



FIRST in Upper Midwest

April 2, 2021

Re: Grant Awards for FEI FI FO FUM Equity and Access Initiatives

FIRST in Upper Midwest (FUM) is pleased to announce the selection of three *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams in Minnesota and North Dakota to receive the first-ever [FIRST Equity & Inclusion Financing Initiative for FIRST in Upper Midwest](#) (FEI FI FO FUM) grants.

The FEI FI FO FUM Grant Program is a new funding opportunity providing FUM *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC) teams with a small grant to implement a project that will make changes to culture intended to increase the participation and success of [underserved, underrepresented and/or vulnerable populations](#) in *FIRST* Robotics in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Teams receiving these initial grants are:

- [Team 2491](#) No Mythic, Great River Montessori School & Avalon Charter School, St. Paul, MN. \$1,000, to create a school-wide survey to understand perceptions about robotics, and to engage the team in facilitated workshops to improve team culture and create a plan to increase participation among underrepresented populations.
- [Team 3130](#) The ERRORS, East Ridge High School, Woodbury, MN. \$900, to promote positive LGBTQ+ STEM curriculum and resources for East Ridge High School by building a resource center housed within the school library.
- Team 8586 Firebirds Robotics, Devils Lake High School, Devils Lake, ND. \$1,000, for new member outreach events to increase the diversity of students participating on the team.

To be awarded a grant, teams needed to submit a grant application proposing a new and creative proposal to make positive change that increases the participation and success of underserved, underrepresented and/or vulnerable populations in robotics. This program represents an important ongoing effort to raise awareness of equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts for the more than 220 *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The funding for these grants was made by *FIRST* in Upper Midwest.

FUM Diversity and Inclusion Committee member Sandy Olson says “We are so excited to offer these grants to area teams as a means of encouraging them to engage in activities that will foster inclusion of our diverse communities. We would like to thank the teams that applied, as well as FUM for making these grants possible.”

FIRST in Upper Midwest would like to thank the [FUM Diversity & Inclusion Committee](#) and the [FUM Board of Directors](#) for making this project possible.

The FUM Diversity and Inclusion Committee welcomes new committee members interested in fostering equity, diversity and inclusion in the FRC community. If you would like to join the committee, please [click here](#) to complete a brief application form.

The mission of FUM is to catalyze the growth and success of *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams and students in the Upper Midwest by providing resources and knowledge, connecting existing efforts, enhancing community, and facilitating events. Facilitating the increased participation of students, mentors and volunteers from underserved and underrepresented groups, and fostering a welcoming climate of inclusion that supports the success of all people in the FRC program, are central to our mission. FUM encourages all members of our community to take advantage of the *FIRST* [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training resources](#).