



Hamilton MS students participate in EcoBot Challenge

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April 1, 2009 — Four teams of Hamilton Middle School students will participate in the All-Earth EcoBot Challenge on Saturday, April 25 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the George R. Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston.

Hamilton's teams, listed below, were beneficiaries of four Lego Mindstorms Education NXT Robot Kits through a grant from the Education Foundation of Harris County and a generous contribution from the MIT Club of South Texas:

- **EcoNerds:** eighth-grade students **Kevin Patterson, Ethan Kovar** and **Andrew Tang**;
- **RoboTigers:** sixth-grade students **Bradley Smith, Ryan Steppe** and **Diana Xu**;
- **Recycl-Bots:** sixth-grade students **Ashlynn Peters, Nick Kramr, Trevor McCants** and **Christina Moreno**; and
- **Flying Purple Pollution Eaters:** sixth-grade students **Karl Lawson, Chris**



Hamilton Middle School eighth-grade students Ethan Kovar, left, and Andrew Tang of the EcoNerds work on their robots in preparation for the All-Earth Ecobot Challenge on April 25.



Hamilton sixth-grade student Ryan Steppe of the RoboTigers tests the durability of his robot.

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Ullrich, Austin Shay and Tyler Sorrels.

Hamilton's teams will be among 80 teams featuring students in grades 5-8 from the greater Houston area using their programmed robots to complete a series of activities that demonstrate recycling, reuse, reducing waste and environmental responsibility.

In Part 1 of the competition, students design their robots and programmed them to perform a set of specific tasks in a 90-second time period. There are four identical heats and the field is narrowed to 16 teams for the final round. The winners will participate in an exposition challenge round with a visiting robotics team from Japan. Hamilton students met before and after school to complete their tasks.

Part 2 of the competition involves teams researching and marketing a robot of their own creation that has something to do with the environment. Participants will be interviewed by a panel of experts and scored accordingly. They must name their product, create a slogan, decide who they will market it to and perform a cost analysis.

The Flying Purple Pollution Eaters, for example invented the "Inflator," a robotic device that automatically rolls up to a car's tires, checks tire pressure and fills tires accordingly, in order to save gas while driving.

The event is hosted by the Education Foundation of Harris County, in partnership with the City of Houston CEFD, the Houston Galveston Area Council and the Harris County Department of Education.

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