

IHS' robotics team places in world finals

Code Red Robotics, the Ithaca High School team in the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and **Technology** robotics competition, ended its competitive season this past weekend with a high finish at the World Championship at the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis.

With a contingent of nearly 50 students and mentors at the 100-team event, Code Red was paired with Truck Town Thunder from Ortonville, Mich., and the Beach Bots of Hermosa Beach, Calif., in the alliance round and made it to the divisional finals, a level reached by only 1 percent of the 2,343 teams that took part in this year's robotics competition, which began in January.

Teams are given a challenge -- this year, it was modified game of basketball -- to design and build their robots for, then take part in state-regional and national-regional levels. Teams learn the specific challenge in January. Code Red was the Finger Lakes regional semifinalist and won the Engineering Inspiration Award at that level. The award recognizes a team's success in advancing respect and appreciation for engineering and engineers in their school and community. Code Red then scored the GM Industrial Design Award and was a quarterfinalist at the Washington, D.C., regional.

FIRST is a New Hampshire-based not-for-profit organization founded in 1989 by inventor Dean Kamen to inspire interest in science and technology in young people.

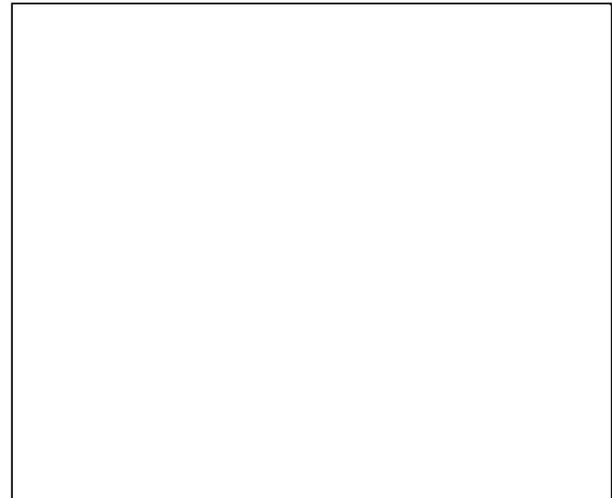
In St. Louis, Code Red's strengths were defense in its robot basketball games and excellent ability to balance its robots on a sort of mid-court teeter-totter, which earned it bonus points that helped it advance, said team president Istvan Burbank, an Ithaca High junior.

It also had a good robot-driving team at the court as well, he noted.

In the alliance finals, Code Red encountered difficulty on the basketball court as the special foam balls degraded and made shooting baskets harder.

While FIRST is about engineering and science, the competition isn't just engineering. Among team roles are public relations, community service, administration and organization, media relations, as well as design, electronics and

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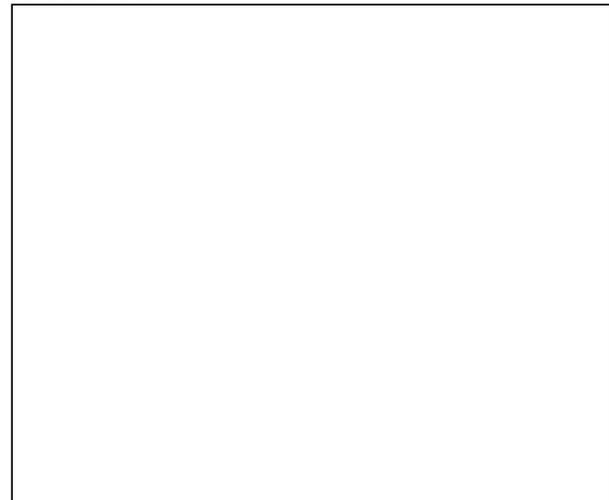
machining.

Code Red's year doesn't end with the final competition, however. Before learning next year's challenge, team members will be contacting sponsors, raising money, training new members and generating interest by demonstrating the robots for younger people and the community.

Funds for the team and its trip to St. Louis was made possible by individuals and team families and community support, including Kionix, the Cornell NanoScale Facility, Holt Architects, the Ithaca College School of Humanities and Sciences, Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI), Park Foundation and Vector Magnetix, as well as NASA and FedEx. The team's participation in FIRST and regional competitions is made possible from support from the community, including JC Penney, IPEI, Autodesk, BAE Systems, BorgWarner Morse TEC, CBORD, Kionix, Goodrich ISR, Incodema, Cornell School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Holt Brothers Real Estate, Vector Magnetix, GORGES, and VFW Post 961.

The team's website is at www.coderedrobotics.com.

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