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PRESS RELEASE

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Innovators of the Deep: The Ultimate Underwater Robotics Showdown Hits Kingsport

Brilliant Minds from Across the Global Converge for the 22nd MATE ROV Competition World Championship

From June 20-22, the Kingsport Aquatic Center in Kingsport, Tennessee, will be the epicenter of innovation as it hosts the 22nd MATE ROV Competition World Championship.

Brilliant minds from around the world will showcase their engineering skills, competing with remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) they have meticulously designed and constructed. The 2024 event will draw students, mentors, coaches, volunteers, and families from across the globe for three days of intense competition and collaboration. This year, 82 teams from 17 countries, including the USA, Canada, Scotland, Mexico, UAE, Italy, Poland, Germany, Turkey, Macau, Hong Kong, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, France, and Uganda, have qualified to compete.

Each year, the MATE ROV Competition pushes students to the forefront of real-world underwater technology. The 2024 competition is no exception, with innovative mission tasks designed to address critical global issues under the theme of 'CREATING SOLUTIONS.'

In preparation, participants have engaged in diverse and impactful projects, from expanding the Global Ocean Observing System, protecting and restoring ecosystems, and developing ocean-based climate solutions. This year's tasks include deploying advanced ocean observing assets for data collection, installing state-of-the-art submarine telecommunications cables, administering probiotics to heal diseased coral, identifying healthy habitats for lake sturgeon, and deploying autonomous robotic floats to monitor ocean health.

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“These mission tasks are more than just technical challenges—they are opportunities for students to apply their skills to solving meaningful, real-world problems,” said Jill Zande, MATE Executive Director for the Marine Technology Society (MTS). “We are excited to see how their innovative solutions can contribute to the health of our planet’s oceans and ecosystems.” The MATE ROV Competition continues to be a dynamic platform for the next generation of innovators.

“We are absolutely thrilled to bring the MATE World Championship back to Kingsport, Tennessee. The enthusiasm and support from the Kingsport community have been overwhelming, and we are especially grateful to all the folks at Visit Kingsport for their hard work and commitment to creating an exceptional experience for our participants,” exclaimed Zande.

Organized by MTS, the competition is supported by the society’s ROV Committee, the National Science Foundation and other technology and education-related organizations, including Schmidt Ocean Institute, Oceaneering International, Blue Robotics, and the NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration, and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Local sponsors include Visit Kingsport, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Eastman.

For more information, including a complete list of competing teams and program sponsors, visit materovcompetition.org/world-championship.

Watch the competition live via Twitch: www.twitch.tv/mateinspires1.

About the MATE ROV Competition

Established with funding from the National Science Foundation at Monterey Peninsula College in 1997, the Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) Center worked with the Marine Technology Society’s ROV Committee to create the MATE ROV Competition. The first event kicked off in 2001. Fifteen years later, MATE Inspiration for Innovation (MATE II) incorporated in the state of California as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. MATE II was founded in 2016 to support and sustain ongoing education activities initiated at the MATE Center. During July 2023, MATE II initiated the next phase of its journey by becoming an integral part of the Marine Technology Society’s lineup of program offerings. Through this partnership, MATE and MTS have fostered connection and bridged the gap between today’s professionals and future innovators in marine technology. To learn more, visit materovcompetition.org.

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