



WILTON LIBRARY

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NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wilton Library's Robotics Team clinches first place to compete at Worlds

Wilton, CT – Wilton Library's shiny, multi-levered robot advanced, spun, lifted and dodged its way through a good performance, but it was the library's Singularity Technology team as a whole who won the Inspire Award at last Saturday's State FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Competition. The Inspire Award is the highest award a team can win and it secured the group's position as the number one team in Connecticut, thereby propelling them on to the World Championships in Detroit at the end of April.

According to the FTC organization's website, "The FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) is designed for students in grades 7 through 12 to compete head to head, by designing, building, and programming a robot to compete in an alliance format against other teams."

Susan Lauricella, Makerspace and Teen Services Manager, remarked about the achievement, "To say we are proud of these kids is an understatement. They meet twice a week throughout the school year, they work together as a team, and some of them have been together for years. Their diligence, tenacity, perseverance and dedication have been evident throughout their time together. They've worked really hard for this accomplishment and it has paid off."

The Inspire Award is presented to the team exhibiting dedication and professionalism. The FIRST judges take into account not only the team's technical achievements, such as producing a superb engineering notebook, but it also acknowledges the team's overall development – working with other teams, empathy, leadership and respect for others.

Susan continued, "To put this achievement in perspective, there are approximately 8,000 FTC teams that compete worldwide in 35+ countries. Connecticut is only allowed to send two teams to Worlds. By winning the Inspire Award, it means that Singularity Technology is the number one team in Connecticut. That's why we are so proud of our team!"

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Wilton Library first formed Singularity Technology in 2013 and to date it is still the only library-based team in the state of Connecticut. This year's team members are Aarushi Agrawal, Alex Cameron, Edwin Gregory, Navod Jayawardhane, Chris McCann, Rishab Ohri, Ria Raniwala, Rishabh Raniwala, Rohit Singal, and Shayna Wilson-Spiro. Navod, Rashabh and Rohit are seniors who have been on the team together since eighth grade, so this is a particularly poignant time for them.

Besides Susan, the team's other mentors include Tom Abend, Paul Lauricella and Thomas Kozak, who have been with the team throughout its seven-year development, which also includes a "farm team" of younger students called TAP (Test and Prototype). The TAP kids help test engineering phases, and the process prepares the younger students for the team as they move into high school.

The idea of a library robotics team came to fruition when Susan's husband, Paul, a software engineer and former commercial pilot, lamented that "there isn't a library program for teens who liked engineering nerd stuff."

Singularity Technology will be going to Detroit mainly on the funds raised throughout the year with bake sales and its "Destroy Your Hard Drive" fundraiser held annually in November. Anyone wishing to support their effort and spur the team on may send donations payable to Wilton Library to Development Department, Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, CT 06897, marked "for robotics team."

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Caption: Wilton Library’s Singularity Technology robotics team snagged the Inspire Award at the FIRST Tech Competition state challenge on Saturday, Feb. 22. The win propels the team to the World Championships in Detroit in April. Anyone wishing to help send the team to Detroit may send a donation payable to Wilton Library to Development Department, Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, CT 06897. Team members pictured back row (l-r): Rishab Ohri, Thomas Kozak (mentor), Ria Raniwala, Paul Lauricella (mentor), Rishabh Raniwala, Rohit Singal, Alex Cameron, Navod Jayawardhane, Tom Abend (mentor), Susan Lauricella, Makerspace and Teen Services Manager for Wilton Library (and mentor); front row kneeling (l-r) Shayna Wilson-Spiro, Aarushi Agrawal, and Chris McCann. Missing from photo is Edwin Gregory. Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, CT; www.wiltonlibrary.org; 203-762-3950.