News Release

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G-FORCE FTC Teams Bring Home Top Awards

The Garrett County 4-H FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) G-FORCE team returned from the Maryland FTC Qualifier Tournaments with the top awards. The team has worked together since September to build a robot to play the new Cascade Effect game. They designed, prototyped, tested, and fabricated a robot to drive on and off a ramp, release a kickstand which produces a cascade of over a hundred plastic whiffle and golf balls to roll across the field, collect (no more than 5) balls at a time, then shoot the balls into different height rolling goals. In addition to building a robot to compete, the team members give a technical/community outreach presentation to a panel of judges. G-FORCE is busy all year long sharing STEM excitement with others. You can join in on the fun at the monthly SuGO events the first Sunday of each month at GEARS in Accident, MD (SuGObot.com), or attend the upcoming Mineral County STEM Festival at Potomac State College on March 28 (mineralstem.com). The team will also be mentoring at the summer Technology Camps sponsored by the Garrett County Board of Education, and helping with robotic events at the county and state fairs. Coach Arlene Lantz stated, “The 4-H FIRST robotics program is a great learning experience for the youth.” “They learn valuable life skills, public speaking, and teamwork through hands-on experiences.” If you are interested in 4-H or robotics contact the local 4-H Extension Office at 301-334-6960.

G-FORCE would also like to congratulate the local 4-H Techno Clover team who earned a spot at the Maryland State Championship at the Annapolis qualifier by bringing home the Winning Alliance Trophy and the Motivate Award. The rookie GaCo FTC team also did an outstanding job at that tournament going undefeated and placing third after qualifying matches. They played in the finals and also brought home The Rockwell Collins Innovate Award Trophy. G-FORCE and Techno Closers will continue to practice and improve their robots for the Maryland State FTC Championship at the Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) in Laurel, MD on February 21.

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Team Photo:
The team earned the two top awards, the Inspire Award and the Winning Alliance Trophy at their first qualifying FTC tournament. The G-FORCE Team includes Jonah Faciolli, Will Baker, Blake Smith, Griff Speis, Phil Malone, Arlene Lantz, with Darrah Spies and Ashley Quinn in front. Team mentors not pictured Max Peterson, Ken Gotsch, Aaron, Levi, and Willie Lantz. At their second event, they earned the Control Award, Think Award, and Finalist Alliance Trophies. They will continue to improve their robot for the Maryland State Championship next month. The top 5-6 teams will advance from the state tournament to the Super Regional in Scranton, PA in March. Then those top teams will advance to the FTC World Championship in St. Louis, MO in April.

Pit Photo:
Rookie team member Ashley Quinn explains key robot features to the judges at the pit table. You never know when judges will stop by to ask more questions and learn more about the robot and the team. Ashley is interested in a career in teaching or engineering, so she joined the team to learn more about the engineering process through the hands on experiences.