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**Energy Industry Sponsors FIRST® Robotics and FIRST® Tech Initiatives**

**WASHINGTON (January 16, 2015)** – During its winter Board of Directors meeting last week in Palm Beach, Fla., the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) announced a new industry initiative to sponsor *FIRST® Robotics* competitions and the *FIRST®* *Tech Challenge*. The new “Get Into Energy, Get Into STEM” initiative will be supported by 11 electric companies and will be managed by the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD), a consortium of electric, natural gas, and nuclear utilities and their associations, including EEI and many of its member companies.

“Our industry's support of *FIRST* demonstrates the strong commitment we have to encouraging more students to participate in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, while inspiring them toward exciting energy careers that utilize their highly developed skills and education,” said EEI Chairman Ted Craver, Chairman, President and CEO, Edison International. “We are optimistic that with the support of EEI, CEWD, and its members, *FIRST* participants will be tomorrow’s energy leaders.”

CEWD’s support for *FIRST* will provide funding at the national, regional, and local levels for onsite robot doctors and charging stations during the 2015 national and super regional competitions and will cover registration fees for more than 180 new *First* *Tech* teams. Participating companies will also provide onsite, hands-on support to student participants at each competition level. CEWD’s sponsorship of *FIRST* also includes local community support through *FIRST Tech* team grants.

“This new partnership with *FIRST* is a perfect fit for the energy industry,” said Craver. “*FIRST* designs innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in STEM. These students are exactly the type of kids we want to be the future employees—and leaders—in our industry.”

CEWD member sponsors of the *FIRST* initiative include: Ameren, Consumers Energy, DTE Energy, Duke Energy, Edison International, Exelon, MidAmerican Energy, National Grid, NextEra Energy, Pacific Gas and Electric, and Southern Company.

CEWD is a non-profit consortium of electric, natural gas, and nuclear utilities. Through partnerships with energy companies, the community, and academia, CEWD helps to foster energy career paths for future employees. To learn more, visit [Get Into Energy](http://www.getintoenergy.com/).

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*EEI is the association that represents all U.S. investor-owned electric companies. Our members provide electricity for 220 million Americans, operate in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and directly employ more than 500,000 workers. EEI has 70 international electric companies as Affiliate Members, and 270 industry suppliers and related organizations as Associate Members.*