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SLAS Offers Young Competitors \$500 through the New SLAS FIRST Team Grants Program

CHICAGO – The Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening (SLAS) is proud to announce the launch of the SLAS FIRST Team Grants Program for the 2013-14 school year.

As a long-time sponsor of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), SLAS is directing its support to the grassroots of both organizations by inviting dues-paid SLAS members who actively participate as coach or mentor for a FIRST team in their area to apply for \$500 team grants, which will be awarded on a first applied-for, first-served basis. SLAS FIRST Team Grants must be used to offset necessary costs associated with required project supplies, team registrations and travel to and from FIRST competitions.

In addition, SLAS once again will welcome teams of regional champions to its exhibit floor when it returns to the San Diego Convention Center for SLAS2014, Jan. 18-22, 2014. According to SLAS President Jeff Paslay, Ph.D., “SLAS’s continued support of this fine organization is exactly in line with our mission *to encourage the study of, and improve the science and practice of, laboratory automation and screening.*”

“As we all know, science, technology, engineering and math-related disciplines are responsible for many of the societal innovations that make our world a better place. Consider that, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, only 5 percent of workers here in the U.S. are employed in fields related to science and engineering, yet they are responsible for more than 50 percent of our sustained economic expansion.”

FIRST (was founded in 1992 by inventor Dean Kamen of Segway fame “to show students of every age that science, technology, and problem-solving are not only fun and rewarding, but are proven paths to successful careers and a bright future for us all.” The annual programs culminate in an international robotics competition and celebration where teams win recognition, gain self-confidence, develop people and life skills, make new friends and perhaps discover career paths. More than 300,000 youth between the ages of six and 18 and 120,000 mentors, coaches and volunteers from 70 countries participated in FIRST programs throughout the 2012-13 school year.

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“As they say on the FIRST website,” says Paslay, “today they’re building robotics for friendly competition. Tomorrow they’ll be our competitor’s smartest innovators (unless we get to them FIRST!).”

For more information about the SLAS FIRST Team Grants Program, please visit www.slas.org.
For more information about FIRST, please visit www.usfirst.org.

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The Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening (SLAS) is an international community of more than 15,000 individual scientists, engineers, researchers, technologists and others from academic, government and commercial laboratories. The SLAS mission is to be the preeminent global organization providing forums for education and information exchange and to encourage the study of, and improve the practice of laboratory science and technology. For more information, visit www.SLAS.org.