# **BH Robotics newsletter**



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**Greetings!** 

# **Indispensable Summer Experiences**



By: Anna Khananashvili

Though the school year is well under way and the summer is decidedly over, MorTorq team members Chloe Revery, Alex Kern, and Raj Vir have taken their valuable experiences from

the summer into the fall. Chloe, a junior and new Robotics recruit, traveled as part of the "2010 Korea-US Youth Network" to South Korea. While in Korea, Chloe stayed at Yonsei University in Seoul, visited places of interest such as the DMZ and Gyeongbokgung Palace, took Korean language classes, and learned about Korean history and culture. Chloe is both incredibly enthusiastic and nostalgic about the trip; "There's nothing like ordering pizza in Korean at 3:30 in the morning!" she says, and she tells of her trip with contagious zeal.

Alex Kern, our Head of Programming and Media and one of the MorTorq team presidents, stayed local but still seized the opportunity of a lifetime. He was selected to participate in the Space Grant program at JPL in Pasadena, California; the program began in June and concluded August, and Alex worked 40 hours a week as the youngest high school intern at the JPL facility. Alex focused most of his time and energy testing the Motor Control System for the Mars Science Laboratory, which will be JPL's next Mars rover (to be launched in Fall 2011). Kern improved upon his skills in practical mechanical engineering thanks to his internship and he considers himself very fortunate to have been chosen for the program. "Thankfully, my experience with FIRST Robotics made the whole experience exciting and enjoyable for me," Kern shared. "My time with MorTorq at BHHS has provided me with a fantastic foundation for my future tech career, upon which the JPL internship built."

Senior Raj Vir had an eventful local summer as well. He built a news prediction engine called Digginthefuture that predicts a story's popularity on the internet; it

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received 1.2 million views in its first month of existence. He was also hired by Professor Villasenor to work in the UCLA engineering department over the summer. Raj worked extensively with graduate and postgraduate students to develop a 4G mobile network simulator. The data from this simulator will be used by carriers such as Verizon and AT&T to deploy their next generation networks. Just like Chloe and Alex, Raj gained invaluable know ledge from his activities this summer, and he plans to bring his newly acquired and expanded skills to the FIRST Robotics Competition this year.

# **Summer Bonding**

By: Chloe Revery

Team 1515 caught its first glimpse of this year's new talent on July 12, 2010 during a summer meet-and-greet betw een veteran members and nervous hopefuls. The applicants represented a promising range of students with an interest in Robotics, from wide-eyed freshmen to world-weary juniors. The team split into groups for casual interviews with the new bies, all of whom were eager to learn more about the program and to offer their skills to the team. Students were asked about their interests, areas of expertise, and goals for the year. After a pleasant bonding experience the new friends gathered for words of advice and encouragement from mentor Eileen Kahn, who asked each student to say a few words about himself. With such a capable group, Team 1515 is already craning its neck looking forward to a year of memorable inspiration and recognition of science and technology.

# MorTorq: Getting Back to Work

By: Emmanuelle Hodara

On Tuesday, August 24, assembling veteran members in the new Robotics workshop room, MorTorq had its first meeting. After two long months of summer vacation, MorTorq members had a chance to catch up and share exciting summer activities ranging from far-off travels to unique internships. Three of the newly elected captains, Ethan Gabbay (building) Shoshana Young (building) and Alex Kern (programming) as well as two dedicated mentors, Eileen Kahn and Arnold Lesin, led the meeting and outlined comprehensive expectations and goals for the coming Robotics season.

The team then split into various subgroups- building, programming, animation, and business- to discuss specific starting plans, fundraising ideas and sponsorships. Although Summer is not yet over, MorTorq is already back to work getting a head start to make the 2011 Robotics season just as (if not more) successful than that of 2010.

