# FLATE Communications Program

a FLATE Best Practices Guide to Designing Strategic Communications Tools

2013 Edition







# **FLATE**

# Florida Advanced Technological Education a National Science Foundation Regional Center of Excellence

10414 E Columbus Drive Tampa, FL 33619 Tel. 813.259.6577 FAX 813.259.6576 www.fl-ate.org

Hillsborough Community College

### Developed by:

Dr. Marilyn Barger, P.I. & Executive Director Ms. Janice Mukhia, Communications Specialist Dr. Marie Boyette, Associate Director

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# Introduction

**FLATE's Communications Program** is designed to inform key stakeholders and the media about the center's multi-faceted initiatives. The communications program is designed to reflect the Center's vision "to be Florida's leading resource for education and training expertise, leadership, projects, and services to promote and support the workforce in the high performance production and manufacturing community." FLATE uses print, web-based media outlets, and social networking tools to disseminate activities and projects to stakeholders and others. FLATE uses a variety of avenues to reach and inform its key stakeholders which comprises of students, faculty, industry partners as well as the media.

Some of these avenues include:

- FLATE Focus: FLATE's Monthly Newsletter Blog
- Press Releases
- News Alerts
- Media Kit
- Social Networking & the FLATE Wiki
- FLATE Websites

# **FLATE Focus Newsletter**

### **FLATE FOCUS**

is a monthly newsletter blog whose readership comprises of an eclectic mix of government, educational, and industry partners from across Florida and the nation. This is our first edition of the toolkit. We welcome your feedback and ideas about the materials and your experience using them. For more information visit: http://flate-mif.blogspot.com, or contact us at 813.259.6581, or email us at news@fl-ate.org.

### **GOALS**

The **FLATE Focus** is part of FLATE's multi-faceted communications program designed to inform the Center's stakeholders about educational, outreach and professional development opportunities. Published since spring 2007, the FLATE Focus is one of FLATE's primary communication tools, published on a monthly basis in blog format. It is among the top most visited online resources offered by FLATE, and "connects manufacturers, educators and students with Florida's workforce."

# Making of the FLATE Focus...the basics

FLATE's products and programs are designed and created with the end user in mind. The *FLATE Focus* is designed and written to meet the needs, interests and demands of FLATE's state and national stakeholders. The creation, execution and delivery of the *FLATE Focus* are guided by four marketing research principles, RACE: research, action, communication and evaluation.

1. Research	2. Action
<ul> <li>Draft article ideas</li> <li>Brainstorm ideas with management and staff</li> <li>Finalize topics</li> <li>Research article topics</li> <li>Identify candidates to interview for articles</li> <li>Initiate contact with interviewees</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Set-up a timeline from conception to completion</li> <li>Draft questions for interview and set-up interviews (if necessary)</li> <li>Conduct interview by phone, or email interview questions to interviewees</li> <li>Draft articles based on interview/research</li> <li>Edit articles</li> <li>Prepare, design and finalize layout of articles, and post on blogger</li> <li>Design and populate email template</li> </ul>
3. Communication	4. Evaluation
<ul> <li>Check distribution list for errors, addition and remove requests</li> <li>Email newsletter to stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Connect blogger account to Google analytics</li> <li>Run monthly Google analytics report to gauge number of readers, popular topics, geographical location of readers/visitors, popular keywords.</li> <li>Tally and analyze data</li> </ul>

# Making of the FLATE Focus.... insider tips

Additionally we have included some tips on getting started, and others to help keep you focused on your readers.

## **Tips**

- Make News a habit with your team.
- Keep a story idea file.
- Have a point person.
- Be regular with your standard communication.
- Be professional.
- Share partners & stakeholders news and successes.
- Someone somewhere is interested in your project.
- Share with NSF program officers.
- Pick a format that meets your needs.
- Pick a format that works for your stakeholders.



# Once you get going

- **Dive into the data**—what are people reading?
- **Survey readers** what do they want to read?
- Be short main ideas with following details
- Jazz it up jazz the titles; challenge your readers
- Strategize graphics— be sure they tell a story
- Get interactive polls, quizzes, surveys
- **Give options** for viewing, saving, printing, accessing

# FLATE "In the News"

**Press Releases** have been an effective tool for FLATE to promote its message and capture wider local/regional attention. To date FLATE has issued nearly 60 press releases that have yielded 50 stories in nearly 30 publications. Some of these include the Tampa Tribune, Tampa Bay Times, Brandon Tribune, Maddux Report, Florida Trend Next. As a result of these efforts, FLATE's robotics camps have consistently been broadcast on all major local, affiliate stations in Tampa bay which include Fox, NBC, and ABC.

