



ATLANTA TO HOST 2007 *FIRST* CHAMPIONSHIP

ATLANTA (Aug. 23, 2005) – The Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB) is pleased to announce the return of *FIRST* (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) to Atlanta for the 2007 *FIRST* Championship. *FIRST*'s commitment to return to the city comes after the success of the 2004 and 2005 competitions in Atlanta. With the 2006 Championship already committed to Atlanta, 2007 will mark the fourth consecutive year the event will take place in the city. The 2007 agreement also includes options to continue in Atlanta in 2008 and 2009.

“We have established a great partnership with *FIRST* and are beyond excited to welcome the Championship back to the city,” said Spurgeon Richardson, ACVB president. “To host an event, especially one of this magnitude, for four consecutive years with the potential to make it six, speaks volumes about Atlanta and everything we have to offer.”

The *FIRST* Championship is the premier student robotics competition and celebration of science and technology. The Championship marks the culmination of the *FIRST* Robotics Competition, *FIRST* LEGO League, and *FIRST* Vex Challenge seasons. Students work alongside professional engineers to design, build and then compete with robots in three simultaneous competitions. The event is open to the public and features exciting, high-tech competitions, access to robot pit areas where teams repair and refine the robots for competition, and seminars on the latest in robotics technology.

Driving *FIRST*'s decision to return to the city was Atlanta's unmatched combination of facilities, accommodations, restaurants, transportation and attractions. The *FIRST* Championship will once again be based in the Georgia Dome, with the adjacent Georgia World Congress Center serving as the pit area for the competition. The nearby Centennial Olympic Park will provide open space for outdoor activities involved with the event.

“Without a doubt, our campus offers an event like *FIRST* everything they are looking for in a convention facility, from a stadium to traditional exhibit hall space to the 21-acre Centennial Olympic Park,” said Georgia World Congress Center General Manager Mark Zimmerman.

“Atlanta's rich history of hosting world class sporting events and its state-of-the-art facilities make it a perfect fit for the *FIRST* Championship,” said Dean Kamen, *FIRST* founder and inventor of the Segway human transporter. “Its attractions, accommodations and genuine Southern hospitality make it a wonderful host city for the *FIRST* teams and their families.”

The 2005 Robotics Championship welcomed over 460 teams from 19 countries to Atlanta during April 21-23. Combined, the 2004 and 2005 Championships brought an estimated 40,000 visitors

to Atlanta and generated more than \$40 million in economic impact on the city. Next year's event is scheduled for April 27-29, 2006 in Atlanta.

ABOUT *FIRST*

Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen founded *FIRST* in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people, their schools and their communities. 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 the support of many of the world's most well-known companies, the non-profit organization hosts the *FIRST* Robotics Competition for high school students and the *FIRST* LEGO™ League for children 9-14 years old. To learn more, go to www.usfirst.org.

About the ACVB

Established in 1913, the ACVB is a private, nonprofit organization created exclusively to market metro Atlanta and Georgia as the premier conventions, meetings and leisure destination in the regional, national and international marketplace and to favorably impact the Atlanta economy through conventions and tourism. For more information on Atlanta or the ACVB, please visit www.atlanta.net.

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