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ALHAMBRA
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Monterey Highlands Elementary Engineering Teams Take Top Honors at 2019 FIRST Lego Qualifier

by Debbie Kotani,
Monterey Highlands principal

May 10, 2019, Monterey Park, CA — Competing against 30 elementary and middle schools, Monterey Highlands Elementary's rookie engineering teams, Brainy Bots and Dream Team, took First and Second, respectively, at the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Lego League "Into Orbit" Walnut Qualifier Tournament. The teams advance to the LA Regional Championship Tournament.

To win the FIRST Lego League Walnut Qualifier, students grades 4 through 8 researched a real-world engineering challenge, developed a solution and competed with LEGO based robots of their own design.

This year's challenge was to identify a physical or social problem faced by humans during long duration space exploration within our Sun's solar system. The teams are judged on their project and solution, robot design, and application of Core Values. The Core Values are FIRST philosophies encouraging participants to pursue discovery, innovation, inclusion, impact, teamwork, and fun in the spirit of friendly competition.

Brainy Bots were named Champions at the Qualifying Tournament for Best All Round performance in all categories. They also won the Judge's Award at an earlier tournament, Blockhead Bash Rewind, for their innovative solution. The team included Gavin Chan, Keira Chan, Sonia Hinojosa, Nicholas Jung, Cesar Osorio, Kristine Sy, and Justin Wong.

Dream Team won first place in the Core Values category recognizing their inclusion and teamwork. Their team included Ethan Amaro, Raelene Aragon, Sarah Duong, Sophia Duong, Andrew Duran, Diego Ruiz, Alexander Song, and Gabrielle Wong.

Congratulations to our future engineers!

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PHOTO BY LIEZEL GUTIERREZ



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PHOTO CAPTION: The Monterey Highlands winning rookie engineering teams at the FIRST Lego Qualifier were honored by the Alhambra Unified Board of Education. Pictured left to right: AUSD Superintendent Denise Jaramillo; Monterey Highlands students from the Brainy Bots (Justin Wong, Cesar Osorio, Sonia Hinojosa, Gavin Chan); Monterey Highlands principal Debbie Kotani; the Dream Team (Diego Ruiz, Sarah Duong, Raelene Aragon, Ethan Amaro). Not pictured for the Brainy Bots (Keira Chan, Kristine Sy, Nicholas Jung). Not pictured for the Dream Team (Andrew Duran, Alexander Song, Sarah Duong, Gabrielle Wong)