

## Student Win Qualifies Robotics team for World Championship

By Danae Jarrett

With Robotics, art, writing, and theatre crew in the forefront, swimming and cheer coaching as pastimes, and architecture as a passion, Sierra Callwood continues to trail blaze as an all-star, award winning, eleventh grade student at NSU University School.

Sierra's interest in Robotics began when she was in sixth grade. Although there wasn't a formal Robotics club/class at that time, Sierra began experimenting with gears, robots, and the like on her own. Once she entered the Upper School and joined the Robotics program, she began perfecting her skills. Sierra mastered simple task projects and programming, and ultimately built competition robots for the competitive Robotics team. However, this was just the beginning. Fascinated with the problem solving intricacies of building a robot, Sierra joined Advanced Robotics. She began to think through things differently, and strengthened her ability to develop creative ideas and strategies collectively with her Robotics team 4154C.

Last year, Sierra received her first World Championship Robotics award. This year, Sierra won first place in an international online robotics competition out of over one thousand students from around the world. The first place win automatically qualified team 4154C for the Vex World Championship and a \$750 gift certificate to Vex Robotics.

"I enjoy building robots the most. There's a challenge in taking apart and putting back together competition robots, but it's also freeing to know that you can use whatever you want to build the robot," said Sierra.

Her love for Robotics has helped shape her passion for a career in architecture, being that Robotics mixes both architecture and spatial reasoning, two of what Sierra considers her strengths.

In her free time, Sierra enjoys writing, as well as art. During her sophomore year, she received the Most Accomplished English Scholar writing award. Sierra has also received four National Scholastic awards for art. This year, she earned a National Scholastic award on a piece she created in response to a Holocaust challenge.



"I shared my personal family experience and then also decided to create an art installation hung on a wall, using silhouettes and strings with features of my family members, to pay homage to those affected by the Holocaust."

Furthermore, in the art category for the Scholastic Art Awards, Sierra won Best in Grade and was one of only two students in eleventh grade nationally to receive this honor. She also earned a creativity and citizenship award and was one of only three students nationally to win. Moreover, Sierra received the American Vision (given to only 5 students overall) and Gold Key awards!

Sierra is part of the Fairchild challenge, a competition that helps NASA collect data on plants that are the easiest to grow and yield the most results in space.

In addition, Sierra spends a lot of time in the theater, helping with sets and lighting as part of the crew and even putting her hair and make-up skills to the test as she preps other students for their various roles. According to Sierra, her involvement in theatre, although hectic at times, gives her the opportunity to have fun and take a mental break from her intense academic schedule.

"NSU University School creates great opportunities and resources for its students. I have felt comfortable growing with the same students through Middle and Upper School. My teachers have pushed me to do my best and learn my strengths, while becoming proficient at time management," said Sierra.

Sierra is focused on preparing the next class of students through leadership, mentorship, and training. She is also excited about finding a college where she can pursue what she loves—architecture. Some of Sierra's college options are: Rice University in Texas, Tulane University, and Rhode Island School of Design.

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