

4 LI robotics teams advance to the nationals

BY MICHAEL R. EBERT

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Four Long Island teams are advancing to the national level after winning top awards at the 2025 FIRST Robotics Competition Long Island Regional.

The 2025 competition included 49 high school teams that designed and built robots using a kit of parts ranging from control systems to game components. They then competed in an alliance-style tournament last month at Hofstra University in Hempstead under the theme of “Reefscape,” which challenged teams to “score coral, harvest algae and attach robots to a barge,” according to competition officials.

The RoboLions (Team #564) from Longwood High School in Middle Island won the FIRST Impact Award, the most prestigious honor and recognizes the team that “best represents a model for other teams to emulate,” according to FIRST officials. FIRST stands for “For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology.”

The winning alliance included Longwood’s RoboLions as well as Kings Park High School’s Kingsmen Robotics (Team #3736) and Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK High School’s POBots (Team #353). Mineola High School’s Mineola Wild Reds (Team #6806) won the Regional Engineering Inspiration Award.



The RoboLions from Longwood High School in Middle Island won the Impact Award, the most prestigious recognition, at the FIRST Robotics Competition Long Island Regional at Hofstra University.

The four teams are now eligible for the national robotics championship in Houston April 16-19.

“This was one of the best Long Island regionals we’ve experienced,” Bertram Dittmar, the executive director for FIRST Long Island, wrote in a statement. “All participating teams demonstrated tremendous teamwork, gracious professionalism and critical thinking. The fun and excitement of the competition was evident as many students and mentors got caught up in the spirit of the event.”

DEER PARK/DIX HILLS CHEMAGINATION WINNERS

Students from Deer Park High School and Half Hollow

Hills High School West won first place in this year’s Chemagination competition coordinated by the American Chemical Society’s New York Section.

Participants imagined they were living 25 years in the future and described “a recent breakthrough or innovation in chemistry that has improved the quality of people’s lives today,” according to competition officials. Ideas ranged from using *Alcanivorax borkumensis* bacteria to clean oil spills to devising a cure for Huntington’s disease.

First-place winners were Kayla Cruz and Ava Sacarin of Deer Park High School

and Arjun Chaudhary, Eliana Eisenberg, Ethan Gomes, Eryk Kaczocha, Gunisha Kaur, Eric Lu, Sidh Puri and Aryan Suraj of Half Hollow Hills High School West.

HICKSVILLE POETRY WINNER

Hicksville High School freshman Pratheeksha Ganesh was one of 30 winners nationwide in the National High School Poetry Contest’s 2024-25 winter competition coordinated by Just Poetry: The National Poetry Quarterly.

Ganesh’s poem focused on the effect of academic pressure on teenagers. For winning, she received a copy of the publica-

tion that included her poem. “I love poetry because it’s a pathway to express yourself in few, but impactful words,” Ganesh said. “This accomplishment has definitely given me a boost of self-confidence in my writing and motivated me to write more.”

ISLANDWIDE QUILL AWARDS

Nine students and one school publication from Long Island were honored with Quill Awards during Adelphi University’s Press Day, which celebrated the talents of high school journalists in February.

This year’s winners, their high schools and categories: Gabriella Mayer, Great Neck North, Best Layout; Katherine Zhao, Great Neck North, Best Arts Review; Janice Kwon and Mia Shu, Jericho, Best Visual (photograph of artwork); Zoya Khan, Jericho, Best News Article; Cristina Palmieri, Kellenberg in Uniondale, Best News Video; Benjamin Davidson, Roslyn, Best Opinion Piece (column or editorial); Emilee Youn, Roslyn, Most Outstanding Reporter; and Skylar Hunt, Shoreham-Wading River, Best Sports Story or Column.

Lynbrook High School’s Horizon newspaper was named the competition’s Most Outstanding Newspaper.

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