

Ithaca Code Red Robotics team advances to nationals

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Ithaca High School's Code Red Robotics team competes at the Buckeye Regional FIRST Robotics competition at Cleveland State University's Wolstein Center in Cleveland, OH



Code Red Robotics at Buckeye Regional

Zoom

From left, Cameron Burbank, Rishi Verma and Noah Davis control their team's robot Friday during the three-day long Buckeye Regional FIRST Robotics Competition held at Cleveland State University's Wolstein Center in Cleveland. The Ithaca High School's

Code Red Robotics team, back, right robot, made it to the finals as part of a three team alliance. The alliance ended up winning the championship, qualifying the three teams for the world championship in St. Louis later this spring. The IHS Code Red Robotics team will be competing again this weekend at the FIRST Finger Lakes Regional Robotics Competition which begin's Thursday at the Rochester Institute of Technology. / DAVE BURBANK/Provided Photo

How to help

Community members interested in making a contribution to the Code Red team may donate electronically through the Ithaca Public Education Initiative website to Ithaca STEM Advocates-Code Red Robotics or send checks payable to IPEI, PO Box 4268, Ithaca, NY 14852.

Ithaca [High School's](#)

Code Red Robotics team overcame a technical glitch to win the Buckeye Regional competition in Cleveland, Ohio, clearing the way for a trip to the nationals next month.

FIRST Robotics Team 639 spent the last four months preparing for the [competition](#)

, including six weeks to build this year's robot, the Red Hippo.

This year's game challenge, Aerial Assist, requires the robot to successfully shoot inflatable exercise balls into two targets, one near the floor and another that is 7 feet high. The higher the target, the more points the team can earn.

Code Red had 11 round-robin matches of three-on-three from Friday through Saturday morning and ended with a 5-6 record. Despite being seeded low, Code Red was chosen to join teams from California and Michigan for the elimination tournament, in which teams partner together in alliances.

Code Red's alliance, nicknamed the RedFunkyFreeze, advanced to the semi-finals, where the Red Hippo suffered a disconnected wire that was quickly repaired during a dramatic timeout. The alliance advanced to the finals, where they beat an all-Ohio opponent that included their co-defending [champion](#)

[partner](#) from last year's Buckeye.

"It was a tad bittersweet," said Code Red President and IHS Junior Rishi Verma. "We were playing against our old alliance partners. The two of our robots went head to head and we were pushing each other around. After that their robot had some issues and it broke a little bit. ... But it was a great competition and we're happy about the [win](#)

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Code Red also received the Innovation in Control Award for its unique energy-efficient drive system.

This weekend the team will [travel](#)

[to](#) Rochester for the Finger Lakes Regional. The national competition will be held from April 24-26 in St. Louis. Code Red — which receives support from a number of local sponsors, including Rheonix, BAE Systems, BorgWarner Morse TEC, Cayuga Medical Center and others — will be scrambling to raise \$30,000 to cover travel, hotel and registration costs for the 40 students and their mentors who will be attending the competition.

"That's a pretty big chunk of money so we've contacted all our sponsors and we're fundraising like crazy. We really want to get there but we're going to need a lot of [help](#)

[from](#) our community and our sponsors," Verma said.