

## Robotics Success Leads Student to Acquire Prestigious Summer Internship

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David Skaff, NSU University School junior, possesses a passion for robotics, which has driven him to compete on the national level and to apply and procure a summer internship with HPCC Systems. Skaff's interest in robotics started due to a scheduling mishap; his original choice of an elective was unavailable. At the time, Dr. Kopas, head of NSU University School, recommended that Skaff take a Robotics class as an alternative.

Fast forward four years later, Skaff and the NSU University School Robotics Team have not only competed in the Vex Robotics World Competition for the third time but the team is also ranked first in Florida. Additionally, he and his teammates have received the Amaze Award and Excellence Award, among a number of other accolades!

HPCC, an international data processing company and a sponsor of the NSU University School Robotics Team, was so impressed with the team's success, that they encouraged team members to apply for their summer internship program, which is typically offered to undergraduate students and above. To apply for the internship, students had to outline a proposal for one of the nineteen programming projects on their website.

Skaff was honored to be selected as one of only a few students nationwide for the summer internship. This summer, he will research and translate thirteen different programs in the HPCC database to C++, test the written code with sample documents on their database, and update their documentation and parameters to better their libraries.

According to Skaff, "My internship really applies to computer science, engineering, and things like that." He believes that the skills he will learn during his summer internship will help him pursue a successful engineering career. Skaff anticipates working long hours in a field that he is passionate about. He is also thrilled to be earning a salary for this internship while pursuing his lifelong dream.

Skaff stresses that Robotics is a course that anyone can take, despite what math class they are in. He states that robotics involves brainstorming and problem-solving in a limited time period where "failure is necessary to determine the best approaches" to ultimately achieve a build's intended purpose.

"I would not have been able to do any of this if I was in any other school," says Skaff. "I can't really think of another school that has such an extensive robotics program or that would let me continue this at such a young age." David explains that with USchool's emphasis on individuality, he was able to shape his schedule around his Robotics classes and experience amazing opportunities, which led to the HPCC internship and resulted in his many accomplishments in his chosen field.