In an effort to optimize visibility of its press releases, FLATE uses **PR Log**—an online press release distribution tool. PR Log has enabled FLATE-related news to appear in manufacturing-related news feeds. You can read recent and past press releases at <a href="http://pressroom.prlog.org/Made\_In\_Florida">http://pressroom.prlog.org/Made\_In\_Florida</a>.

"News Alerts" have proven to be another effective tool to keep local, state and national stakeholders engaged, informed and connected with the Center. News Alerts are one page news blasts that are distrubuted exclusively via email. FLATE started using these Alerts in 2012 to distribute timely information about events, or share strategic success stories with partners and stakeholders.

FLATE has also developed a "Media Kit" that provides an overview of current and future projects to news professionals. The media kit is distributed to newspaper/magazine reporters and television anchors during press events.

FLATE's "Manufacturing News" provides fast-fingered, state and national industry-related news. Published since 2006, manufacturing news links are incorporated in FLATE's monthly newsletter. FLATE also regularly contributes articles regularly to partner newsletters as well as publishes in several state and national Educational and Professional Journals. Full list of FLATE publications can be found at <a href="http://fl-ate.org/news/publications.html">http://fl-ate.org/news/publications.html</a>.

# FLATER Goes Social...

To raise awareness about manufacturing, and to create a platform for students, educators and industry professionals to interact and exchange ideas, FLATE has created profiles on various social networking sites. This has given the Center an opportunity to provide and share timely news with stakeholders. FLATE is most active on **Facebook** where you can read manufacturing-related story clips, regional events and conferences, or view event photos and videos. You can find FLATER on Facebook at www.facebook.com/madeinflorida.

In keeping with current Web 2.0 trends, FLATE also started **Tweeting** in summer 2012. This has enabled the Center to share timely news and maintain instant contact with its stakeholders. You can follow FLATER Tweets at @Made\_InFlorida.

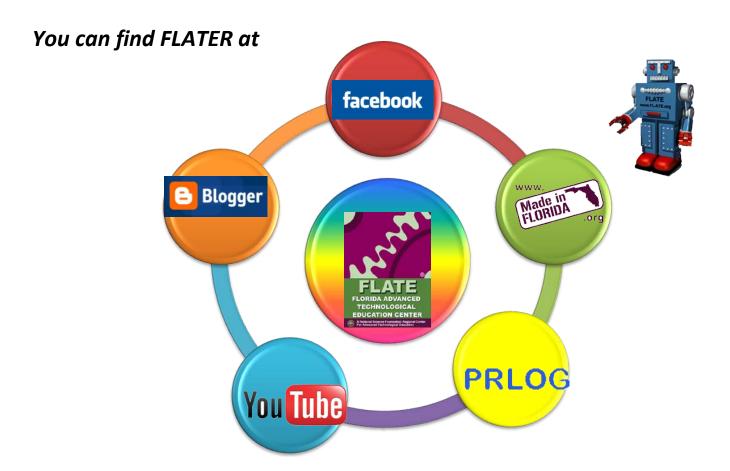
**YouTube** is yet another avenue that has enabled FLATE to share information about STEM based events and projects organized and offered by the Center. Examples of these include videos on FLATE's high-tech robotics camps, energy camps for middle school students, the National Visiting Committee discussion panels etc. Tune into FLATER's channel at www.youtube.com/madeinflorida2010.

FLATE also has a Wiki that offers free resources specifically for middle and high school teachers. The wiki contains a wide range of STEM and manufacturing based lesson plans, as well as professional development and career/education planning tools. These resources can be accessed at <a href="https://www.flate.pbworks.com">www.flate.pbworks.com</a>.



