

LCHS Robotics Team to Compete in National Championship



La Cañada High School Robotics Team members who qualified for national championships to be held later this month include (front row, from left) Hima Hassenruck, Catherine Wooten, Matthew Whitham, Robert Shuman, Christopher Carpenter, Jinhan Wang, Shang Jeng, Collin Chersi, Amir Mojarrodi and Matthew Brenner. Back row: Morgan Rygg, John Gregg, Silas Hughes, Russell Smith, Coach Steve Zimmerman, Benjamin Kellogg, Holden Kilbride, Theodore Wu, David Goldstein, Brad Phillips, Trent Jones, Matthew Goldstein and Bryan Watson.

By MARTA BELCHER
The Outlook

La Cañada High School's Robotics Team was recently honored with the Rookie All-Stars Award in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Overdrive Robotics Competition at the Los Angeles regional competition at the L.A. Sports Arena. More than 50 teams from Southern California and Arizona participating.

La Cañada High School's stellar performance qualified the team for the national championships to be held in Atlanta, Ga., April 17-19.

The Robotics Competition is an annual event in which high school teams are given six weeks to construct a robot that can accomplish a task that varies each year. In the 2008 Overdrive event, the teams were challenged to create robots that could manipulate 40-inch-diameter "track-balls" around a track about the size of a tennis court. During rounds lasting two minutes and 15 seconds, points were awarded each time robots

crossed a finish line or passed the ball over a six-and-a-half-foot overpass. For the first 15 seconds of each round, robots were required to operate by themselves, with students controlling the robots for the remaining two minutes of play.

LCHS Team 2429 met during SSR, after school and on weekends in preparation for the competition.

LCHS teachers Jenny Witman and Steve Zimmerman are the team coaches. JPL employees who served as mentors include Kevin Watson, Matt Haberland and Chuck Hughes.

"This year has been a fabulous opportunity both for me as a teacher and for our team members," Witman said. "Going to nationals will be an amazing experience. I'm immensely proud. The team has worked incredibly hard, and it has paid off."

Team members created a video of the robot, which is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBjCGs16g9g.

The team's website is www.calzim.com/first.

SCHOOLS

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