

## **4-H *FIRST* LASER Robotics in the community**

**Camdenton 4-H FIRST LASER Continues Legacy of Leadership**

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**CADV Director, Angie Fiene with members of the 4-H FIRST LASER Robotics teams of Camdenton.**

For members of the Camdenton 4-H FIRST LASER teams, robotics has a deeper meaning.

"What a lot of people don't understand is that it's about a lot more than a robot," Senior Katelyn Goodwin said. Instead it is about spreading the program's core values and giving back to the community they live.

For Goodwin and her fellow teammates, it's about "making a difference in a way we know how."

Recently members of teams from Osage Beach Elementary, Hawthorn Elementary, Oak Ridge Intermediate, Camdenton middle school and high school gave back to an organization that has an impact on many families in the lake area. Students purchased numerous math and science games, books and resources that will be used in the new Citizens Against Domestic Violence shelter's play room.

"It means a lot to have the kids involved in the project," CADV Director Angie Fiene said. "I think the love will come through."

"I think it's cool we get to help and they get to play with the toys," team member Amelia Schaefer said.

Students painted the robot themed room and donated a custom LEGO activity table designed and built by LASER head coach, Mitch Comer. LCTC students also found a way to get involved. The Building Trades and Collision Repair Technology classes built and painted colorful bookshelves for the room. Students also applied for funding that would provide resources to equip a playground at the shelter.

"The Camdenton 4-H LASER teams take the core values of FIRST as serious as designing and fabricating robots to complete complex tasks for state and national competitions. In fact, FIRST uses the robot to get students excited about STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) but the main goal of FIRST is to develop life skills that will help students with relationships, teamwork, finance, fundraising, budgeting and project management," Afterschool Services Director Sherry Comer said. "FIRST teaches students to see the correlation between academics, community, industry and making the world a better place."

Each year the teams pick a cause and this year, CADV was at the top of their list. The FIRST LASER teams will cohost 'Drive One 4 UR School' with Sakelaris Ford on May 4 at Camdenton High school.

"For every community member that comes to the event and test drives a Ford vehicle, \$20 is given to the LASER teams up to \$5,000. The event will start at 9 a.m. and run throughout the day until 3 p.m. In addition to the 'Ford Drive One 4 UR School' event, the LASER team will host a local First Lego League rumble with the elementary LASER teams from Osage Beach Elementary, Hawthorn, Oak Ridge Intermediate, the MS and HS teams will also demonstrate their robots and allow community members to 'test drive the robots,' " Comer said. "A silent auction will also take place that day with all proceeds going directly to the teams. Hamburgers

and hot dogs will be grilled by the Camdenon Optimist Club to make the May 4 event exciting and fun."

For the students, this truly is a way to reach out to others in need.

"We are giving back to a community that has given us so much," Senior Brigitta Peth said.

The high school LASER 3284 team will travel to St. Louis March 14-16 and Fayetteville, Ark. April 4-6 in hopes to qualify to compete at the world championship. For more information about Camdenon 4-H FIRST LASER please contact the Camdenon R-III Afterschool Services office at 573-346-9233.