**Access FLATE Resources Using Your Smart** 

# FLATER on the Web...



Corporate Site: www.fl-ate.org

Outreach Site: www.madeinflorida.org

Blogger: http://flate-mif.blogspot.com

You Tube: www.youtube.com/madeinflorida2010

PR Log: www.pressroom.prlog.org/Made\_In\_Florida

Facebook: www.facebook.com/madeinflorida

# **Appendices**

### **Sample Draft of Article Ideas & Timeline**

### MONTH & YEAR

### **Sample Articles**

•	Executive Director's Note	(Monthly)
•	STEM Puzzle & Answer	(Monthly)

- Curriculum-based article
- Outreach-based article
- Professional Development-based article
- Partner News (Occasionally)

### Sample Side Bars

•	Did you know?	(Monthly)
•	Calendar items	(Monthly)
•	Photo Features	(Monthly)
•	STEM Educators' Corner	(Monthly)
•	Manufacturing News Links	(Monthly)

- Video Features
- FLATE Announcements
- Contact Information

### Sample Time Line

• Three to four weeks prior to publication: Review ideas & draft articles

One Week prior to publication:
 Build email template

Edit/review articles & finalize layout

Targeted Publication Date:
 Newsletter goes to distribution

### Sample Interview Questions for Manufacturing Industry Professionals

Name of Interviewee Email address Contact information

- Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
- What does a machinist's job entail? How did you get interested in a career as a machinist?
- As a Machinist at Vulcan what are some of the tasks that you perform during a typical day?
- What do you like most/fun part of about your job?
- What kind of training/classes did you take in order to become a machinist?
- Do you have any industry certifications?
- To what extent does your job involve manual labor vs. operating/working with high-tech equipment?
- What kind of opportunities do you think are out there for skilled machinists?
- When you think of machinists the traditional mindset is that the job is for men. What would you say to women who are considering a career as a machinist?
- What can manufacturers and educators do to attract more people to train as machinists?
- Is a job as machinist all work and no pay? How lucrative are the jobs?
- Additional thoughts
- Can you send me one or two pictures of yourself on the factory floor—action shots would be nice—that I could use as part of the article?

### Sample Email Template



### Defining Workable Education Models: Conclusion to A Three Part Series

reviously we explored the details and definition of formal licensed apprenticeship (FLATE FOCUS June 2013) and formal student internships (FLATE Focus July 2013). This month we will look at less formal work experiences for students. These experiences differentiate themselves from apprenticeships and internships by the important fact that they do not have any tie to a particular credit-bearing course (as an internship would be). These less formal work experiences can certainly add important related work experience to a student's resume. **Full Article** 

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Defining Workable Education Models: Conclusion to a 3 Part
- Manufacturing Day 2013
- ET Summer Institute: Building MFG Career Pathways in FL
- Educational & Career Options for Girls in Technology & Robotics
- Manufacturing Skills Gap Analysis

- FLATE Focus Winner of 2013 Apex Awards
- FLATE Wins ePIE Award
- Job Announcement
- Did vou know?
- STEM Educators Corner
- Manufacturers News
- Special Announcements
- Mark Your Calendar



### Manufacturing Day is October 4! Sign up NOW!

t's not too late to sign up for Manufacturing Day in Florida. FLATE, the National Science Foundation Center of Excellence at Hillsborough Community College in Brandon and the Manufacturers Association of Florida are working with industry partners and educators across the state to make a big, statewide splash for students on Manufacturing Day which is on Oct. 4, 2013. This event is the perfect opportunity to expand knowledge about and improve public's perception of manufacturing careers. Full Article



### New Hires in Manufacturing Earn Higher Compared to Other Industries

ooking for ways to attract students to your manufacturing programs and to manufacturing jobs? A new study by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Economics and Statistical Administration offers a different and positive light on wages and salaries in manufacturing. Although comparisons between new hires and incumbent workers probably won't mean much to students, strong worker earnings for the manufacturing sector between 2000-2011 are something to think about. Full Article



### Educational & Career Options For Girls in Technology and Robotics

here is a song in the Disney Junior channel which beats to the tune of "you can be who you want to be," That was exactly the kind of message 36 girls enrolled in the PACE program received during their one day visit to FLATE's, Careers in Technology and Robotics Workshop. The workshop was held in August and involved PACE students and teachers from Manatee, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and Polk counties. PACE Center for Girls, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c) 3 corporation that provides a non-residential delinquency prevention program in locations statewide, targeting the unique needs of females 12 to 18 who are identified as dependent, truant, runaway, delinquent, or in need of academic skills. Full Article

