

NSU University School's Robotics Team is Ranked #1 in the State

Info derived from Our City Davie

By Debby Teich

NSU University School's Upper School robotics team recently competed at the Vex Robotics 1st State Qualifying Tournament and was undefeated in all rounds.

Determined to continue their winning streak, students have been busy making changes to their robot to make it even better for the competition this month at Miami Springs High School.

There are a total of 20 students on the team, with five on the A team and 15 on the B team. The students are very dedicated and put in long hours that include meetings after school, on weekends, and during the summer to complete research and build prototypes.

"Robotics is essentially a problem solving activity," said team head coach Erik Weidenboerner, who created the team, as well as the honors and advanced robotics curriculum. "There are no do overs. You either win or you lose based on your dedication and skill set."

So far, the school has been winning. In the four years that the school has been competing, it has won 30 trophies, including three state champion trophies and one world championship trophy. The team is currently ranked number one in the state of Florida. "Our students are dedicated, committed, encourage one another, and truly love Robotics," said



Weidenboerner. "Each of them brings a unique set of skills to the table and has the initiative and drive to tackle new ideas independently and as a team. We (the team and I) love everything about Robotics and I

feel like that is one of the main reasons we do so well."

David Skaff, team president, has been on the team for the past three years. "The key to our success has been the constant improvement, learning, and dedication that has driven us to embody the engineers we hope to become," said Skaff. "We work together as a single NSU University School team in our competitions and help each other meet the legacy that we've worked so hard to establish. We each contribute to the process in some way, whether it is building, programming, note booking, or managing."

Skaff says that he loves the freedom and flexibility of the competitions. "There are no instruction manuals or criteria that dictate our actions," said Skaff. "There is only the game that VEX presents to us. The rest is up to the team. We outline our own processes and come up with our own designs to whatever extent we feel appropriate. I've been lucky to have dedicated team members that have qualified for the World Competition two years in a row. I can't wait to see what more we can achieve."