



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Goose Creek CISD team rises to robot challenge

At the John M. Stuart Career Center, young men and women are starting from literal scraps and building a fully functional robot.

They are doing it without the aid of any ready-made plans or designs. The only thing they have in their arsenal is a kit of parts made up of motors, batteries, a control system, a PC and a mix of automation components.

Sounds like a daunting project for even the most seasoned of engineers. So who are these ingenious creators?

Goose Creek CISD high school students.

The team, known as Blarglefish, that includes students from Lee, Sterling and Goose Creek Memorial high schools has been meeting four to five times a week since Jan. 8 when this year's challenge was issued by FIRST, or For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology, the nonprofit organization that leads the FIRST Lego and robotics leagues for students around the world.

Supported by Goose Creek CISD robotics coaches, David Ghere and Rick Olsen, as well as a sponsorship by JCPenney, the team has six weeks to build a robot that can maneuver a field flanked by poles and earn points by hanging as many triangle, circle and square logo pieces on each pole as possible.

Bonus points will be awarded for each robot that can hang and assemble logo pieces to form the FIRST logo as well as deploy a "mini-bot" to climb vertical poles positioned within the middle of the field.

The robot is a six-wheeled robot that must pick up pieces in the shape of triangles, circles and squares.

The robot must then place the pieces on a wall to score points.

Founded by Dean Kamen, inventor of the electric human transporter, FIRST aims to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology by engaging them in innovative robotic competitions.

Goose Creek CISD's "Blarglefish" is a veteran team that aims to advance beyond the FIRST Regional Competition scheduled for March 17-19 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston.



The Goose Creek CISD high school robotics team is shown in front of the John M. Stuart Career Center. Team members in front row, from left, are Katherine Brewer, Rachel Smith, Amelia Kosma, Zach Holt, Kaitlyn Martin, Yaswant Devarakonda, Fuller Jacob, and Nicholas Pequeno. In the back row are Jordan Fischer, Travis Talent, Sergio Reynaga, Steele Seeley, Joseph Cummings, Emily Pohr, Jacob Lewis, and Joel Mendez.

"Having our students involved in FIRST is not just about increasing educational opportunities in science and technology, but also instilling well-rounded life capabilities such as self-confidence, communication and leadership," said David Ghere, a Sterling teacher and robotics sponsor.

Schools, communities and government acknowledge the need to improve the country's global economic competitiveness by increasing aptitudes in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) among America's youth. Studies show that FIRST students are three times more likely to major in engineering in college, 10 times as likely to have an apprenticeship their freshman year, more than twice as likely to pursue a science or technology career, and nearly four times as likely to pursue a career in engineering.

The Goose Creek CISD robotics team is one of 500 high school teams being sponsored this year by JCPenney as part of the company's multi-year goal to bring FIRST to more than 1,100 communities in the United States.

Currently in its 20th season, FIRST Robotics Challenge anticipates close to 2,100 teams will compete in 48 regionals in the United States, Canada and Israel ? all leading up to the 2011 FIRST Championship at the Edward Jones Dome, April 27-30, in St. Louis. This season, participating FRC high school students are eligible to apply for more than \$14 million in scholarships from leading universities and colleges.

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