

CEESA MIDDLE SCHOOL LEGO ROBOTICS COMPETITION 2012 AT ISH

Two years ago ISH started a Lego Robotics after school club, for students in grades 3-5, with just fifteen students. We were thrilled to purchase our first kits and have students learn about how to build and design robots that we could program to perform different tasks. The more involved and practiced the students get in this, the more they can see how relevant this model building is, and how many machines in our everyday usage can start in these simple forms and help millions of people.

This year we were proud to not only participate in a Lego Robotics competition, an FLL tournament www.firstlegoleague.org but also host the **Senior Solutions Challenge**, which provided students an opportunity to see life functions through the eyes of an aging person experiencing physical limitations.

We committed to hosting this year's CEESA tournament for the third Lego Robotics tournament in CEESA history. We had more schools and teams interested than we could handle and had to limit entry to 9 schools, including ISH, which was four more schools than last year. We were proud to have in our midsts so many middle school students and offer each team four matches, in addition to the elimination rounds. Each team had just two and a half minutes to choose from fourteen different "missions" or challenges to have their robots accomplish. Every mission represented a challenge a senior might face in everyday life, from reaching something, turning levers, picking up the correct medicine container and more. **The ISH team won the head-to-head competition championship and was rewarded by the Robot Performance Award, while the American School of Warsaw Gnags took the Champion's Award for the best overall performance.**

One of the major celebrations, in my eyes, was seeing our upper school students in so many leadership positions of this event, from organizing the website to livestreaming, to announcing and judging. All of our US students did an amazing job and were so positively acknowledged and thanked, time and time again from our visiting coaches and locals.

As a teacher who believes in this program with her heart and soul, and introduced this club and program here, I am so glad we had this opportunity to share the competition with our community. I believe this Lego Robotics involvement provides a special niche for many of our students that no other after-school club or activity provides. It is exciting to promote this activity here with hopes of growing it to be not only a force in our school but in our city and region as well. What a great tournament we hosted and a super terrific team we fielded. Way to go ISH!

*Event Director
Rebecca Rosenberg*

"Many of the spectators and visiting teams witnessed how amazingly the ISH Huskies team performed and won the head-to-head competition, but not many people realize how much hard work and preparation went into getting the team ready for competition level. Every Tuesday after school for 2.5hrs the team have been planning, programming, building and finding solutions under my guidance. In the last few weeks the team relentlessly perfected their strategy and executed it perfectly over the two days of competition. I am really proud of their achievements and team spirit. It was an honour to work with all the ISH Huskies team members and I will certainly remember the nail biting moments and our victory over so many strong teams"

*ISH Huskies Coach
Darren Trofimczuk*

"The last few weeks have been pretty rough for the planning committee. From having to make sure everyone was ready to making sure everything was all set to go, there was a lot of work to get done. Everyone was working hard doing their duty, working to accomplish our common goal. It makes you feel proud when you reflect on everything that was accomplished during the tournament. Despite all of the challenges, we managed to pull of this event and everyone had fun during the tournament. I am glad that in the end all of our hard word payed off and that most of the visiting teams had something to take home with them and felt proud of themselves for everything they had accomplished during the tournament. It was an honor to work with everyone that played a part in making this event successful and I am sure that if we get a chance to host another tournament like this, we will succeed."

*Assistant Event Director
Rashika Bahl (grade 11)*

We were requested to house two visiting students from Warsaw. At first we were a bit worried about how everything will go. But now we are very glad that we decided to host the students, since, in our opinion, it is an absolutely unique and very valuable experience for all of us. We hosted 2 wonderful boys from Denmark, our children enjoyed spending time with them and actually were sad when they leftJ.

Living in the international community is a great joy and privilege – when the children travel around the world and visit different families, they get an attitude that the whole world is one big home for them. We are so proud and grateful to ISH for this amazing experience and look forward to welcoming new children.

*Evgenia Tkacheva
Host Parent*