



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Impact Report 2024



FIRST® exists to prepare the young people of today for the world of tomorrow.

The mission of *FIRST®* is to provide life-changing robotics programs that give young people the skills, confidence, and resilience to build a better world. *FIRST* is actively engaged in developing strategies, collaborations, grants, scholarships, and initiatives that remove barriers and ensure greater access to *FIRST* programs for all youth to participate. Our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) strategy is grounded in the *FIRST* Core Value of Inclusion such that our programs welcome all. To globally engage our community, in FY24 (July 2023 - June 2024) our strategy prioritizes equity, diversity, and inclusion implementation across all *FIRST* programs.

Our ED&I Strategy

1. **Increasing Capacity** through the committed *FIRST* Headquarters ED&I, Access, Volunteer Resources, Global Field Operations, and Education Teams; a growing community of volunteers, participants, and educators; galvanizing alumni to champion STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education; and engaging youth and industry leaders.
2. **Increasing Skills and Resources** through developing inclusive and accessible programs, curriculum, and events; **ED&I training** for *FIRST* volunteers and students, all *FIRST* Headquarters staff and Program Delivery Organizations and Partners; professional development for classroom teachers; and activating thought leadership to share our best practices internally and externally.
3. **Engaging Youth Where They Are** through a focus on all PreK-12 students, **STEM Equity Community Innovation Grants**, partnering with youth serving organizations, opportunities to learn STEM via **Educator Resources**, and in school through **FIRST Class Pack**.
4. **Building Community** through expanding our alliances and partnerships with mission-driven organizations that embody and align with **FIRST Core Values** and continuing support for alumni through scholarship programs and career development pathways.
5. **Strategy Refinement** through assessment and reflection, we continuously refine our ED&I strategy at *FIRST* to meet the needs of the global community we serve and integrate it in our work across all departments at *FIRST* Headquarters.

An Expanded Focus on ED&I

- *FIRST*® Tech Challenge Curriculum Translation
- Inclusive updates to *FIRST* systems
- New training designed for teams as part of our [Youth ED&I Training](#)
- New Certificate of Completion designed for students as part of our [Youth ED&I Training](#)
- New Blog Post on [How to Build a Youth Advisory Council](#)
- *FIRST* is a proud partner of the Human Rights Campaign’s (HRC) Project THRIVE. [This checklist](#) provides a research-based guide for K-12 educators and other youth-serving professionals as they proactively work to ensure safe, welcoming, and inclusive schools and communities for LGBTQ+ youth.
- Language pins made available for event organizers to offer to volunteers and teams
- Over 5,350 participants engaged in the online ED&I module training
- Reported [FIRST Leadership Demographics](#)

Connecting All Youth To STEM

Five Outstanding Community Organizations Awarded STEM Equity Community Innovation Grants

The 2023-2024 *FIRST* STEM Equity Community Innovation Grant Award Recipients:

- Cox Science Center and Aquarium
West Palm Beach, Florida
- East Harlem Tutorial Program Inc.
New York, New York
- Juneau Economic Development Council
Juneau, Alaska
- KC STEM Alliance – UMKC Foundation
Kansas City, Missouri
- South Dakota Discovery Center
Pierre, South Dakota

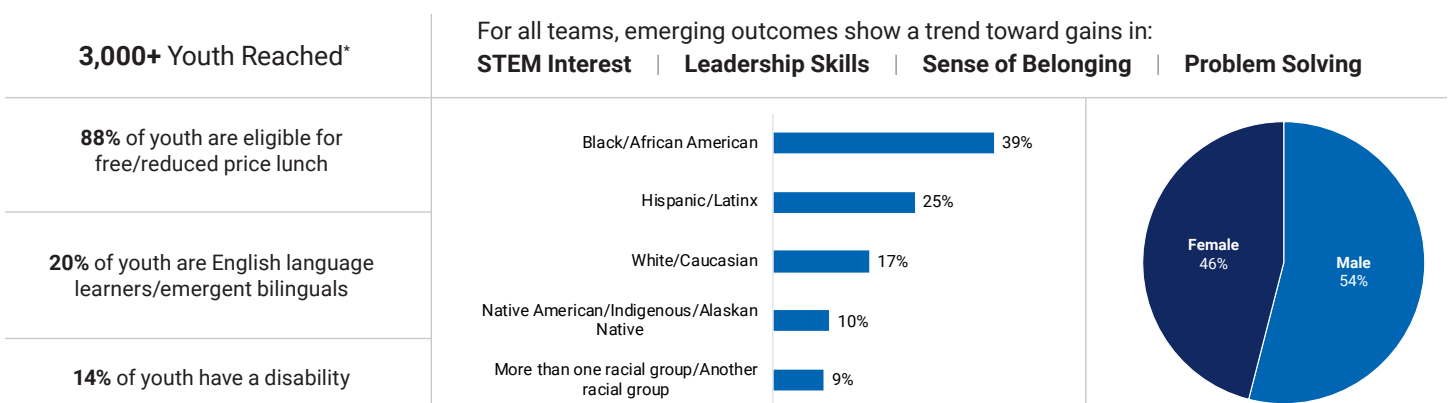


FIRST STEM Equity Community Innovation Grant

Launched in 2016, the annual competitive [FIRST STEM Equity Community Innovation Grant \(SECIG\)](#) increases the opportunity for historically marginalized students to participate in *FIRST* programs. The goal of this grant is to expand reach and inclusive practices by removing barriers to provide students access and opportunity in STEM.

Furthermore, since 2021, grants have provided equitable STEM engagement opportunities for youth globally across India, Nigeria, the United States of America, Canada, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Chile, and Libya.