### Manufacturing Skills Gap Analysis for Hillsborough & Pinellas Counties

ccording to a recent study conducted by the Hillsborough and Pinellas counties' leading economic and workforce development organizations, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties are home to 2,074 manufacturers, representing 50,803 employees. Manufacturing employees have a total income contribution of almost \$9 billion to the local economy, and each manufacturing job created results in the creation of an additional 2.65 jobs. The study states the economic recovery is leading manufacturers to increase production, but they are facing challenges in hiring qualified workers for critical positions. Full Article

### **Sample Blog Entry**



# Executive Director's Take on Establishing National Standards for Career & Technical Education

Education is changing. Our country's roles in the global economy and the recent years of recession have focused our country on evaluating systems that we have in place, including our education system. The paradox of high unemployment and high numbers of unfilled, high-skill jobs has let us to evaluate many aspects of our education system. Some of the national initiatives include developing common academic standards for students; raising the requirements for STEM teachers; engaging industry in all aspects of education; providing career awareness information to students; and implementing more effective, 21st century teaching methods. One such national effort has been to develop national standards for career and technical education.

This national effort to define common technical core skills and knowledge for Career and Technical Education (CTE) will be finalized in all of the 16 Department



of Labor career clusters later this summer for implementation in the fall of 2012. The "Common Career Technical Core" (CCTC) effort began in the spring of 2011 with subject matter experts, industry validation and reviews. Currently, 42 states are participating in the effort that should better define student outcomes that meet industry expectations of our high school students. (See www.careertech.org for more on the CCTC).

All states engaged in the CCTE project were asked to invite one expert to participate in the series of workshops for each career cluster. I was invited by the FLDOE to participate in the review of the standards for the manufacturing cluster. The process has been educational and enlightening.

The process started with a lengthy orientation webinar for all participants in all clusters. Next, each cluster working group was

### IN THIS ISSUE

- ▼ 2012 (33)
  - ▼ May 2012 (8)
    - Executive Director's Take on Establishing National...
    - NSF-ATE in Florida: Why Florida is a Great Place f...
    - sTEm-at-Work (Puzzle #28); Boiling. Points of Mixtu...
    - FLATE's Summer Camps Make for a STEMtastic Summer!...
    - AFC Joint Spring Commission Conference Highlights ...
  - Industry Day for Local Students
    Expected to Help B...
  - Enroll NOW for the FLATE ET Summer Institute

### Congratulatory Notes

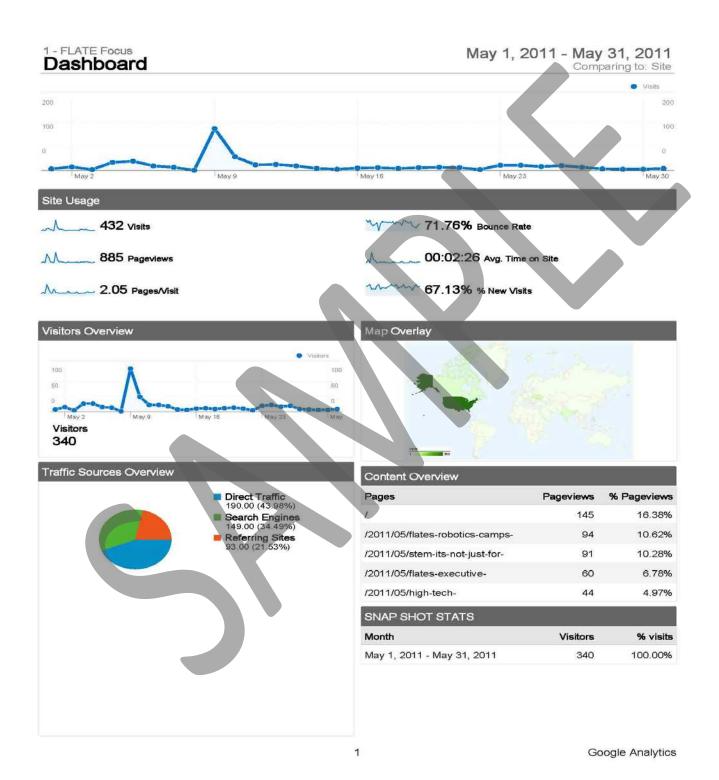
- ► Apr 2012 (8)
- ► Mar 2012 (6)
- ► Feb 2012 (7)
- ▶ Jan 2012 (4)
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- ▶ 2009 (33)



