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Hudson Valley Community College to Award Course Certificates to High School Students in the *FIRST*[®] Organization

Hudson Valley Community College is offering learning certificates, good for tuition for a three-credit course at the college to local high school students who participate in the [FIRST](#)[®] Robotics Competition (FRC) program. The certificates will be awarded to students from schools in the Capital Region, as well as Columbia, Greene, Washington, Warren, Fulton and Montgomery counties. Certificates are non-transferrable and have no expiration date.

FIRST[®] (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a New Hampshire-based, non-profit organization that engages students in science and technology learning and fun. In addition to robotics, *FIRST*[®] sponsors competitions in Lego building and technologies.

“Hudson Valley Community College and the *FIRST*[®] organization have a shared mission in promoting STEM skill development at all age levels. We have worked together several times on projects and it seems only natural to bring these students into classes at Hudson Valley, where they can get a feel for college and the subjects they can pursue in STEM,” says Drew Matonak, president of Hudson Valley Community College.

Ana Martinez, *FIRST*[®] Regional Director, who hopes that other local colleges will become involved as well, said, “FIRST is the spark that ignites students’ interest in STEM. However, our partnerships with higher education are critical in building upon the STEM pipeline. This credit-bearing certificate is the first of a kind and US FIRST is delighted with the opportunity that President Matonak is offering FRC participants in the Capital Region.”

Founded in 1953, Hudson Valley Community College offers more than 75 associate degree and certificate programs in four schools: Business; Engineering and Industrial Technologies; Health Sciences; and Liberal Arts and Sciences; and an Educational Opportunity Center for academic and career training. One of 30 community colleges in the State University of New York system, it has an enrollment of more than 12,000 students, and is known as a leader in distance learning initiatives and workforce training. Hudson Valley has more than 75,000 alumni.

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