FOR THE 2023-2024 SEASON: STEM EQUITY COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANTS



Note: Data is from FY2024 and summarizes youth demographic information reported by sites, not all sites report complete demographic information.

Notable Highlights in 2023-2024



FIRST Program Delivery Partner Fellowship in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The 2024 *FIRST* PDP Fellowship in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) provided the opportunity for participants to: 1) Increase knowledge in ED&I, 2) Normalize conversations in ED&I, 3) Gain skills and resources to implement in their communities, and 4) Build community amongst one another. Sessions included topics such as Allyship, Implicit Bias, and Power and Privilege. The Fellowship was facilitated by the ED&I team at *FIRST*: Dr. Janell N. Catlin, Kristen MacCulloch, and Daphne Galatas. Participants in the Fellowship completed six hours of training and earned a Certificate of Completion. **Fellows serve as champions for ED&I across the global *FIRST* community** and reconvene up to two times a year to meet and share updates. The 2024 cohort of Fellows compose the third cohort, and the first cohort was launched in 2022. As of March 2024, there are a total of 75 Fellows moving the needle forward in ED&I across our global *FIRST* community.



Expanded Partnership with AISES

In November 2022, we announced the *FIRST* and the [American Indian Science and Engineering Society \(AISES\)](#) partnership to bring robotics programming to Native-serving schools in the United States. The goals of this partnership are to 1) Remove barriers to participation in STEM education, 2) Build awareness and increase retention for students in grades 6-12, and 3) Increase success in STEM higher education through scholarships. For FY24, we reached students and teachers in Native communities in North Carolina and New Mexico, and we commenced a scholarship program for higher education. To learn more about the partnership [read here](#).



Continuation of *FIRST* and UNCF Scholars Program for the 2024-2025 Academic Year

The *FIRST* x UNCF Scholars Program was announced in March 2022, as an initiative designed to identify and provide scholarship and academic support for *FIRST* alumni who aspire to become leaders and innovators in their respective fields. Since March 2023 and continuing for the 2024-2025 Academic Year, the Program was expanded to award students with renewable scholarships in the amount of \$10,000 for matriculated college students attending a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), Tribal College and University (TCU), or Asian-American, Native American, and Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI).



[#PeopleofSTEAM: An ED&I Storytelling Campaign](#)

Inspired by "[Humans of New York](#)," People of STEAM is an ongoing blog series featuring a wide array of people of all ages and backgrounds who are involved in *FIRST* and/or making an impact in the world of STEAM. In February 2024, we celebrated our [One Year Anniversary](#) of #PeopleofSTEAM to amplify the voices of our global community.

Notable Highlights in 2023-2024 continued

Thought Leadership Podcasts



The All Inclusive Podcast

Dr. Janell N. Catlin, *FIRST* Vice President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Kathleen Owsley, President of the Bosch Community Fund participated in The All Inclusive Podcast hosted by Natasha Rainey to discuss the path to more diversity in STEM.



The HR Leaders Podcast

Dr. Janell N. Catlin, *FIRST* Vice President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Dana Rixter, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer at BAE Systems, Inc. participated in The HR Leaders Podcast hosted by Christopher Rainey to discuss the transformative potential of career pipelining in driving equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.



Rockwell Automation Podcast: Solving Manufacturing's Workforce Crisis

Dr. Janell N. Catlin, *FIRST* Vice President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, participated in the Rockwell Automation Podcast along with other STEM leaders, to discuss how women can help solve the manufacturing workforce crisis.

Celebrating our Community

- [The Human Rights Campaign at *FIRST* Championship](#)
- [The Society of Women in Engineering at *FIRST* Championship](#)
- [International Women in Engineering Day](#)

Social Features and Articles

- [Celebrating Team CocoNuts](#)
- [Rockwell Automation: Advancing Women in Manufacturing](#)
- [Ontario Provincial Championship](#)
- [Self-Esteem in STEM: \[LinkedIn\]\(#\), \[Facebook\]\(#\)](#)
- [Building Long-Term Inclusion in the Workforce](#)
- [How Companies Can Fortify Their Talent Via STEM Mentorship](#)
- [The Moral Responsibility of Business Leaders to Empower Young Women in STEM](#)
- [How Businesses Can Help Close the Gender Gap](#)
- [Diary of an Innovator Blog from Team 1880: \[Post 1\]\(#\) and \[Post 2\]\(#\)](#)

We Believe that STEM is for Everyone

FIRST is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We embrace and encourage differences in race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, income, language, learning difference, or any other characteristics that make our adult-force and students unique.

FIRST Core Values

The FIRST Core Values emphasize friendly sportsmanship, respect for the contributions of others, teamwork, learning, and community involvement and are part of our commitment to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion. The FIRST Community expresses the FIRST philosophies of *Gracious Professionalism*[®] and *Coopertition*[®] through our Core Values:



Discovery

We explore new skills and ideas.



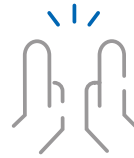
Innovation

We use creativity and persistence to solve problems.



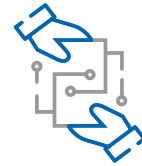
Impact

We apply what we learn to improve our world.



Inclusion

We respect each other and embrace our differences.



Teamwork

We are stronger when we work together.



Fun

We enjoy and celebrate what we do!



Thank You to Our Sponsors

Thank you to our sponsors for their generous support and commitment to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at FIRST. Their support enables us to explore, develop and implement strategies to become more inclusive and ensure access to our program for all students.

🔗 Questions, contact us directly diversity@firstinspires.org 🌐 Learn more about FIRST at www.firstinspires.org