### Mark your calendar!

- May 2: LaBelle Middle School to visit PGT.
- May 3-6: FLL World Invitations Tournament, Winter Haven, FL.
- May 7-8: TIME Center NVC. Baltimore,
- May 10-11: Society of Manufacturing Engineers Conference. CT.
- May 12-June 1: Student Training at Usurbil, Spain.
- May 14: Society of Manufacturing Engineers at FLATE. Tampa, FL.
- May 16: Industry Day for River Ridge High School.
- May 17: FLATE Industrial Advisory

### **Sample Google Analytics Report**



### Sample Press Release (on PR Log)

6/14/12

Florida Students Embark on an International Technician Training Program in Spain | PRLog



### **Country News**

United States
Australia
India
Hong Kong
United Kingdom
--More Countries

### Industry News

All News

Exclusive News

### June 2012

Th We Tu Mo Su Sa Fr 14 13 12 11 10 9 8

### Florida Students Embark on an International Technician Training Program in Spain

NSF Center of excellence in advanced technological education at HCC in Brandon is taking a delegation of students, faculty members and administrators from Florida's community and state colleges on a 21 day technician training program to Spain.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRLog (Press Release) - May 01, 2012 - National Science Foundation (NSF) Center of excellence in advanced technological education at Hillsborough Community College (HCC) in Brandon is taking a delegation of eight students, five faculty members and two administrators from Florida's community and state colleges on a 21 day international technician training program to Spain. The three week program, from May 12-June 2, 2012, is poised to provide outstanding technical and cultural learning experience. Students enrolled in the engineering technology AS, degree program, as well as, faculty members at Hillsborough Community College, Polk State College, State College of Florida, and Breverd Community College will participate in a structured technical education and training experience.

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structured technical education and training experience at IEFPS Usurbil GLBHI—a technical college in the Basque region of Spain.

Executive Director of FLATE, Dr. Marilyn Barger who spearheaded the project says "the goal is to expand partnership between the two government-supported technical programs, assess opportunities for curriculum creation, and provide professional development for technical college faculty and students." Faculty and students will engage in intense training exploring technical knowledge/expertise in renewable energies such as solar photovoltate, solar thermal biomass energy, hydraulic energy and automated systems. Training will include site visits to Traika—an innovation institute for vocational training established by the Vice Ministry of Education of the Basque government in Spain, Students will also visit MCC-Mondragon Cooperative Corporation and ALECOP Cooperative in Arrasate. All student participants will be earning college credit towards their AS-degree in engineering technology.

Working directly on state-of-the-art, manufacturing-related projects, students will attend class for approximately six hours a day, including one hour per day of Spanish and Basque languages. The technical sessions will incorporate a curriculum component that requires students to evaluate what and how they are learning, in Spain, to their current curriculum. They will evaluate their expectations for this new material, and how that content can be blended into their courses in Florida. Assessment of

their training experience will include site visit report and final presentation on one aspect of their alternative energy automated system theory class. Students will also be blogging their daily thoughts about their cultural/educational experiences about the trip.

In terms of professional development, mentoring faculty will be attending instructional workshops. They will meet frequently with students to discuss status of projects and review content that has been presented as well as observe the teaching and training of students. At the conclusion of the trip, the entire delegation to Spain will be expected to contribute content and skills assessment for developing tangible tools and solutions to improve engineering technology related curriculum and instruction materials within the Florida educational system.

For more information about the Iberian Partnership for Technical Excellence contact Dr. Marilyn Barger at 813,259.8578/barger@fl-atb.org. You can also get more information about the trip/initiative on FLATE's blog at <a href="http://ilate-mif.blogspot.com">http://ilate-mif.blogspot.com</a>, and visit www.madeinflorida.or/engineering-technology-degree.

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### Similar ?

