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Humanoid Robot is Going To School

- National Essay Contest to Bring ASIMO to Winning U.S. School -

Torrance, Ca. – The world’s most advanced humanoid robot is headed to school this spring. ASIMO (Advanced Step in Innovative Mobility) will perform a special demonstration in March 2004 at the school that submits the winning entry to the ASIMO Essay Contest, a national contest on robotics. All public and private elementary, middle, junior high and high schools in the 48 contiguous United States are eligible to enter.

“The goal of the ASIMO Essay Contest is to encourage students across the nation to dream about the future of robotics,” said Jeffrey Smith, leader of the ASIMO North American Project. “But more importantly, with this contest we hope to inspire students to work together to make their dreams a reality.”

The winning school will receive an educational and interactive demonstration about robotics featuring ASIMO. This presentation will illustrate ASIMO’s technical capabilities, including walking forward and backward, balancing on one leg, dancing and even climbing stairs. Students will also learn how ASIMO was developed, understand the challenges of creating humanoid robots and explore potential future applications for robotic technologies.

To enter the contest, each school elects one class or group of students to represent the school in the competition. This designated group submits an essay of 1,000 words or less describing their vision for the future role of humanoid robots. Entries are due by December 31, 2003. Information and contest entry forms are available at www.asimo.honda.com.

This school visit will be the final stop on the “Say Hello to ASIMO” North American Educational Tour, a 15-month national educational tour presented by American Honda Motor Co., Inc., a world leader in advanced mobility. The tour reaches out to students across the country through the nation’s top science museums and educational institutions to create a unique educational experience inspiring young students to pursue academic study in the sciences.

To date, the “Say Hello ASIMO” North American Educational Tour has attracted full-capacity audiences at the Liberty Science Center (Jersey City, N.J.), the Museum of Science and Industry (Chicago, Ill.), Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh, Penn.), MOSI (Tampa, Fla.), the Museum of Science (Boston, Ma.), SciTrek, the Science and Technology Museum of Georgia (Atlanta, Ga.), the Washington Convention Center (Washington, D.C), The Franklin Institute (Philadelphia, Penn.), the Ontario Science Centre (Toronto, Ontario) and the Montreal Science Centre (Montreal, Quebec). Future tour stops include: Seattle, Wash.; San Jose, Ca.; and Los Angeles, Ca. Since the launch of the tour in January 2003, more than 67,000 students and museum visitors have seen ASIMO in person. More information about the tour is available at www.asimo.honda.com.

ASIMO was developed by Honda Motor Co., Ltd. after more than 17 years of research. Created for the purpose of someday helping people in need, ASIMO can walk forward and backward, turn smoothly without pausing, climb stairs and maintain balance while walking on uneven slopes and surfaces. ASIMO also has two arms and two hands, which ease such tasks as reaching for and grasping objects, switching lights on and off, and opening and closing doors.

About Honda

Honda is one of the world’s leading producers of mobility products including its diverse line-up of automobiles, motorcycles and ATVs, power products, marine engines and personal watercraft. This diverse product line-up has also made Honda the world's preeminent engine-maker, with production of more than 15 million engines globally in 2002. On a global basis, Honda has more than 110 manufacturing facilities in 31 nations.

Honda began operations in North America in 1959 with the establishment of American Honda Motor Co., Inc., Honda's first overseas subsidiary. Honda began assembling motorcycles in America in 1979, with U.S. automobile manufacturing starting in 1982. Honda now employs more than 21,000 Americans in the design, manufacture and marketing of its products in America. Honda currently builds products in 11 manufacturing plants in North America, with three major R&D centers in the U.S.

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