

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## Rock River Robotics Off-Season Competition is Back

*Event to return for a special outdoor competition for the first time in its history*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 20, 2021**

**ROCKFORD, IL** – We are pleased to announce the return of the ninth annual **Rock River Robotics Off-Season Competition (R2OC)**, a premier STEM-engagement showcase event produced by the R2OC committee and generously supported by titanium sponsors Collins Aerospace, PCI Pharma Services, and Woodward. Free to the public, **2021 R2OC is set for 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sunday, July 25, at City Market Pavilion in downtown Rockford.**

This year's event will feature 18 teams from four states, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin. Normally held indoors at the Rock Valley College PE Center, R2OC made the move outdoors to City Market to account for pandemic-related planning. R2OC's footprint at City Market will include the outdoor Pavilion where the competition will be held, food and beverage trucks along Water Street, and a cooling zone with indoor restrooms at the adjacent Indoor Market.

Under the stewardship of a local volunteer nonprofit board and committee, R2OC, a certified 501(c)(3) organization, will for the fifth-straight year offer **\$1,000 scholarships to 2021 R2OC student participants.** Two scholarships will be awarded this year. As part of the event's annual giveback initiatives, R2OC has earmarked up to \$5,000 in grant funding for robotics programming expenses exclusively for programs based in Boone, Stephenson and Winnebago counties—the three counties represented by the event's five host teams: Flaming Monkeys from Belvidere, Metalheads from Freeport, Rockford Robotics, Stateline Robotics from Rockton, and Winnovation from Winnebago and Pecatonica.

R2OC will have limited seating available; attendees are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs to guarantee their own place to sit.

"We are excited to provide opportunities for area high school students to learn about the real world of engineering and manufacturing by designing, building and programming functioning robots. As these students develop the skills and passion for science and technology they are becoming our community's future workforce, said Chris Magee, R2OC Coach. "We have FIRST robotics teams across the whole Rock River Valley. New students are always welcome."

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After a one-year hiatus due to the pandemic, R2OC returns for a special outdoor competition for the first time in the event's history. This off-season event is derived from the international *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC), which combines sports with the rigors of science and technology. 2021 R2OC is modeled after **INFINITE RECHARGE**, a game that involves two alliances of three teams apiece, with each team controlling a robot and performing specific tasks on a field to score points. The game centers around a futuristic city theme involving two alliances competing to perform various tasks, including shooting foam balls known as Power Cells into high and low goals to activate a Shield Generator, manipulating a Control Panel to activate this shield, and returning to the Shield Generator to park or climb at the end of the match. The objective is to energize and activate the shield before the match ends and asteroids strike FIRST City, a futuristic city modeled after [Star Wars](#). FIRST Robotics Competition is the varsity sport for the mind, featuring teams of 10 or more high school students who are challenged to build and program a robot to perform prescribed tasks against a field of competitors, raise funds, design a team brand, and hone teamwork skills.

Admission to R2OC is free. Please wear closed-toe shoes for access to the team pits. For complete event information, visit [www.r2oc.org](http://www.r2oc.org).

*RACVB is a private, non-profit organization established in 1984 to champion efforts to promote the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. The RACVB adds wealth to the region's economy by investing in marketing programs that grow tourism. [www.gorockford.com](http://www.gorockford.com)*

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