

---

## Lawrence Goldfarb Teams Up With Renowned Inventor Dean Kamen To Inspire Science And Technology Programs In Marin Schools System

**Novato, CA, March 16 , 2007** -- One of America's most famous inventors came to Marin this week to inspire young people to become actively involved in science, engineering, and technology.

Dean Kamen, known for inventing the Segway electronic scooter, portable dialysis machine, heart stint, and numerous other medical devices, appeared at the Marin Country Club on March 14 asking a group of science and math educators to initiate a FIRST program in the North Bay.

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a nationally recognized program dedicated to inspiring teams of middle school and high school students to work alongside engineers and other professional mentors to solve real-world problems by applying math, science and technology. FIRST programs can be initiated by school districts, by individual schools or by a group of schools.

"We have kids spending years getting better at bouncing a ball, or gossiping about celebrities," said Dean Kamen, who declares that the lack of inspiration for science and technology is not symptomatic of an education problem, but a fault of American culture. "As a society we are distracting kids with superficial concerns that have no real value. In order to inspire interest in these kids, we need to show students real local heroes-real engineers, real scientists, real inventors."

Dean Kamen's appearance in Marin was sponsored by LRG Capital Group, LLC of Larkspur, a global merchant bank that specializes in investments and providing financial advisory services to publicly traded and private companies primarily in the technology and bio-tech industries. Lawrence Goldfarb, Managing Partner of LRG, is a strong supporter of the FIRST program and is offering to provide sponsorship of a team in the North Bay. Lawrence Goldfarb currently sponsors a FIRST program in Davis and would like to extend his sponsorship to a second team in the North Bay because he believes so strongly in the program.

FIRST offers three innovative programs: the FIRST Robotics Competition and the FIRST Vex Challenge for high-school students, and the FIRST LEGO® League for 6-14 year olds. The programs teach students valuable lessons in team work, scientific research, and real-life problem solving. Students who participate in FIRST teams generally excel beyond their peers in academic programs and frequently go on to professional careers in science and technology.

"Local businesses have to take an active approach to improve the lives of youth," said Lawrence Goldfarb, who will serve as a volunteer judge at the FIRST Robotics Competition at the UC Davis Sacramento Regional on March 29-31. "Investing in these kids means we're investing in our future. FIRST can fill in some of the gaps in our middle schools and high schools by helping to stimulate interest in after school programs."

Attendees at the event included representatives from the County of Novato, the George Lucas Foundation, Marin School of Arts and Technology, Ambassadors of Hope and Opportunity, and the Marin PTA.

"To passively sit in a classroom is a 19th century format," said Dean Kamen. "In this next century, you're going to have to be creative, or you're not going to make it. We want to help stimulate our youth to be varsity thinkers and varsity creators."

A 2003 independent social impact study conducted by Brandeis University indicates that student participants in a FIRST team are 50% more likely to attend college, three times more likely to study engineering, and nine

time more likely to have an internship their freshman year in college. In this study, 89% of students reported increased self-confidence, and 70% had an increased motivation to do well in school.

"There are no high risks in initiating this program," explains Dean Kamen. "This is not proof of concept-the results have been studied, and the numbers speak for themselves. So now we need adult mentors who believe in this program to bring it to the schools in Marin."

The FIRST program has grown throughout the country and is now in most metropolitan areas, with over 38,000 participating high schools students and 90,000 middle school students. Sponsors for national FIRST program include top executives from Fortune 500 companies, including NASA, LEGO, Xerox, GM and Motorola as well as hundreds of universities worldwide.

### **About LRG Capital Group**

LRG Capital Group is a global investment, banking and advisory boutique that focuses on public and private companies in the technology, life sciences, hospitality, real estate, and entertainment sectors. The firm provides capital via private equity, commercial loans, and structured debt financing, and guides and advises clients on mergers and acquisitions, corporate finance advice and other strategic alternatives. Headquartered in San Francisco with offices in New York and Miami, LRG Capital Group excels at relationship-focused guidance and financing.

### **About FIRST**

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) ([www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org)) was founded by inventor Dean Kamen in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, NH, the 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization delivers accessible, innovative programs that build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math.

FIRST offers three innovative programs: the FIRST Robotics Competition and the FIRST Vex Challenge for high-school students, and the FIRST LEGO® League for 6-14 year olds. Also located at FIRST headquarters is a research and development facility called FIRST place that offers science camps and workshops to school groups. This year, the FIRST Championship will be held at the Georgia Dome, Atlanta on April 12-14, 2007.

Contact:  
Alexis Banducci  
LRG Capital Group  
(415) 834-4664  
[abanducci@lrgcap.com](mailto:abanducci@lrgcap.com)

###