

Woodall Student Robotics Techs Tell of Invited Visit to White House

Woodall's Cybercats got their robots moving — all the way to the White House.

Woodall students Taylor Wingo, Anthony Maldonado, Benjamin Woolen, and Ty Brant participated in the White House Science Fair last week in Washington, D.C. The four, members of the Cybercats Robotics Team, showed how their robots operate.

Taylor, a sixth-grader, said the science fair gave the team a way “to express what we do.”

“We program robots to perform different tasks,” Taylor said.

Benjamin, who is in eighth grade, said the team showed two robots — a metal one that competed in Vexpro 15 meets and one that competed in FIRST LEGO League Robotics.

“It was a great experience, being inside the White House,” Benjamin said. “We got to see things tourists didn't get to see. It was actually an insider's look at the White House.”

The Woodall students joined more than 100 students who showed their skills at science, technology, engineering, and math. President Barack Obama has had the science fair for six years.

“We actually got to shake hands with the president and Bill Nye, the Science Guy. He was awesome,” said Anthony, a seventh-grader.

“I never thought we'd ever get to go to the White House,” said Ty, also in seventh grade. “I think we impressed people with our ingenuity.”

Woodall science teacher Dr. Geary Crofford, who accompanied the students, said they got to “shine” at the science fair.

Crofford said Woodall's STARBASE program helped the students get to the fair. STARBASE is a Department of Defense educational program that operates an after-school club at Woodall.

He said state STARBASE officials learned of Woodall's robotics program, "and they sent the information to the White House."

Crofford said the school received its invitation to the science fair "the Thursday night before April Fool's."

He said he started a GoFundMe internet funding account to help pay for the trip. Other funds were carried by the FIRST Lego League.

The team spent three days in Washington, he said.

Article courtesy of Cathy Spaulding and the Muskogee Phoenix.

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