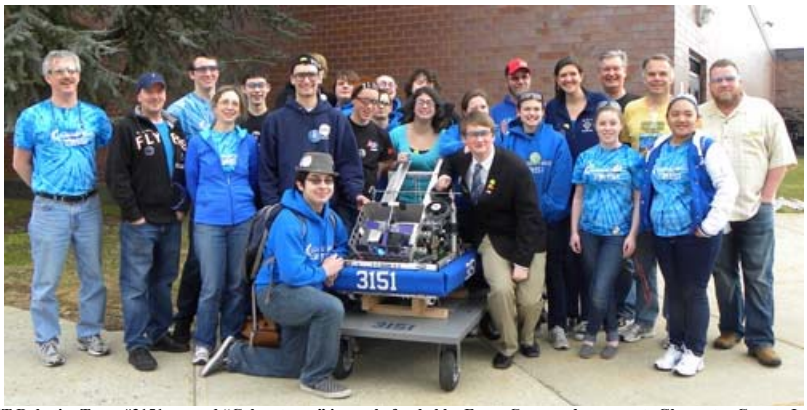
Engineering Company Helps Promote Interest in Science and Technology for Young People

Rebecca Carnes



The FIRST Robotics Team #3151, named "Cyberstorm," is partly funded by Enser Corp. and represents Gloucester County Institute for Technology (GCIT), a full-time career high school. The team is in its fifth year of competition.
Photo courtesy of Enser Corp.

Combine the excitement of a national sporting event with the rigors of science and technology and you get the FIRST Robotics Challenge (FRC) competition, held each year to promote interest among young people in pursuing careers in high-tech science fields.

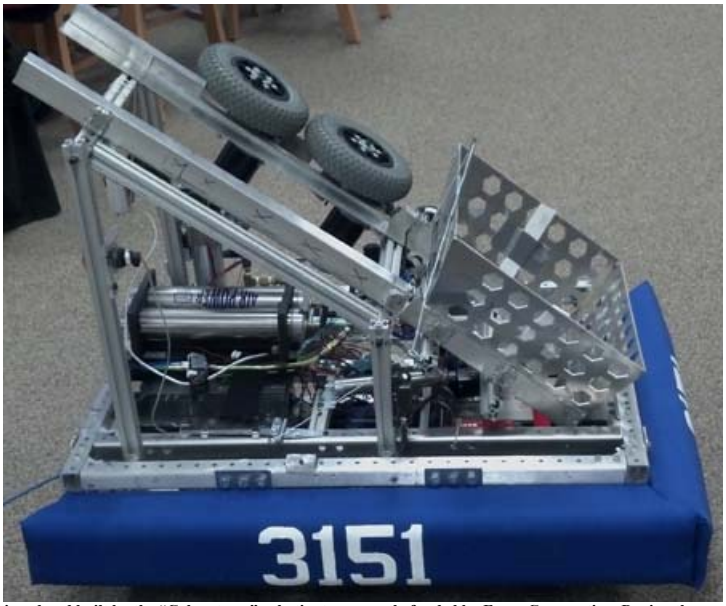
With the prestige of NASA behind it, the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Challenge involves groups of high schoolers competing under strict rules, limited resources, and time limits to design a robot to perform certain tasks against competitors, such as shooting basketballs through hoops or tossing rings onto posts.

And with the FIRST Robotics Challenge being an engineering competition and New Jersey-based Enser Corp. being an engineering services company, the two were a perfect fit to join together. Enser Corp. has been one of many sponsors of the challenge for the past three years and because the grandson of Enser's regional sales manager, Harold Doty, is on one of the high school teams that take part in the annual competition, it was even more of a perfect fit for the company.

"It's pretty phenomenal. The kids on this team are just so incredibly bright," said Doty, whose grandson, Camryn Doty, is on the Cyberstorm #3151 team based in Sewell, N.J., at the Gloucester County Institute for Technology (GCIT), a full-time, career high school. "These are incredibly young, bright, energetic kids that are truly the future of our country, and it's absolutely amazing what they're able to accomplish."

Last year's competition, dubbed the Ultimate Ascent, involved robots scoring as many flying discs as possible into goals during a two minute match. Students compete for scholarship money.

Each January, NASA announces the parameters for the new competition in a live, national webcast and teams get a set time frame—about nine weeks—to engineer, design, and build their robot prior to the competition. In the past, Enser has aided its sponsored team, Cyberstorm, by providing monetary assistance and the engineering and data management software to perform the task.



This robot was designed and built by the "Cyberstorm" robotics team, partly funded by Enser Corporation. During the past few years, robots have been designed by students to kick a soccer ball in a goal and shoot a Frisbee, among other achievements. Photo courtesy of Enser Corp. Photo courtesy of Enser Corp.

The goal of the Robotics Challenge (grades 9 to 12), as well as other FIRST challenges, such as FIRST Lego League (grades 4 to 9) and FIRST Tech Challenge (grades 7 to 12), is to promote interest in STEM jobs, which many engineering and manufacturing companies are seeking due to a continuing skills gap in America. "That's how this competition came about," Doty said. "There's such a shortage of kids going into engineering, and this gets them excited at a young age. It's not just Enser that's short of engineering talent. But we are constantly looking for good, young engineering candidates."

After the yearly national competition, the students get to re-use their robots in regional competitions. The Cyberstorm team participated in two regional competitions during 2013, placing in the top eight teams for the competition at the Seneca Regional Competition in Tabernacle, New Jersey. During the past several years, the Cyberstorm team has designed and built robots that have kicked a soccer ball into a goal and picked up an inflated inner tube and placed them on pegs on a wall, among other achievements.

Headquartered in Cinnaminson, N.J., Enser (www.enser.com) also has facilities in Charlotte, N.C., and Orlando, Florida. The company offers 66 years of technology and engineering experience in implementing strategic solutions for mechanical engineering, tooling and fixture design and build services, turnkey systems and process engineering, manufacturing process engineering, and product development.

The company also offers manufacturing resources. Its project managers and network of domestically-based manufacturing partners enable fabrication of parts or building of complex machinery for both Enser-designed and customer-designed projects. Enser also provides staffing services, finding highly qualified professionals with a recruiting system that reportedly has more than 100,000 technical resumes.

Back to Industry News page

Back to Homepage