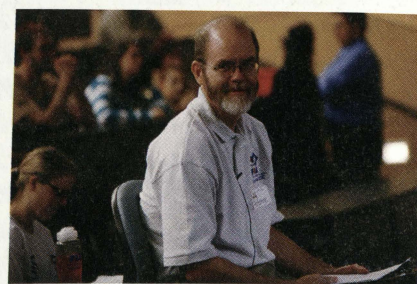
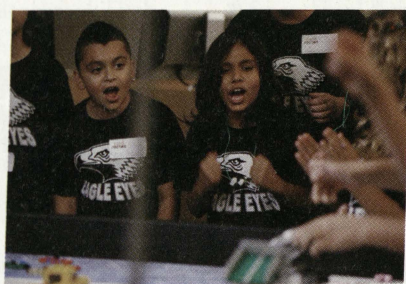
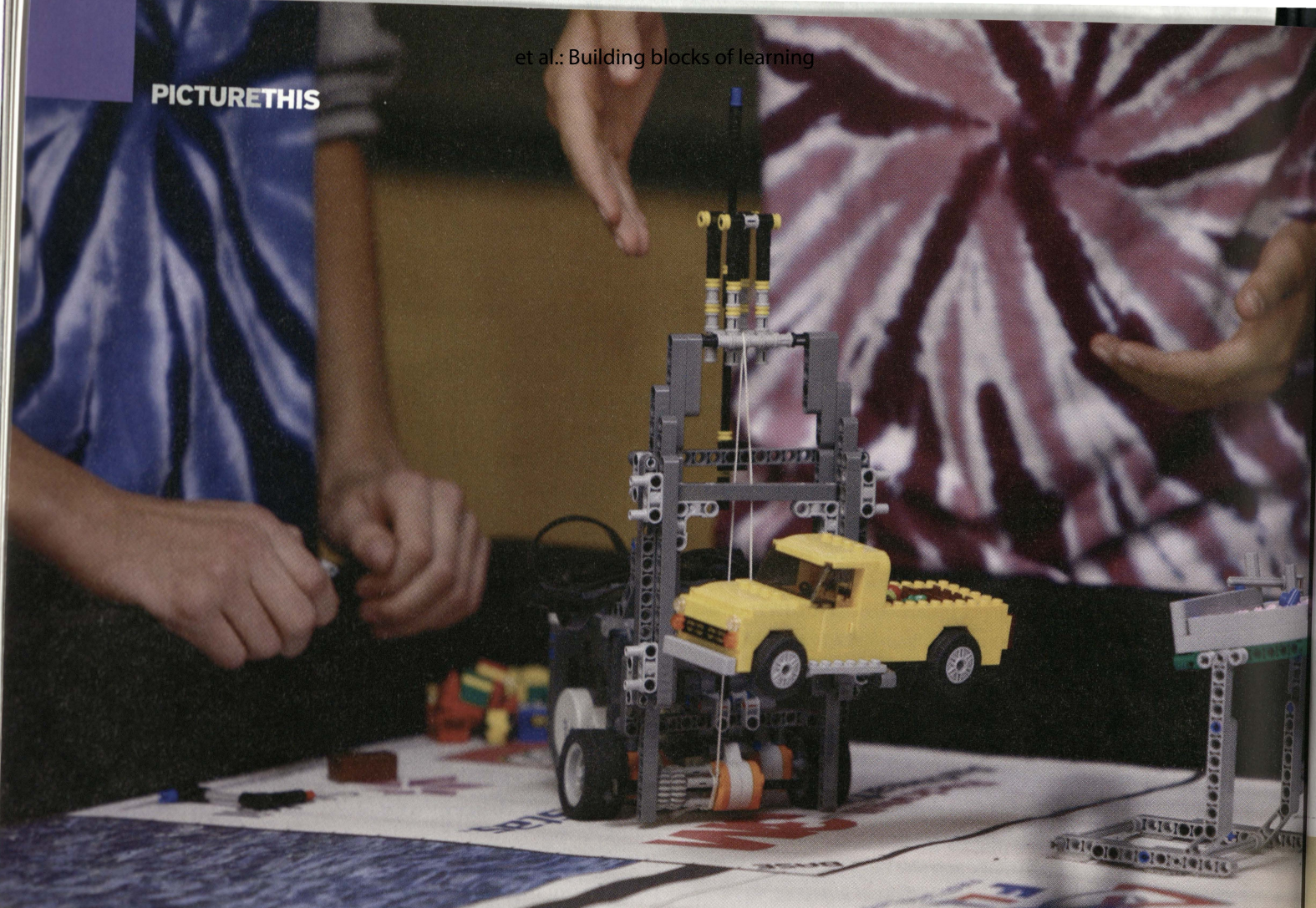


# PICTURETHIS



## Building blocks of learning

*JMU boasts the world's largest Lego League robotics team*

With 500 teams, it's all hands on deck as JMU leads the biggest Lego League robotics program in the world. JMU professors and students in education, engineering, hospitality, leadership and physics turn out to coordinate one huge Madison weekend of math and science challenges for more than 900 9- to 16-year-old competitors. The weekend also draws 500 volunteers and a 2,000 adult entourage of coaches and parents, who fill 600 local hotel rooms. Lego League competitors challenge their math, science and team skills in an internationally recognized hands-on, interactive robotics competition with a sports-like atmosphere. Each year the teams attack a real-world problem. This year teams were asked to build robots that address food safety issues.

The dramatic growth of JMU's Lego League program took place after a direct challenge from JMU President Linwood H. Rose. When JMU took over the statewide Lego League program, there were 258 teams. "At the 2007 championship (our first)," says coordinator Nick Swayne, "President Rose challenged the organization to grow to 400 teams and have 100 teams at the championship. JMU met the 100-team challenge in 2009 and exceeded the 400-team challenge in 2010 – when JMU's became the biggest program in the world and the only program to exceed 400 that year. JMU was the only program to exceed 500 in the 2011 season."

\* Learn more at [www.jmu.edu/coe/alumni/lego.shtml](http://www.jmu.edu/coe/alumni/lego.shtml)

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HOLLY MARCUS ('03)