

LI students' robots face off with peers'

March 26, 2011 by AISHA AL-MUSLIM / aisha.al-muslim@newsday.com



High-tech robots battled it out in an intense competition at [Hofstra University](#) Saturday, at times leaving the game floor covered with metal pieces.

The 120-pound robots built by 50 high school teams, including 43 from Long Island, faced off in the 12th annual Long Island Regional For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology Robotics Competition.

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"It turned out to be much more fun than I thought it would be," said Luis Tolosa, 16, a junior heading [Westbury High's Team 2027](#).

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Teams had six weeks to create their robots. Students were guided by mentors and faculty but did all the work on their own.

"They come up with a design themselves," said [Janet Anderson](#) of School-Business Partnerships of Long Island Inc., which sponsored the competition.



This year's game, "Logo Motion," required teams to build a robot with an arm that could extend up to 9 feet. Alliances of three teams battled each other in two-minute, 15-second matches. The robots had to maneuver around a 27-by-54-foot floor to grasp and hang on a hook as many inflated plastic shapes as they could. The teams got extra points when they put the shapes in the order of FIRST's logo: a red triangle, white circle and blue square. Then, robots deployed mini-bots to the tops of poles.

"This competition gave me the opportunity to expand on my knowledge and create a robot," said Laura D'Aquila, 17, of Team 2875 from [Cold Spring Harbor High School](#).

Screaming students, parents and school mascots filled the stands and sidelines. Pop music kept the crowd pumped up.

"It is amazing what they can build and how they program it," said Lorna Krug, mother of Kenny Krug, a junior on [Baldwin High's Robotics Team 1546](#).

Ishmael Romero, 17, a junior on [Uniondale High's Team 1537](#), aspires to be an engineer. "I really would like to advance society in the technology field," he said. "For now, I'll start with robots."

Six teams from the contest at Hofstra, including [Patchogue-Medford](#) and [Malverne](#) high schools, will compete April 27-30 in the national championship.

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