



Robotics students throughout their season.  
Photos provided by team.

*“The teams have worked very hard and I am very proud of them.” -Coach Santos*

# Robotics Takes On Worlds

**By: Ishan Kumbar**

Standing in the huge coliseum, they were ready to conquer the world.

“A moment that will always stand out personally is walking into the Worlds competition. Envision a grand competition the size of two ballrooms with teams and robots from around the world,” Roman Moy [27] said. “It takes [a lot] to go from the start of the robotics season to the Worlds competition. You must put the time in. Setting time aside to put into your team is a responsibility; not only to yourself, but to the rest of your team. Our team was very grateful when we heard we had made it to the States competition. It did not make all our hard work for naught. When we made it to the Worlds competition, we did not even need to win to be satisfied. It was a great experience to even be at Worlds competition in Dallas, and I am glad we achieved it.”

Moy and his team were one of the over 800 total robotics teams that traveled to Dallas, Texas to compete in the Vex Robotics World Championship from April 25th to May 4th. “Worlds was divided into four different age divisions,” said Head Coach Katherine Bis. “First was high school, April 25th - April 27th, that overlapped with the 8th grade VRC which went from April 27th through April 30th, and then the VexIQ middle school group started on April 30th and went to May 2nd, which overlapped with Elementary VexIQ from May 2nd to May 4th. So, four separate divisions/competitions one after another in this one huge convention center.”

With nineteen different teams, Cranbrook Kingswood sent the most competitors than any other. Out of the 488 teams that competed in the middle school division only eight went undefeated in all ten matches. Cranbrook’s team Boba Bots was one of those teams earning the title as Division Champs. At the end of the season, they ranked top six in the World and number three in the US.

Practice was a big part of their preparation and success. “Teams did lots and lots of practice, because practice is what it is all about,” she said. “Everyone should just be working with the robots they have trying to get as good as they can get with driving, trying to shave off seconds where they can in releasing the dispensers and making sure they have a proper strategy planned for the end game.”

Waking up at 6am and spending over twelve hours at competitions, Moy agrees that practicing prepared them for the Worlds stage. “We practiced and came into the lab with our free time, and we worked hard as a team to get to States competition, and finally Worlds. Getting to the competition took much dedication, and in the end, it was worth it,” he said.

“Every year there is a new challenge and this year almost all of the teams got to worlds,” Peter Mei’s father said of the team’s hard work and dedication. Seeing his son “overcome and work with his

team and having the ability to go to the world championships” is something he will “always remember.”

Because the championship was held in the same place the previous year, Bis said that “we knew what to expect already in terms of how the event flows and things like opening and closing ceremony and how that was going to go. We knew that there was not going to be enough time to sleep, and that everybody was going to be very excited and very busy. What we did not know [was] the level of competition, like, I think that this year’s level of competition was quite a bit higher than what it was last year. It could have been just because of the pandemic, maybe there were not many international teams last year. Whereas this year, a lot of international teams came back, so the competition level was much more like it was pre-pandemic. So, we were not sure what to expect. We definitely saw an increase in competitiveness this year, higher than we expected.”

“It was super cool collaborating with other teams going to Dallas,” said James Baroni [29] who was on team 37Z “Uno Reverse Card”. Teammate Tyler Skoczylas [29] added that while it was a very cool experience, he “was nervous because I felt like every time, I was driving the robot I was zoning out thinking ‘am going good or not.’ I had a lot of mixed emotions.”

Also part of team 37V Shoken Han [29] said that at times he, felt like “I was going to die. I was ‘Why are there so many good teams?’ I was also really happy that I was there as well.”

Agreeing with her Han, Bis said that she “was just very excited to see teams coming and going from Cranbrook. [Because] we were by far the largest organization there, I really loved seeing the teams with their families and getting all set up and excited and then sad when those teams had to leave but then other teams were coming in. So, there were a lot of ups and downs of emotions. There were a lot of teams that did really well, that were excited and there were some teams that, unfortunately, did not do as well as they were hoping, and they were kind of sad. But overall, I think everybody had a good time and felt they got a good sense of what the world is all about and were very excited for next year.”

With almost 1100 teams in Michigan. Bis said that she was “very happy that we had teams that qualified for worlds. Just to think that we had twenty of our teams that were able to go and represent Michigan and represent the USA was very cool. I was happy about the teams’ performances, how they got along, and their behavior and sportsmanship was really great. The teams upheld the reputation of Cranbrook, which is obviously very important to all of us.”

# They’re Going to Seattle

**By: Kanav Kalmadi**

Hiking, kayaking, and whale watching. What do those words have to do with each other? During the second to last week of June, thirteen current seventh and eighth grade students from the middle school for boys will find out the answer.

“This year we will fly into Seattle and fly home from Seattle,” 6<sup>th</sup> grade MSB science teacher Karen Campbell, who is coordinating the trip once again with MSB Tech teacher Jennifer Dawson, said. “We’re going to visit Olympic National Park which has The United States’ only rainforest in it and then also Mount Rainier National Park. I’ve never been to [there] so I’m excited to visit another national park. It’s my goal to visit all of them in my lifetime. This is one more I can check off the list. We’ll be kayaking on this trip and experiencing a whale watching excursion. Hopefully we’ll get to see some orcas. The last time we saw orcas. We’ll also do things where we’ll just get to like sort of sit and enjoy the mountain views

“We picked this location because it was a location that Mrs. Campbell and I both love. We want the boys to be able to see it and experience it for themselves,” Dawson said. “I’m most excited about going to Washington again. It’s one of the most beautiful states that I’ve been to.”

The goal of the trip is to expose students to new experiences,” she said. “I [also] hope to instill a passion about the outdoors, being outdoors, about nature, and especially about our national parks. We need to preserve that land. There’s less and less land that we haven’t developed, and those national parks are like our only spots left like that.

Campbell said another benefit of going on the trip is to “practice some independence. We hope [our students become] not only independent learners but [also] independent people who can take care of [themselves] and can take care of each other. These are the types of experiences that can help really bond kids together. Whether it’s a really hard hike or it’s a cold day and we decide to go kayaking, surviving those activities bond you together with your classmates.”

For those attending the trip, Campbell recommended that they “go through [their] things relatively soon meaning making sure your hiking boots still fit..., making sure everything still fits and, on this trip, we’re going to need some rain gear. Even if it doesn’t rain it’s important. We’re going to a rainforest, so it has a very damp feeling and so rain gear is going to be important. I think we’ll also need some good water shoes for kayaking.”

All in all, the trip to Seattle will prove itself to be a fun, valuable learning experience, Dawson said. “People should go on our summer trips to see amazing places in this country that they’ve never been, to gain independence, and to [go through] new life experiences.”

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Jenifer Dawson  
Co-chair of summer trips