



## For Immediate Release

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### Macomb County presents local FIRST Robotics participants with \$1,000 sponsorships

On Friday, April 27, Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel presented several local FIRST Robotics teams with \$1,000 sponsorship checks on behalf of the Make Macomb Your Home initiative. Hackel visited the teams at the First Robotics World Championships taking place at Cobo Hall. The three-day event, which drew more than 15,000 students on 700 teams from 40 countries, is one of the largest youth robotics competitions in the world. It concluded on Saturday, April 28.

“The teams participating in the championship have incredible creative thinking and problem solving abilities – skills essential for succeeding in today’s economy,” said Hackel. “I’m inspired by their work ethic, passion and excitement and know that all of the students here will have very bright futures.”

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics was founded in 1989. Its mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators by engaging them in mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, technology and life skills. The Macomb County teams that participated in the FIRST Robotics Competition include:



- The Fighting Pi: Formed in 2006 at the Macomb Academy of Arts and Sciences in Armada, Mich., Fighting Pi is made up of more than 40 students.
- Byting Bulldogs: The Byting Bulldogs are based out of Romeo, Mich. The team has 55 student members.
- I. AM. Robot 4810 (pictured above): The I AM Robot team has more than 40 members. It was founded six years ago at the International Academy of Macomb.
- Blue Devils: Based in Richmond, Mich., the Blue Devils have 25 student participants. At the close of the 2018 competition, the Blue Devils were announced as a runner-up.
- ThunderChickens: Founded 20 years ago, the ThunderChickens are based out of Sterling Heights, Mich. and the Utica Community Schools. The team, which has more than 100 students, has been to the FIRST Robotics World Championship 17 times, winning the event twice. In 2018, the ThunderChickens were a runner-up.

As participants in the FIRST Robotics Competition, these Macomb County teams were tasked with designing a brand, honing teamwork skills and building and programming a robot that could perform prescribed tasks

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# News

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against a field of competitors. At the championship, the robots participated in head-to-head challenges that required movements like lifting cubes, stacking tubes and climbing. Teams spent countless hours over a six-week period preparing for the event.

“Our team dedicated a lot of time to get here,” said Lexie Bahm, an 11<sup>th</sup> grade student on the I. AM. Robot 4810 team. “The hard work certainly pays off at the championship, but also in ways outside of the competition. The most important thing I’ve learned as a participant in FIRST Robotics is how to communicate with a variety of people and audiences, and that will set me apart from other students in the future.”

An additional Macomb County team that participated at the event in the FIRST Tech Challenge is the Raging Robots from Shelby Junior High and Bemis Junior High. All six county teams received sponsorship checks from the Make Macomb Your Home initiative. The sponsorship will assist them in preparing for next year’s competitions.

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