



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 15, 2025

Georgia Brown Dual Immersion School Robotics Teams Win Multiple Awards in Regional Robotics Competition

Santa Maria, CA—On Saturday, December 13, 2025, forty-six (46) robotics teams from across the Central Coast—from Paso Robles to Santa Maria and beyond—competed in the Santa Maria Winter Wonderland Robotics Open Competition at Tommie Kunst Junior High School.

Each team spent months designing, programming, and building their robots to compete in skills challenges that tested both remote-controlled and autonomous performance. Students worked collaboratively to pick up, stack, and move objects in timed matches, earning points through strategy and precision. Every robot in the competition was designed and programmed by students, with teachers serving as mentors in engineering, design, and teamwork.

Georgia Brown Dual Immersion School (GBDI) brought two teams to the event: an elementary team comprised of 4th graders and a junior high team comprised of 6th and 7th graders.

With more than thirty (30) elementary teams in the field, GBDI's elementary team dominated the event, earning the Overall Teamwork Champion Award, the Robot Skills Champion Award, and the Design Award for their heavily modified clawbot—nicknamed “Lobster.” Driven with exceptional skill, Lobster scored more than twice as many points as the nearest competitor.

By winning in Santa Maria, the team qualified for the Southern California Regional Competition (Southern California State Championships) scheduled to be held at UC Irvine, March 13-14, 2026. Their performance at the Southern California Regional Competition will determine whether they advance to the World Championship in St. Louis at the end of April, 2026.

GBDI's middle school team also impressed, reaching the finals and earning the Innovation Award for the design of their robot, “Bot-Zilla.” The team achieved the highest autonomous score—where the robot operates solely using student-written code—of all 46 teams in attendance.

Winning four top awards, the GBDI Robotics Teams, led by Science Teacher Jon-Paul Ewing, brought home more honors than any other school.

“It was a wildly successful day and I’m still processing what happened,” said Ewing. “Our students were fantastic—handling setbacks with maturity and showing outstanding sportsmanship with their fellow competitors.”

“I really enjoyed learning how robots work and getting to meet other kids from all over,” said Evelyn Maxted, a 6th grader and member of the middle school team. “It was so much fun.”



This inaugural year for GBDI's robotics program marks a promising start for future STEM learning throughout the school and the District.

Community Support Fuels Student Success

Launched in September of 2025, the GBDI robotics program was made possible through the generosity of local supporters. Paso Robles Education Association (PREA) donated \$1,600 for the purchase of competition kits, while the GBDI PTO covered the \$310 contest entry fee and \$70 for the practice arena. In addition, Principal Cristina Velasco used school donation funds to pay for team registrations and transportation totaling \$500.

Now, as the teams prepare for the upcoming State Competition at UC Irvine, they are working to raise \$2,000 to help cover the entry fee, travel expenses, and purchase new pneumatic kits to upgrade their robots for the next round of competition.

"Our students are fired up, and I'm doing everything I can to keep up with their energy and ambition," said Robotics Club Advisor and Science Teacher, Jon-Paul Ewing. "They're already brainstorming ways to make their designs even stronger for State. The community's support makes all of this possible."

Community members and local businesses interested in contributing can contact Mr. Ewing at jpewing@pasoschools.org.

Elementary team members: Rees Slover, Yeshua Angulo-Jimenez, Adrian Volle, Vivienne Abarca, Jupiter Ewing, and Hannah Thompson.

Middle school team members: Sawyer Goodin, John Arevalo, Connor Ralls, Evelyn Maxted, Emily Bailey, and Jeseria Huffman.

About the VEX IQ Robotics Competition

The VEX IQ Robotics Competition is presented by the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation, an international organization hosting robotics tournaments for students from elementary through college levels. With over one million participants worldwide, it is the largest and fastest-growing robotics competition series in the world.

About Georgia Brown Dual Immersion School

Georgia Brown Dual Immersion School is a TK–8 magnet program within the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District that fosters biliteracy, bilingualism, and biculturalism in both Spanish and English.



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About Paso Robles Joint Unified School District

Paso Robles Joint Unified School District (PRJUSD) serves more than 6,400 students across northern San Luis Obispo County. Guided by its core values—integrity, accountability, collaboration, innovation, compassion, and belonging—PRJUSD is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment where every student feels valued, empowered, and prepared to thrive.

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