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Connecting for Success: Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HCCHS Students Debut First Robot at NW Mississippi CC

LEXINGTON, Miss. – The Holmes County Central High School (HCCHS) robotics team competed in the *FIRST* Tech Challenge Robotics Competition February 8th at Northwest Mississippi Community College in Senatobia where they placed 13th out of 19 schools from across the state.

The HCCHS students had no previous robotics competition experience, but they overcame technological issues to represent the district in a competition with global sponsorship. Each team had six opportunities to complete the assigned robotic task. “Students who competed in this competition are now eligible for millions of dollars in scholarship opportunities from a variety of colleges,” said teacher-coach Corey Redd.

The *FIRST* Tech Challenge sends teams a kit of materials and challenges them to design, build, program and operate robots in order to compete in a head-to-head challenge using an alliance format. Guided by adult coaches and mentors, students develop STEM (Science, Technology, Math, and Engineering) skills and practice engineering principles, while realizing the value of hard work, innovation, and working as a team. In addition to designing and building robots, teams raise funds, design and market their team brand, and perform community outreach to earn specific awards. Participants are eligible to apply for over 80 million dollars in college and university scholarships.

HCCHS students Patrick Wright and Carleigh Andrews were the drivers of the robot in the periods of the competition when the robot was not operating autonomously. Four other team members helped prepare the robot for the competition, including Chasity Gregory-Wright, Na’Darius Vance, Ricky Webster III, and Sandra Young. The team had pre-competition assistance from Tougaloo College students, as well.

Carleigh Andrews said, “The event was exciting because of the challenge of building and programming the robots for specific tasks. We ran into trouble with the wiring early but figured out the problem using teamwork. We placed 13th out of 19, which is a great start for our team.



The First Tech Challenge is a great opportunity for us because we need to be exposed to more technology to prepare us for the future job force which is technology-based."

District Science Coordinator Dr. Shimelle Mayers said, "The robotics learning experiences provide exposure and empower future innovators to achieve their full potential through STEM learning. We are happy to have students grades 6-12 participating in *FIRST*Tech events."

Superintendent of Schools Dr. James L. Henderson said "These types of real-life applications are what prepare students for the career opportunities. Using the Python computer language to program a robot for autonomous, offensive and defensive maneuvers is not only fun, it stimulates an innovative problem-solving thinking process in order to succeed. Our students are working as engineers and experiencing real-world career roles while still in school."

Media organizations in need of more information are asked to contact Ms. Deborah Antoine, Media Spokesperson by email: dantoine@holmesccsd.org, or call (662) 854-3447.



Carleigh Andrews (blue shirt) and Patrick Wright (red shirt) brainstorm to devise and apply science and engineering principles to discover the most effective track on which to maneuver the robot.



Patrick Wright and Carleigh Andrews use controllers to obtain the necessary motion control trajectories to drive the actual robot.

