

February 10, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spotswood High School Captain of the Second Place Alliance in New Jersey Garden State Rumble FTC Championship Tournament

In only its second year, Spotswood High School's Robotics team placed second in the New Jersey Garden State Rumble First Tech Challenge Championship Tournament. The competition took place on February 7, 2009 at the College of New Jersey and included 37 teams from various high schools and home-schooled groups in the tri-state area as well as representatives from Massachusetts and Maryland.

First Tech Challenge (FTC) is a challenging mid-level robotics competition designed specifically for high school students. Taking a hands-on team approach, students develop their knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering and math. Students drive the creation of teams while industry mentors and volunteers lend support. FTC events recognize students for their hard work and innovation, but also for their gracious professionalism – a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.

The challenge in this year's competition, entitled *FIRST Face Off!*, was played on a 12'x12' playing field and featured a 30-second autonomous period as well as a two-minute driving period. The object of the game was to score more than your opponent by placing street hockey pucks into a center scoring area. Robots navigated over a variety of surfaces to reach the scoring area. Teams also earned points for knocking pucks off puck racks in autonomous mode and getting off the field at the end of play.

Spotswood High School began its Robotics program last year after receiving a grant from the Spotswood Education Foundation, which also partially funded this year's team. The 2008-2009 team, Heavy Metal Robotix, was led by advisors Martin Dempsey, Lou Rua and Christopher Talish and included the following students:

Grade 12

Brian Lippman
Katlin Miller
Debra Nicklas

Grade 11

John Cicolella (Driver #1)
Mike Fink
Kenny Goff (Driver #2)
John Mangano
Luis Marte
Chris Stollen (Driver/Coach)
Chris Torres
Jake Wright-Piersanti

On behalf of the entire district, the Spotswood Board of Education wishes to congratulate our students and advisors for their impressive accomplishment. Thank you for making us proud!