



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 13, 2015

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CHARLOTTE HIGH SCHOOL OBOTS EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME



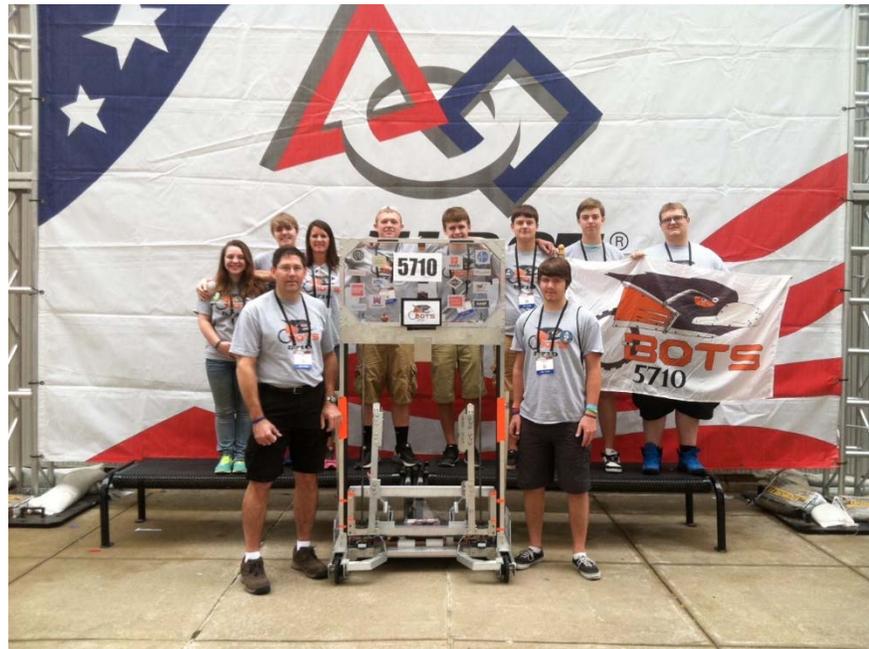
“It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience”, said senior Gabe Raney, when asked about attending the FIRST Robotics World Championship in St. Louis, Missouri. The rookie robotics team, Charlotte High School’s OBOTS, qualified for the championship by earning enough points in regional and state competitions.

When news of qualifying hit, community supporters rallied and raised over \$3000 to help the team afford the trip and participate in the event. Sponsors included Candy Ford, DART container, Charlotte Public Schools staff, Optimist Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, and even individual donors. “I was so excited that the community came together like that to help us attend this event. We couldn’t have had this amazing experience without their aid.” said junior Emily Sayer-Mayosky.

Whether at the FIRST championship, or back in Michigan interviewing for college internships, Andrew Lula found the benefits of FIRST. “Many companies have shown great interest in the FIRST Robotics aspect of my resume. That is how well-respected it is.” Also, the FIRST program totes itself for its millions in scholarship

opportunities. “I couldn’t believe the number of people who talked about the scholarships their students had received due to this program,” said DART Container employee and coach Don Wiltse.

The theme of the event was “More Than Robots” and it definitely came through on that promise. “I really want to share with students at CPS all of the life-improving inventions that have come out of technology development,” said



high school science teacher and coach Marlo Wiltse . “Everyone just thinks about building a robot but there is so much more that goes into the FIRST program than just using tools to put metal together.” It is a celebration of technological advancement and technology careers. At the event, students could speak to businesses and get firsthand information about job opportunities, and there were many informational and educational conference sessions ranging from engineering based concepts to business planning like marketing, communication, and finance, to computer software and programming. Junior Hunter Wiltse was excited by the opportunity to compete and meet with industry representatives as he said, “This was the first time I have competed in a world championship for anything. And this will actually help me get a job.”

Despite all of these opportunities, though, the students spent a majority of their time at the competition focused on the 10 qualification rounds that they were scheduled to play. “Our robot was very successful but just not as fast as it needed to be,” said junior Perry Beebe. Going into playoffs, the OBOTS’ rank was 55th out of 76 teams, and was not chosen as an alliance partner. However, they are very motivated to work hard for next year’s competition. “I think we have a great chance to make it again next year and it would be awesome to go to St. Louis for

the championship again,” said junior Austin Smith. Having seen the top robotics teams in the world, they know what it will take to reach that level again and their response is “Challenge accepted!!” GO OBOTS!!