

# ROBO PARADE

## An opportunity to develop your

# IMAGINATION

while having fun! by CJ Chung

There are many robotics game competitions around the world. However, in some cases, tightly defined game rules may limit students' imagination and creativity. Our annual Thanksgiving RoboParade was designed to do the opposite; it provides a fun way for students to develop their imagination. It was started at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Michigan 4 years ago.

Believed to be the world's only autonomous robot parade, this event features miniature floats with moving parts, sparkling lights, and all sorts of bells and drums rolling down a parade route without remote controls. Floats with various sensors must be programmed to stay on course. They must avoid running into any floats in front of them, autonomously. The float also must observe the speed limit, which is a minimum of 4cm/sec and a maximum of 18cm/sec.

### PLATFORM AGNOSTIC

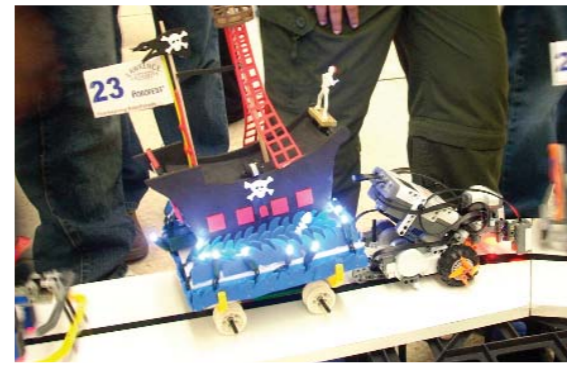
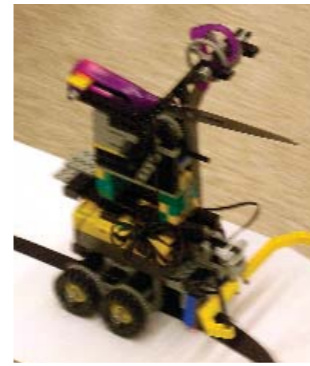
Teams can use any robot kits, sensors, actuators and programming languages. Lego RCX and NXT are the most popular kits. VEX, Tetrix, Boe-Bot, AIBO, and L2Bot have been used, as well. Attendees of the parade will be able to see fully autonomous robotic floats that follow the parade route while interacting with people along the route.

For example, one robot threw candies when it detected spectators waving their hands! Since 2006, many interesting robotic floats have been constructed and programmed by 4th ~12th grade imaginative young inventors. Animals like turkeys were popular themes. There was an amazing musical robot playing 4 castanets. A ribbon cutting robot kicked-off the 2007 parade. AIBO robot dogs with 4 legs and a tail amused the spectators in 2009. You can see happy students with their RoboParade creations since 2006.

Albert Einstein also said, "Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere." Programs like RoboParade will let young students develop their imagination which is essential for creative and innovative ideas and for entrepreneurship in the future. In addition, the RoboParade promotes cooperation, camaraderie, and harmony. Streaming videos of the previous parades can be found on the RoboParade link at [www.robofest.net](http://www.robofest.net).

For prospective teams, Lawrence Tech is providing free technical hands-on workshops for schools and teams. For more information or if you are interested in hosting RoboParade in your city, please contact the

"Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world." —Albert Einstein



Robofest office at [robofest@LTU.edu](mailto:robofest@LTU.edu) or call 248-204-3569. The event is open to the public and admission is free.

This year the 5th annual indoor Robot Thanksgiving Parade in Michigan will be held at Macomb Community College Lorenzo Cultural Center, Clinton Township, Michigan on Saturday, November 20, 2010. 12:30pm-3:00pm. ©

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Links  
Robofest, [www.robofest.net](http://www.robofest.net)

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