1,100 Children Competing in the 15th Annual FIRST® LEGO® League Championship Event at LEGOLAND® California Resort, Dec 7th

“NATURE’S FURYSM” challenges teams to apply robotics and research to discover what can be done when natural disasters occur

San Diego, CA, December 5, 2013 – Creativity, science and celebrities will come together at the 15th Annual FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL®) Championship Tournament at LEGOLAND® California Resort where 112 teams of 9 to 14 year-old children and Coaches will demonstrate their problem-solving skills, creative thinking, teamwork, competitive play, sportsmanship, and sense of community.

This year’s “NATURE’S FURYSM” Challenge calls for teams to research and present their own creative solutions to one of today’s most relevant topics: natural disasters. Teams will discover what can be done when intense natural events meet the places people live, work, and play. With missions such as positioning an evacuation sign, clearing an airplane’s runway from debris, and delivering supplies, teams will have to program their LEGO MINDSTORMS® robots to solve a set of missions on an obstacle course set on a thematic playing surface.

NBA legend and California’s After School STEM Ambassador, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, will give a pep talk to teams and then kick off the afternoon robot competition on day one of the two-day competition. “Science, technology, engineering, math – that’s where today’s jobs are,” Abdul-Jabbar said in a statement at the California STEM Symposium in November. “That’s where the real super stars of the future are. We need to help these kids get there.”

Recognizing Kareem Abdul-Jabbar’s accomplishments in advocating for STEM, California State Senator Mark Wyland will be presenting a proclamation thanking Kareem for his support of STEM through his [Skyhook Foundation](#).

To kick off the morning robot competition, former NASA Astronaut [Dr. Sandy Magnus](#), will be in her flight suit offering words of encouragement for these young roboticists. Following her presentation, she will be touring the pits and interacting with students. Dr. Magnus is known for her extensive public outreach focused on inspiring the next generation to pursue a science, math, or engineering career.

Major supporters of the FIRST LEGO League Championship Tournament include LEGOLAND California and Time Warner Cable. LEGOLAND California support started with 28 teams in their parking lot more than 14 years ago and has grown to oversee nearly 400 teams and 30 events across Southern California and this championship event. As an active partner and supporter, LEGOLAND California encourages 21st century learning through real world problem-solving, hands-on science and fun.

Time Warner Cable’s Director of Community Investment, Kim Latour, expressed this about their three year partnership, “We believe one of the most powerful ways to engage children in any kind of learning, especially STEM, is to make it fun, and that is why we are thrilled to support the FIRST LEGO League Championships at LEGOLAND

California again this year. At Time Warner Cable our [Connect a Million Minds](#) (CAMM) initiative is a five-year, \$100 million cash and in-kind commitment to address America's declining proficiency in STEM. This event is very aligned with what we're all about."

For the NATURE'S FURY Challenge, FLL collaborated with organizations such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Red Cross, the National Weather Service, and other specialists to create a theme and challenge missions that reflect real-world issues.

FIRST LEGO League (FLL) is an international program for 9 to 16 year-olds (9 to 14 in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico) created in a partnership between FIRST and the LEGO® Group in 1998 to get children excited about science and technology – and teach them valuable career and life skills. Using LEGO MINDSTORMS® technologies and LEGO® Education materials, children work alongside adult mentors to design, build, and program autonomous robots and create an innovative solution to a problem as part of their research project. After eight intense weeks, the competition season culminates at high-energy, sports-like tournaments. Like any other organized "sport," teams also fundraise, create a team identity, and go on field trips.

Currently in its 16th year, FIRST LEGO League anticipates its biggest season ever, with approximately 23,000 teams in more than 80 countries competing in hundreds of Qualifying Tournaments and Championship Tournaments. About 230,000 children will compete to win honors and recognition. Teams will also have the opportunity to participate at the FIRST LEGO League World Festival, to be held in conjunction with the FIRST Championship, April 23-26, 2014 at the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S. In addition, more than 22,000 6 to 9 year-olds are expected to participate in Junior FIRST LEGO League this season.

ABOUT FIRST®

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, 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® Robotics Competition (FRC®) for students in Grades 9-12; FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC®) for Grades 7-12; FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL®) for Grades 4-8; and Junior FIRST® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) for Grades K-3. Gracious Professionalism® 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. To learn more about the "NATURE'S FURYSM" Challenge, go to www.FIRSTLEGOLeague.org.

ABOUT LEGOLAND® CALIFORNIA RESORT

LEGOLAND® California Resort includes LEGOLAND® California, SEA LIFE® Aquarium, LEGOLAND® Water Park and LEGOLAND® Hotel which opened on April 5, 2013. All are geared for families with children between the ages of 2 and 12. At LEGOLAND California, you'll find more than 60 rides, shows and attractions including LEGO Star Wars™ Miniland Model Display, Pirate Reef and LEGO® Legends of Chima Water Park opening summer 2014. SEA LIFE Aquarium is home to more than 5,000 living creatures and incorporates LEGO® models into a child's voyage to the depths of the ocean featuring play zones, fun facts and quiz trails. LEGOLAND Water Park features more than 7 slides, sandy beaches and the unique Build-A-Raft River. The nation's first LEGOLAND Hotel features 250 rooms, all themed either as pirate, adventure, or kingdom plus more than 3,500 LEGO models throughout the three-story hotel. LEGOLAND California Resort is part of Merlin Entertainment Group, the world's second-largest visitor attraction operator with more than 99 attractions, eight hotels/three holiday villages in 22 countries across four continents. For more information, visit: www.LEGOLAND.com or call (760) 918-LEGO (5346).

ABOUT THE LEGO GROUP

The LEGO Group is a privately-held firm based in Billund, Denmark. The LEGO Group is committed to the development of children's creative and imaginative abilities through high-quality, creatively educational play materials, and its employees are guided by the motto adopted in the 1930s by founder Ole Kirk Christiansen: "Only the best is good enough." For more information, visit www.LEGO.com.

ABOUT TIME WARNER CABLE'S CONNECT A MILLION MINDS

Time Warner Cable's (TWC) Connect a Million Minds (CAMM) is a five-year, \$100 million philanthropic initiative to address America's declining proficiency in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), which puts our children at risk of not competing successfully in a global economy. Using its media assets, TWC creates awareness of the issue and inspires students to develop the STEM skills they need to become the problem solvers of tomorrow. Program highlights include: original PSAs that challenge public perceptions of STEM; a unique website, www.connectamillionminds.com, and "The Connector", a one-of-a-kind online resource that makes it simple and easy for

parents and students to find informal science and technology learning opportunities in their communities. Local TWC markets have activated CAMM across the country with community-specific programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.connectamillionminds.com.

ABOUT THE SKYHOOK FOUNDATION

The Skyhook Foundation's mission is to 'Give Kids a Shot that Can't Be Blocked'. It's founder, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the NBA's All-Time Leading Scorer and UCLA-trained scholar travels around the world to provide books and films to disenfranchised youth, and to encourage mentor-led educational programs through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) in underserved communities. For more information visit www.campskyhook.org. Follow us on Twitter @CampSkyhook.

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