

About
STELA



STELA Inc. (Science, Technology, Entrepreneurship, Leadership Academy), is a New York State-based nonprofit organization founded by Eric Biribuze. He is an award-winning engineer at Corning, Inc., originally from Burundi. STELA's purpose is to deploy world-class programs in STEM and leadership to the youth of underserved communities in the United States and Africa and build capacity for socio-economic transformation.

"Our robotics program enables students to develop hands-on experience with design, building, and coding of robots through playful learning activities, while empowering them to think critically and solve complex problems with real-world relevance, which are the core skills needed to be the next generation of innovators."

-Eric Biribuze



About Bright School

Bright School is a TEACH Rwanda Exemplary School in Muhanga, Rwanda. The school is a non-profit model for evidence-based, Africa-centric teacher mentoring for preschool and primary education. Our Future Hopes LEGO Robotics team is sponsored by STELA, founded by Eric Biribuze. The team is coordinated in-country by Bill Whipple. Both men are TEACH Rwanda board members.



Want to start a robotics team in your school?

Contact Bill Whipple at +250 78 651 9486

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Watch this RwandaTV news story:
youtube.com/watch?v=_uzf51jVhGY&t=24s



Schools with LEGO® robotics teams are innovators



Rwandan Minister of ICT & Innovation Paula Ingabire is excited about Bright School's LEGO robotics team.

- **Prepare students** for the 4th industrial revolution. The Rwandan Ministry of Education expects students to "be prepared for the 21st century and given abilities needed to succeed and thrive in today's complex, technology-based global economy."
- **Gain local recognition.** The Hon. Jacqueline Kayitare, Muhanga Mayor, recognizes that the Bright School LEGO Robotics Team "will help us to accelerate development and continue to help our communities to have a scientific and technological performance."
- **Achieve national visibility** as an education innovator!

How do students benefit from a robotics team?

- Experience an **enriched STEM curriculum**: science, technology, engineering, math, physics, programming, communication, culture
- Develop **life skills** to plan, set priorities, identify challenges, think analytically, find creative solutions, collaborate, speak with confidence
- Explore **career opportunities** with a world view
- Share **fun**, engaging projects!



Students gain understandings and skills that lead to success as tomorrow's African leaders

What do students think about their robotics team?

- "I built a dancing robot with families from Bright School."
- "Our team built a car and bicycle."
- "We have fun while learning."
- "The time we spend together working on different projects makes our friendship bond strong."

What are the benefits for teachers?

- Build student **enthusiasm** to understand and apply their knowledge and skills
- Enhance **STEM capacity**, computer access, learn from and with students
- Are offered **opportunities** to volunteer as coaches whose teams eventually may compete with other schools internationally
- Have access to workshops that **build their leadership skills**



Teacher workshops focus on teambuilding, student-centered experiences, strategies to encourage analytical thinking, and development of executive function skills.

What do families say about robotics?

- "Our children are excited and curious!"
- "We want to learn how to build robots, too."
- "Our child helps us at home with phones and electronics."
- "I am lucky to have a child on the Bright School robotics team."

How do schools and communities support robotics teams?

- Commit to **enrich and expand** their STEM program
- Expect coaches to attend leadership **workshops** to implement world-class teaching strategies
- Provide **team resources**: dedicated, secure space, computers, LEGO kits
Support team diversity with school **scholarships**
- Seek **funding for team resources and**
- **travel** to international competitions



Bill Whipple and Eric Biribuze with the coaches and members of Rwanda's first LEGO Robotics Team