

SIEMENS VDO  
Automotive

# Inside

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# Siemens VDO Automotive FIRST Robotics Teams Emerge Victorious

*The 2005 FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition season concluded and for the Siemens VDO Automotive-sponsored teams, it proved to be a very happy ending at the National Competition in Atlanta.*

The FIRST Robotics Competition program teams professionals and high school students to solve engineering and design problems in an intense, competitive game environment. The 2005 nationwide competition included more than 25,000 students representing approximately 1,000 teams from across the United States, as well as Brazil, Canada, Great Britain, Mexico, Ecuador and Israel.

“Being involved in the community through education-based programs like FIRST enables our organization to support the development of the next

generation who will advance tomorrow’s technology,” said Siemens VDO Automotive President and CEO John Sanderson. “The FIRST Robotics Competition is an effective and satisfying way for the company, as well as employees, to contribute to the community, while preparing and creating a future workforce of innovators.”

As part of Siemens Corp.’s Caring Hands Initiative, employees at Siemens VDO Automotive locations in Auburn Hills and Troy Mich., Newport News, Va., Huntsville, Ala. and Windsor Ontario,

Canada provide financial support, year-round mentors and access to their facilities to aid local high school students in their engineering challenges.

The Rochester Adams High School “Adam-Bots” FIRST Robotics Competition Team had a great deal of success this season, snagging first place at both the Detroit and Sacramento Regional Events, while placing second at the West Michigan Regional Event held in Grand Rapids, Mich. The team’s successful performances during the Regional Events allowed them to compete at the



The Siemens VDO Automotive 2005 Rochester Adams High School FIRST Robotics Competition Team #245 after placing first in the Archimedes Division.

National Championship Event held at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta.

"This is the best I have ever seen the team perform," said Siemens VDO Automotive longtime Adam-Bots mentor Paul Slaby. "We may not have had the best-built robot compared to other teams, but we sure did have a winning team and a winning attitude."

Along with more than 300 teams, the Adam-Bots traveled to Atlanta to battle it out in four separate divisions during the Championship Event. The Adam-Bots were seeded first and took first in the Archimedes Division and tied for third place overall during the three day National Competition.

The company's Huntsville location-sponsored team, The Rocket City Robotics, Team # 34, out of Limestone Technical Career Center in Athens, Ala., has completed their first season under Siemens VDO Automotive sponsorship. However, the team has been in existence since 1996 and was the first FIRST team formed in the state of Alabama.

The Rockets competed in the Peachtree Regional in Duluth, Ga., where they were seeded eighth place, while also bringing home the Imagery Award and the Woodie Flowers Award. The Imagery Award celebrates the attractiveness of entry engineering design and outstanding visual aesthetic integration. The Woodie Flowers Award, presented to Huntsville Transitional employee and longtime mentor Dana Hobbs, recognizes an outstanding engineer or teacher participating in each of the Regional competitions and is nominated by student team members.

"I was honored to be the recipient," said Hobbs. "This was one of the few awards our team has not won through the years and it was one of the most touching moments in my life. To know a group of students took the time to write an essay about me is beyond words."

Team #34 also competed at the Palmetto Regional in Columbia, S.C., before heading to the Final Competition in Atlanta, where they were seeded 36th in the Curie Division.

Since the team's inception, the Huntsville mentors have worked with more than 400 high school students from 11 different schools in the area. In addition to the FIRST Robotics Team, the Rockets have successfully organized and hosted the FIRST Lego League Tournament for the past three years.

"More than 700 elementary and middle school students attended this year's Lego tournament," said Hobbs. "It was amazing to see that 75 percent of the volunteers working the tournament were from Siemens VDO Automotive."

The company's Windsor Canada-based Kingsville High School First Robotics Team, the Kukies, had a very successful season, as well. Siemens VDO Automotive's Windsor facility mentor Paul Howlett helped the team construct the robot, nicknamed the Kukinator. The team competed at the Greater Toronto Regional in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada and advanced into the playoffs after being selected as an alliance member.

