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Anderson robotics competition team: 'It's not BattleBots'

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Austin Motz fondly remembers summer camps at iSpace in Sharonville.

There, as an elementary school and middle school student, he learned the art of LEGO engineering incorporating motors and computer coding. He also learned about video game design, robotics and more. These experiences fed his passion for the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). It was there he was introduced to [FIRST Tech Challenge](#) (FTC) – teams of students learning about real world applications of STEM through robotics competitions and expos. Motz's STEM interest and talents landed him a spot on a robotics competition team out of West Chester.

Before long his dad, Martin Motz, became a team coach and 7 Sigma Robotics FTC 10030 was formed. Team members are Austin and Andrew Motz, John Mays, Jackson Todd, Zach Rana, Rohan Rindni, Tassos Manganaris, Lauren Perozek and Nick Norton – all of Anderson Township.

Now a Turpin High School student and a robotics competition champion, Motz and his 7 Sigma teammates are focused on educating others about the activity they love. Last season 7 Sigma earned the Presidents' Silver Volunteer Service Award in recognition of the 550 plus hours of community service.

"We're the only team at state to win this recognition," team member Jackson Todd said.

It wasn't their only award that year. In fact, they brought home several prestigious titles and qualified for state competition at multiple contests. But the volunteer award was one they hold special.

Providing motivation and generating an interest in robotics, that's the driving force behind the team's mission, Todd said.

A lot of people have no idea about the FTC or that there's even such a thing as competitive robotics, Tassos Manganaris said. "We're trying to make it more widely known," he said. "So when people hear robotics competition the first thing that comes to mind isn't BattleBots," he said. Key to this is getting into the schools, especially the elementary schools, and talking to students, Todd said.

Most of their outreach and community service efforts last year were at [iSpace](#), a popular field trip and summer camp destination with a focus on inspiring and expanding students' STEM knowledge.

Individually and as a team, 7 Sigma members have many interests. The top interest, however, is the FTC competition. The competition season begins in the fall with teams receiving a problem to solve and a box of parts, motors, sensors and gears. From that, they are to design, build and program a robot to take on various tasks on a court or game table.