



Stevens' Placement of USA Today Article on WaterBotics Program Wins Top Prize from New Jersey Public Relations Society of America



6/19/2012

Stevens Institute of Technology, in conjunction with its public relations partner Winning Strategies, was awarded the highest honor of the New Jersey chapter of the Public Relations Society of America at the organization's 2012 awards banquet.

Stevens and Winning Strategies received top honors with a "Best in Show" Pyramid Award for the high-profile [USA Today placement](#) promoting the university's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education initiatives through the Center for Innovation in Engineering and Science Education (CIESE).

"Best in Show" is the most prestigious award given by the NJ-PRSA. Stevens and Winning Strategies' entry was one of only two singled out for the designation from among all submissions

across all categories. The placement also won a Pyramid Award in the “Feature or News Articles and Op-Eds” category.

The article appeared in [USA Today's Science Snapshot column](#). It introduced readers to WaterBotics, a hands-on science curriculum that Stevens developed using LEGO-built robots as a teaching tool to encourage more middle and high school students to pursue studies in science, technology and engineering.

The *USA Today* column featured an interview with CIESE Executive Director Beth McGrath, who discussed how the WaterBotics curriculum helps students better engage in their science and math courses. Testing and surveys after students completed the WaterBotics curriculum demonstrate that the program has succeeded – the number of students that understood scientific concepts and expressed interest in becoming engineers increased.

In the article, McGrath also cited the program’s success in making science more appealing to girls as a way to narrow the gender disparity in STEM fields.

The implementation of the WaterBotics program follows a 2010 National Academy of Sciences report that found that U.S. students rank low in science and math scores compared to other developed countries, and many students are not qualified to pursue careers in the sciences.

The *USA Today* placement has been previously honored with a Certificate of Excellence from The Holmes Group’s Sabre Awards.