

Thank you for your interest in UMass Lowell's Community Partnership Program. Our program provides outreach and support to K-12 areas schools in technology. We give STEM related workshops to support the Botball competition and the Botfest exhibition, and we provide scholarships to schools for their participation in these programs. The Community Partnership Program is organized by Drs. Fred Martin and Holly Yanco, with the support of Phyllis Procter and UMass Lowell graduate and undergraduate students. The university provides space, overhead, staff, student and faculty time, but it is unable to provide direct funding. Donations enable us to provide scholarships to schools.

Botball and Botfest provide fun, challenging, team-based, hands-on learning experiences for middle and high school students in computer science, robotics and technology. These efforts instill curiosity, knowledge and confidence to prepare students for college, career choices and the high tech workplace.

To summarize:

- Botball is a national program (www.botball.org) for middle and high schools that includes teacher workshops, a robot kit, and a tournament. UMass Lowell is the organizer and host for the regional teams and competition.
- Botfest is a non-competitive robotic exhibition for grades K-12, held at the same time and place as Botball.

Teachers participate in Botball and Botfest to provide an engaging hands-on technology experience for their students. However, there are expenses involved and, as a result, many schools are unable to participate. Each Botball team costs \$2,500 (this includes an intensive teacher workshop, robotics equipment, software, technical support, curriculum website, etc.). Botfest participation generally costs \$200-\$600 for supplies. With both programs, schools receive robotic equipment and supplies to support learning beyond the tournament/exhibition.

At our free November workshop, we introduce teachers to the programs and provide training. Teachers submit scholarship applications for Botball and Botfest. Teachers are notified of their scholarship awards and in January they return for follow-up workshops, and to receive their robotic classroom supplies. In the spring, teams converge on the campus for the Botball competition and the Botfest exhibition. Last year we had 33 teams and over 300 participants.

Corporate and community support is essential to this program, as they allow us to support more teams. Donations are recognized through press releases, event and publicity materials, brochures and banners.

Please feel free to contact Phyllis Procter by email at pprocter@cs.uml.edu or by phone at 978-934-3625 if you have any questions, or if you wish to donate to our program.