

News Release

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H.M. Jackson High School's robotics team heads to world competition

H.M. Jackson High School's 15 member robotics team, Team 2910, competed in the *FIRST* Robotics regional competition and qualified to participate in the world championship in Atlanta, Ga., April 16-18. On the last weekend in March at the Microsoft Regional Tournament, Team 2910 met 64 other teams from Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, New Hampshire, Florida, Canada, and one from Istanbul, Turkey.

The team secured an invitation to the World *FIRST* Championship by winning the Rookie All-Star Award, the top honor a rookie team can earn.

The Rookie All-Star Award celebrates the rookie team exemplifying a young but strong partnership effort, as well as implementing the mission of *FIRST* to inspire students to learn more about science and technology.



In addition to success at the competition, more than half the team members raised their grade point average (GPA) one full point as a result of the connections they made with mathematics, science, technology and a new understanding of the importance of education and its connection to career success. Some team members raised their GPAs by two whole points. The students of Team 2910 are newly inspired by engineering and computer programming and the possibilities of their future.

Led by instructors Maggie Thorleifson and Richard Graham, along with Boeing engineer Brian Gattman and four other mentors, the students learned about structural mechanics, robotic propulsion and other engineering concepts. With students working more than 4,000 hours on the project since September and mentors dedicating more than 6,000 hours to the team, Team 2910 and their robot "Jack in the Bot" entered the Seattle competition for the first time.

Corporate and individual sponsors enriched the learning and experiences of Team 2910 and were key elements in the success of the students, noted Thorleifson. Sponsors include Terry's Machine, Boeing, Fluke Corporation, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Altair Engineering, BAE Systems, Computer Concepts, Platt and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

"This example of student success as a result of community partners and volunteers is one of many in our district," said Interim Superintendent Karst Brandsma. "Not all of these educational partnerships end up with national placement in a high-profile competition, but every day in every school, our students are being inspired as the result of volunteer and organizational support of classroom learning. Thank you!"

The trip to Atlanta for the World *FIRST* Championship later this month will continue to inspire students to excel. "For the team to travel to Atlanta we are in need of funding and have a very short fundraising window to achieve this goal. We would appreciate any contributions the community can make to our cause," says Thorleifson. "Our team is honored and committed to making it to Atlanta; however, in the next 10 days we need to raise \$26,000 so that everyone on the team can make it to Atlanta."

Donations to help students compete in Georgia can be made payable to:

H.M. Jackson High School
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