### Breakfast Is All About Getting to Know You

By: Madi Kern

On Sunday September 12, 2010, the Beverly Hills High School Robotics team attended the Horace Mann "Get to Know You" Breakfast. The breakfast featured many booths, including our own. The MorTorq booth advertised new robotics programs being offered at Horace Mann this year. Team 1515 displayed its VEX robot -a robot similar to the robots that will be created in the new programs. Kids and parents alike approached the MorTorq booth and asked questions about the two programs currently made available: Middle School Robotics Team, for 6th-8th graders, and Science Olympiad, for 4th -8th graders. The kids had a blast taking turns controlling the robot and talking with the high school team members about the program. Both programs are scheduled to last 3 months, with meetings around once a week. One of MorTorq's co-presidents, Alex Kern (11), spoke at the event, explaining to the attendees the importance of science and technology in schools and the goal of the programs. The programs seek to introduce elementary and middle school to the world of science and technology early on, and to hopefully motivate them to want to continue on with the program till they join the high school team at BHHS. The event was a huge success, with lots of students signing up for both programs. MorTorq looks forward to a great year full of grow th and success with the Middle School Robotics Team and the Science Olympiad!

# **Camp Demo**

By: Udit Dhillon

This past summer, Team 1515 continued its tradition of visiting camp Technotainment at Planet Bravo. The team brought

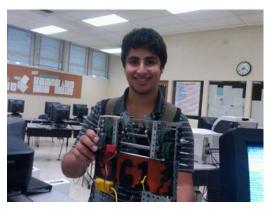
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its robot to show to the campers. They even let some of the kids drive the robot, with the easy-stop at the ready, of course. The team displayed the robot to a relatively large number of campers, ages 7-14. The team introduced our award winning robot, Striker T, to the children. When the team started driving the robot, the kids were in awe. They wanted watch the robot kick the a soccer ball. The robot was able to kick the ball a whopping 7 feet. Each kid was allowed to kick the ball as another played goalie. Everyone cheered when one camper was able kick the ball past one of the goalies. The team wrapped the presentation up with a Q and A session where we got questions such as, "Can it blow things up?" due to the

three air pistons on the top of the robot. In the end, it was an excellent event for both the kids and our team.

# Member Spotlight!



By: Chloe Revery

Mathew Simon is not your typical sophomore. At just fifteen years old Mathew can rightfully claim the titles of inventor, designer, animator, and engineer-and, beginning this year, a talented member of the MorTorq family.

Mathew's affection for robotics began in middle school. As a seventh grader at Milken Community School, Mathew joined the MilkenKnights, FRC team 1836. Says Mathew: "I knew almost instantly that engineering was my life's passion, and I worked from there to achieve my goals as an engineer." Mathew quickly

found success on Team 1836. After only two years on the team, Mathew earned the title of Captain of Mechanical Engineering and took charge of CAD. Meanwhile, he gained experience in Robotics as the teacher's assistant for the Milken High School robotics class, where he gained expertise in mechanical design and Lego robots. Somehow, Mathew also found time to mentor the Milken's FLL team "to earn community service and have fun".

Mathew transferred to Beverly Hills High after his ninth year. He cites robotics as one of several factors that influenced his decision. Mathew soon became an integral part of Team 1515. Today, he serves as CAD captain and mentors several team members.

So what does Mathew do in his spare time? What any teenager does: hang out with friends, listen to music, oh-and build robots. Mathew chronicles his experiments in engineering on his blog, msimonengineering.blogspot.com, where he's already documented designs for objects as diverse as a floating beer pong table and a hydrogen fuel cell car. His current project? Building his second robot, an animatronic griffin currently in the welding stage.

Mathew may not fit in with the average high school crow d. But he's certainly found his niche in Mortorq. We're happy to welcome Mathew to Team 1515!

# Team 1515 appreciates all the support!

Team 1515 is grateful to be supported by so many wonderful people. Our program would not exist without the generosity of our community and our corporate sponsors. Walt Disney Imagineering, The Beverly Hills ROP program, BHEF, and all of our family donors. All are vital to our program.

Special thanks go out to all the familes that have supported our team by supplying food for our hungry students.

We also wish thanks to the people that give us support financially. Thank you to our major donors who are listed on our website!

New sletter Edited by Leah Stromberg

Visit our website for more information!

BHHS robotics is funded solely by donations, corporate sponsorships and fundraising. All business aspects of the program are run by the Beverly Hills High School ROP Entrepreneurship classes taught by Eileen Kahn. If you are interested in supporting our team either as a mentor or as a financial contributor, please contact Elleen Kahn at eileenkahn@gmail.com.

Sincerely, TEAM 1515, BHHS ROBOTICS

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