

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 19, 2015

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman VanOrden, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Boyle (Purdy), Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Mendive, McDonald, Dixon, Kerby, Pence, Kloc, Rubel

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) McDonald

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained with the minutes in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

Chairman DeMordaunt called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Richard Anderson, FIRST Regional Representative, introduced FIRST Robotics. He said the program was set up to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering and technology skills. He indicated that the program is structured to inspire innovation and to foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication and leadership. He presented statistics showing how FIRST Robotics participants were well above the state averages in college enrollment, plus science and technology career choices.

Mr. Anderson said the priority goal of the organization is to be recognized as a student organization within Idaho Division of Professional Technical Education, along with other student organizations such as FFA, BPA, DECA and others. The secondary goal of FIRST Robotics is to garner financial support of the program from the State of Idaho. Mr. Anderson explained the financial support would assist in establishing an Idaho Regional Competition, provide funding for the establishment of new teams and provide stipends for FIRST Robotic mentor-coaches.

Dean Klein, Vice President, Memory System Development, Micron Technology, Inc., introduced students from Team Tator: **Wesley Wong**, Boise High School and **Grace Rosenvall**, Capital High School; and, Team Bulbots: **Lauren Beets**, Renaissance High School and **John Skogsberg**, Mountain View High School. The students were asked to speak about what motivated them to be a part of FIRST Robotics and to describe the process of producing a robot, and the group dynamics involved in that process.

Responding to a question from the committee, the students agreed that young people who may not feel they are smart in science will be drawn in by watching the activity of the projects, or by team captains drafting them in to provide expertise in other areas. In response to further questions the students explained, the program guidelines gave the students six weeks to design, assemble, "bag it up" and "ship it off" to the competition. They also said in designing and producing their robots, they use CAD programs, 3-D printers, zip ties and duct tape. The students indicated some of the teams meet in the garages of their mentors who are often times members of the business technology community; they do not always meet in schools. They said the regional and national competitions are especially inspirational.

Mr. Klein explained that his eight-year involvement with FIRST Robotics came from his need, as an employer, for high school graduates with the right background. He said during those eight years he has watched many FIRST Robotics students go on to become mechanical and electrical engineers, as well as computer scientists.

Mr. Anderson introduced **Justin Reed**, an alumni of FIRST Robotics, who said he began as a terrified, nervous high school student who found a home in the FIRST Robotics program. He said it provided a pathway to other educational areas.

Chairman DeMordaunt announced that a STEM Caucus is being formed at the Legislature this year that will consist of Senators and Representatives interested in science, technology, engineering and math.

Roseann Stevens, Vice President, Field Operations, Volunteer Resources, and Youth Protection, FIRST Robotics in Michigan, was introduced by **Mr. Anderson**. She said the Governor in Michigan allocated three million dollars which included monies for mentor stipends. She encouraged Idaho to support FIRST Robotics.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Representative DeMordaunt
Chair

Jean Vance
Secretary