Additional information about the FIRST Robotics Competition, along with Siemens VDO Automotive's involvement, can be found on the company Intranet in past issues of *Inside Magazine* and *News Circuit* or at [www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org). ■



The Siemens VDO Automotive 2005 Kingsville District High School FIRST Robotics Team #773.



The Siemens VDO Automotive 2005 Limestone Technical Career Center FIRST Robotics Team #34.

With approximately six months until the kick-off of the 2006 FIRST Robotics Competition, Siemens VDO Automotive-sponsored high school teams already are looking for resources and mentors. If you would like to volunteer your time, expertise or support to help a company team, contact:

Location & Team	Contact
Rochester Adams High School Rochester, Mich. (#245)	<b>Paul Slaby</b> (248) 209-5759 paul.slaby@siemens.com
Rocket City Robotics Huntsville, Ala. (#34)	<b>Joe Herbon</b> (248) 209-5881 joe.herbon@siemens.com
Kingsville High School, Windsor Ontario, Canada (#773)	<b>Paul Howlett</b> (519) 974-5400 ext. 5607 paul.howlett@siemens.com

Insiders

# Knowing where the value is

**Siemens VDO Automotive – Auburn Hills, Michigan. Test Center Senior Technician Paul Slaby embraces corporate responsibility with more than two caring hands. He volunteers hours of his time and skills to Siemens Caring Hands initiatives to help make a positive impact in the lives of others.**



As Siemens VDO Automotive is committed to value – to our customers and the community – I’m just someone who knows where the value is,” said Slaby. “The importance of reaching out to young students and helping others in the community is essential and when you have a company as strong as ours, we can make good things happen.”

Slaby, who has been with the organization for more than 15 years, performs machining, welding and fabrication for all projects within the company. He has been involved in every major Caring Hands initiative the Auburn Hills, Michigan, location has undertaken since the initiative’s inception. For the last seven years, he has mentored the Siemens VDO Automotive-sponsored Rochester Hills Adams High School FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science Technology) Robotics Competition Team.

This year alone, Slaby has dedicated more than 500 hours mentoring, providing sup-

port and traveling to various competitions with the FIRST Robotics Team, also known as the Adam-Bots. Not only did he share pride in their accomplishments, he never let failure discourage them. “Mr. Slaby dedicates more time to our team than anyone else,” said Rochester Adams High School FIRST Robotics student Patrick Pannuto. “He actually takes the time to teach us how to use the tools and machinery to build a successful robot, which is unique because other teams send their robots to their mentors to be engineered.”

Some people might say that Paul Slaby has quite a following. As Slaby is truly committed to the Adam-Bots, the team is as equally committed to the Caring Hands initiatives that he champions. Slaby, along with five FIRST students participated in this year’s Engineer Week when they visited a Detroit Middle School to demonstrate the robot, while also sharing their math and science skills with the students.

In addition, Slaby recently served as the House Captain to the Auburn Hills location Rebuilding Together Program, which is a nationally recognized non-profit volunteer organization providing home repairs to low-income families, families with children and disabled homeowners. “Paul was the first person to offer his time to the Rebuilding Together Program,” said Dave Ladd, Siemens VDO Automotive Corp. Director of Corporate Communications. “We needed a skilled craftsman to spearhead our effort and we couldn’t have found anyone more qualified or willing to fill those shoes.”

For his past volunteer efforts, Slaby has received several Caring Hands Community Excellence Awards, which recognize Siemens employees who, on a volunteer basis, undertake outstanding and innovative community service projects. The awards consist of cash grants to qualified Section 501 (C) (3) charities selected by the winning teams. He recently won the 2004 President’s Award and received \$2,500 for the Rochester Adams FIRST Robotics Team.

Slaby, who lives in Howell with his wife, recently completed the major construction of their home, which they built from the ground up. Slaby proves that one inspired person can make a difference in the community and hopes to enlist other volunteers to help make a positive change in the community in which he works and lives. ■

Dedicated: Paul Slaby (front, 2nd from right) with the FIRST Robotics Competition Team.

