

LASER team wins big



Photo submitted

ORI LASER team celebrates a successful robot run at the competition table.

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The Camdenton Oak Ridge Intermediate and the Middle School 4-H LASER (Laker Afterschool Science Engineering & Robotics) teams competed in the FIRST Lego League regional qualifiers in Kearney and Independence, Missouri the past two weekends. One team from each building walked away with a qualifier banner that allows them to advance to the Regional Championship at Union Station January 14th.

FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL®) introduces young people, grades 5-8, to the fun and excitement of science and technology while building self-confidence, knowledge, and valuable employment and life skills. FLL challenges kids to think like scientists and engineers. Alongside adult mentors, FLL teams solve problems using engineering concepts, presentation techniques, and robots. Students learn to solve real-world engineering challenges, discover career possibilities, apply Core Values and learn to make positive contributions to society, engage with their community and solve real-world engineering challenges.

Students participating have the opportunity to participate in qualifying events and tournaments that are a culmination of weeks of teamwork and mentoring. Teams compete with their peers in high energy, sports-like events and present their solutions to a panel of judges.

FLL Core Values are stressed and taught throughout the build season and students must also demonstrate those core values throughout the competition as well as present them to a panel of judges. The Core Values are as follows: We are a team. We do the work to find solutions with guidance from our Coaches and Mentors. We know our Coaches and Mentors don't have all the answers; we learn together. We honor the spirit of friendly competition. What we discover is more important than what we win. We share our experiences with others. We display Gracious Professionalism™ in everything we do. We have fun.

The challenge at this year's FIRST Lego League robotics competition is called FOOD FACTOR. Teams had to compete in four areas related to food safety and contamination. The four areas that teams were judged on to qualify for a trip to regionals were the robot game, core values, the project and the robot table events. The ORI 4-H LASER team qualified to compete at regionals by winning the "Judges Choice" award. This award is given to a team that has shown a unique effort, performance or dynamic that merits recognition above all others. The ORI team is coached by Jane Noyes and Sharon Tussey. The Middle School 4-H LASER team won the "Robot Performance Award". This honor is given to the team that has the robot that scores the most points during the robot competition. The MS team is coached by Bart

Gulshen and Amy Larrington. The MS team was coached by Bart Gulshen and Amy Larrington.

The FLL Kansas City championship competition will be held January 14th at Union Station in Kansas City. Only 36 of 120 teams have the honor of advancing to regionals. All ORI and MS LASER teams were mentored by the HS LASER 3284 team. HS LASER coach Mitch Comer said, "It is amazing that we have two teams representing Camdenton in the final 36!" The winner will get an automatic bid to the FIRST World Championship to be held in April. The Camdenton 4-H LASER High School team is a two time FIRST World Championship qualifier and will start their build season on January 7th at a NASA kickoff party where the 2012 challenge will be announced.

If you would like more information about LASER robotics or would like to volunteer as a mentor please contact the Afterschool Services office at Camdenton R-III, 573-346-9233. The LASER teams main funding source comes from the district's 21st CCLC Federal grant.