Engineering and Robotics Summer Camps at HCC-Brandon Campus

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South Carolina Software Manufacturer Gives Away Free Chemistry Software

Science, Engineering and Mathematics Link inc and Cool Cirls Re-Establish Partnership

Applied Products becomes Manufacturer's Representative for Technifor Permanent Marking

### **Most Viewed Weekly**

Download Prometheus 2012 movie in HD / DVD / DIVX / Ipod quality and mobile phone - 3164

The Twinkle Brothers live in concert - Legends of Reggae Summer Series pt.1 - 1961 views

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Prince Alla with Romain Virgo and Perfect in concert - 1357 views

TechBiz Connection Sponsors Forum on Power of Networking and Relationships - 998 views

### Daily News!

Introducing Canada's New Global Hip-Hop Sensation D'NME, Featured On HipHossip.com

Inflation Has Scots Sleepwalking Into Debt Without Realising, Says Trust Deed Company

Free New Homebuying Seminar Hosted by Lennar in Bryens Crossing

TonerBoss.com Launches New Government and Military Discount Program

Long term CD Rates in Michigan Encounter Slight Up-Tick in Rates 2012

May 01, 2012 News

prlog.org/11863708-florida-students-embark-on-an-international-technician-training-program-in-spain.h...

### **Sample News Alert**



NEWS from FLATE 10414 E. Columbus Dr. Tampa, FL 33619

### CONTACT:

Dr. Marilyn Barger, P.E. P.I. & Executive Director Tel: 813.259.6578 email: barger@fl-ate.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Industry Day for Local Students Helps Build Interest in STEM

FLATE (Florida Advanced Technological Education Center), the National Science Foundation regional center of excellence for advanced technological education at Hillsborough Community College in Brandon, is partnering with CTEF (Career Technical Education Foundation) located in Palm Harbor, FL, to orchestrate a two-day "Industry Day" for high school students in the greater Tampa Bay area. As part of this effort, students from the engineering academies at River Ridge High School in Pasco County and students from East Lake High School in Pinellas County will tour six high-tech manufacturing facilities in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties. These fun-filled, educationally engaging tours will be conducted on May 17 and 18, and are geared to give students a first-hand view of high-tech operations, showcase the importance of industry-aligned STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education, and outline tools/pathways to secure sustainable, career goals in high-tech industries in Florida.

Industry hosts Pall Aeropower, Nielsen Media Research, Micron Pharma Works, Bauer Foundation, Southern Manufacturing Technologies and Mitre Corporation have agreed to open up their facilities and give students a detailed overview of some of their high-tech operations. Special employee presentations have been planned to give students a first-hand account of STEM-based educational pathways needed to secure high-tech careers. Paul Wahnish, president of CTEF Inc. who masterminded the initiative says "using a theoretical arsenal of basic science and math, students are driven to apply that which they have learned, making strong STEM skills relevant to them." Wahnish says this relevance "engages a student's interest and develops a strong desire to apply their knowledge toward innovation."

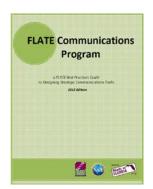
### **Other FLATE Best Practice Guides**

All FLATE Best Practice Guides are available as online resources, or for download at <a href="http://www.fl-ate.org/Best\_Practices">http://www.fl-ate.org/Best\_Practices</a>









Industry Tours for Students Guide

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Let's get on
the four hus!

Connecting Students and Educators
With Their Industry Partners.



Forging Positive Partnerships in Florida

**Communications Best Practices Guide** 

**Industry Tours for Students Guide** 

The Robotics Camp Survival Guide

# How to Print this Guide

If you would like to print your guide in a "booklet" format (from the original pdf file), please use the following steps, you will need a printer that can print double sided documents:

- **Step 1 select Properties**(please make sure you are using a printer that prints double sided documents).
- Step 2 select Booklet/Poster/Mixed
- Step 3 select Booklet Creation and then click OK

Step 4—select Margin Shift/Margins, Print Position Tab, Center, then click OK

Step 1 – select *Properties* 

Step 2 – select *Booklet/Poster* 

Step 3 – select *Booklet Creation* 



Step 4 – select *Margin Shift/Margins* 



# Contact us

# Florida Advanced Technological Education (FLATE)

10414 E. Columbus Drive Tampa, FL 33619

Dr. Marilyn Barger

P.I. and Executive Director 813 259 6577 flate@fl-ate.org

Please visit us on the web at:

www.fl-ate.org

www.madeinflorida.org

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