



Press Release

June 3, 2010

For Immediate Release

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Release # 1018

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Student Robotics Teams To Compete at Oakland University

*Co-hosted by OU and the U.S. Army TARDEC,
18th annual robotics competition takes place June 4-7*

DETROIT ARSENAL, WARREN, MI and ROCHESTER, MI – In recent weeks, robots have been at the forefront of news stories across the country. In New York City, robots helped a police bomb squad disarm a car bomb in Times Square. In the Gulf of Mexico, robots are helping engineers gather information following the massive oil leak. Clearly, robots are playing a huge role in performing dirty and dangerous jobs formerly performed by humans. Accordingly, the robotics industry is spawning an array of career opportunities and new research, development and engineering technologies.

With a focus on urging students toward these new careers, the 18th Annual Intelligent Ground Vehicle Competition (IGVC) is taking place June 4-7 at Oakland University (OU) in Rochester, MI. Co-hosted by the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) and OU, the open-to-the-public competition features a variety of outdoor robot challenges which apply classroom instruction and experimentation to real-world scenarios, environmental challenges and obstacles.

IGVC features high school and college robotics teams from around the world in exhibitions and competitions. At the end of the event, an awards ceremony recognizes the best-of-the-best.

U.S. Army TARDEC Senior Research Scientist in Robotics Dr. Jim Overholt says that, for student competitors, IGVC can be a gateway into a career in robotics. “From an Army perspective, we have about 8,000 robots currently operating in conflict areas,” he said. “Having these students gather in southeastern Michigan gives us an opportunity to explain robotics career options to them both inside and outside of the military.” Overholt, an OU alum, participated in IGVC as a student. Now, as one of the Army’s top robotics scientists, he oversees the TARDEC Joint Center for Robotics. TARDEC is the Department of Defense’s (DOD’s) focal point for ground robotics and unmanned ground systems.

For the 2010 robotics challenge, 58 university teams are competing. The engineering students have been challenged to design autonomous vehicles and compete in a variety of unmanned mobility competitions. Area teams include OU, the University of Detroit, the University of Michigan and Lawrence Technological University. National teams of note include California State, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Texas. The U.S. Navy is taking part, and, for an international flavor, the National University of Singapore will compete.

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In addition to the universities, exhibitions from other TARDEC-supported robotics events will thrill crowds. High school teams from the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) competition will compete against each other in a futuristic soccer match. In addition, high school teams from RoboFest will compete in a debris removal scenario.

On Monday, June 7, a number of business and community leaders are scheduled to address the gathering.

Full event details can be found at <http://www.igvc.org/>.

ABOUT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

Oakland University is a doctoral, research-intensive university located in Oakland County, Michigan. The university has 132 bachelor's degree programs and 117 graduate degree and certificate programs. Dedicated to delivering a distinctive undergraduate experience that is complemented by the strength of its graduate offerings and research accomplishments, Oakland University is organized into the College of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Business Administration, Education and Human Services, Engineering and Computer Science, Health Sciences, Nursing, and The Honors College. Visit Oakland University on the web at www.oakland.edu.

ABOUT TARDEC

Headquartered at the Detroit Arsenal in Warren, MI, TARDEC is the Nation's laboratory for advanced military automotive technology and serves as the Ground Systems Integrator for all DOD manned and unmanned ground vehicle systems. With roots dating back to the World War II era, TARDEC is a full life-cycle, systems engineering support provider-of-first-choice for all DOD ground combat and combat support weapons, equipment and vehicle systems. TARDEC develops and integrates the right technology solutions to improve Current Force effectiveness and provides superior capabilities for Future Force integration. TARDEC's technical, scientific and engineering staff lead cutting-edge research and development in Ground Systems Survivability; Power and Mobility; Intelligent Ground Systems; Force Projection; and Vehicle Electronics and Architecture.

TARDEC is a major research, development and engineering center for the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command and partner in the TACOM Life Cycle Management Command.

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