



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Includes complete list of teams and schools

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GOVERNOR, LT. GOV SPEAK AT 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOTBALL ROBOTICS COMPETITION

BOTBALL: AUTONOMOUS (NO REMOTE CONTROL) STUDENT-BUILT ROBOTS

Honolulu - April 28, 2009 - Governor Lingle and Lt. Governor Aiona will speak at the 5th Anniversary of the 2009 Hawai'i Botball Robotics Tournament, taking place Saturday, May 2, at the Hawai'i Convention Center. The Botball Tournament is free, and the public is invited to attend. Seeding Rounds (unopposed) begin at 10 a.m. and double elimination rounds start at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Forty two Botball teams from all over Hawai'i will compete. Each team consists of about 5-20 middle and high school students who design, build, program and document a pair of autonomous (no remote control) robots to play in this year's open-ended game. The theme of this year's game is "Alternative Energy".

The Botball Educational Robotics Program was the first student robotics program to be offered in the state of Hawai'i. Both the Governor and Lt. Governor spoke at that initial Botball Tournament back in 2004, congratulating the students and strongly encouraging them to pursue science, technology, and engineering careers.

The Botball program engages middle and high school aged students in a team-oriented robotics competition that develops students' science, technology, engineering, computer science and math skills. Home schoolers and community teams are also welcome to participate. In Botball, all the design, coding, and building of robots is done by students, and no machining is necessary.

The Hawai'i Botball Program started with a two-day hands on professional development workshop for educators on the weekend of January 31-Feb 1 at The Hawai'i Convention Center. At the workshop, teams received their kits of reusable robotics equipment. Each kit will be used for competition and will be kept by the school or team to be integrated into the classroom or extracurricular activities. This ensures that schools will be able to continue to grow their science, math and technology curricula through robotics after the Botball season is over.

NASA has sponsored Botball Robotics for over ten years. NASA uses autonomous robots in space and planetary exploration, and they see Botball as an opportunity to reach out to their future workforce and help them get relevant hands-on experience and skills.

Local sponsors, such as Hawaii Space Grant Consortium, University of Hawaii at Manoa, and the Hawaiian Electric Company have sponsored the program in Hawai'i from the very beginning. Local residents Art and Rene Kimura have devoted countless hours to ensure that this program is made available to every Hawai'i school that wishes to participate.

Terry Grant, a NASA Associate, has been personally supporting the Botball Program as a volunteer for many years, going out to schools and teaching programming. He said, "In this environment they learn how to work together, connecting with the technology and understanding how it is relevant in a way that is impossible to get from lectures or books...and they come away inspired to learn more! My only concern is how to make experiences like these available to all our youth; I see it as critical to our future."

KISS Institute for Practical Robotics, an educational nonprofit organization, will present 14 Botball Workshops and Tournaments this year - 12 in the United States and 2 based internationally. All teams who participate in their regional workshop and tournament, regardless of how they place in their competition, are eligible to participate in the International Botball Tournament taking place this summer in Leesburg, VA, during the Global Conference on Educational Robotics on July 1-5, 2009.

Over 6,000 students participate in Botball every year and more than 60,000 have competed over the course of 11 years. In 2009, teams from 23 states and 6 countries will participate in Botball. For more information about Botball please see: www.botball.org or contact: outreach@kipr.org.

The Botball Program is sponsored in part by: NASA Robotics Alliance Project, College of Engineering, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Kauai Economic Development Board, Hawaiian Electric Company, Hawaii Space Grant Consortium, Naval Research Laboratory, Solidworks Corporation, Innovation First Inc., iRobot, and igus, inc.,

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2009 Hawai'i Botball Robotics Teams:

Academy of the Pacific, Honolulu, HI
Castle High School, Kaneohe, HI
Dole Middle School, Honolulu, HI
Earl's Garage, Kamuela, HI
Farrington High School, Honolulu, HI (2 Teams)
Hanalani Schools, Mililani, HI
Hawaii Preparatory Academy, Kamuela, HI
Highlands Intermediate School, Pearl City, HI
Hilo High School, Hilo, HI

Iao School, Wailuku, HI
Iolani School, Honolulu, HI
Island School, Lihue, HI
Kahuku High and Intermediate, Kahuku, HI
Kailua Intermediate School, Kailua, HI
Kamakahahei Middle School, Lihue, HI
Kanuikapono Public Charter School, Anahola, HI
Kapaa High School, Kapaa, HI
Kapaa Middle School, Kapaa, HI
Kealakehe High School, Kailua-Kona, HI
Kekaulike High School, Pukalani, HI
King Intermediate School, Kaneohe, HI
Kohala Middle School, Kapaau, HI
Lahaina Intermediate School, Lahaina, HI
Maui Waena Intermediate School, Kahului, HI
Moanalua High School, Honolulu, HI (3 Teams)
Moanalua Middle School, Honolulu, HI
Nanakuli High & intermediate, Waiaae, HI
Olomana School, Kailua, HI
Saint Louis School, Honolulu, HI
Stevenson Middle School, Honolulu, HI
Voyager Public Charter School, Honolulu, HI
Wahiawa Middle School, Wahiawa, HI (2 Teams)
Waiakea High School, Hilo, HI
Waiakea Intermediate School, Hilo, HI
Waimea Canyon Middle School, Waimea, HI
Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School, Kamuela, HI
Waipahu Intermediate School, Waipahu, HI
Washington Middle School, Honolulu, HI