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For Immediate Release

News Release

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Ardrossan students win at FIRST Lego League Championship

Sherwood Park, A.B. — Students from Ardrossan Junior Senior High won high marks at this year's For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Lego League Championship in Edmonton. Students representing the Ardrossan Bison Robotics Team, made up of five Grade 7 students from the school, were presented with the prestigious Strategy and Innovation award.

More than 300 students, between the ages of nine and 14, from across northern Alberta gathered at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) on Jan. 16, 2016 to showcase their robotic engineering abilities. The Ardrossan Bison Robotics Team were tasked with designing and building a robot—complete with sensors, motors, gears, and software—capable of improving the way people handle trash.

“Designing a robot from scratch is no easy feat,” says Richard Pretzlaff, a teacher at Ardrossan Junior Senior High. “I’m so proud of all five students. They have worked so hard over the last two months preparing for the competition and they certainly rose to the occasion.”

Using a themed playing surface, the students quickly got to work designing, building, programming, and testing a Lego-engineered robot that addressed the theme of the day: waste reduction. Once complete, the students presented their solution to a panel of five judges. The Ardrossan Bison Robotics Team stood out for how they used engineering practices and strategy to design and build an innovative, high performing robot. For that, they took home the Strategy and Innovation award.

“It’s an incredible experience to be a part of because you actually see the months of hard work finally come together—they are confident, polished, and want to keep learning,” says Pretzlaff. “Collectively, they’ve learned how to solve challenging real-world problems through creativity and teamwork.”

This is the first year the Ardrossan Bison Robotics Team has entered the FIRST Lego League Championship, a global program focused on promoting science, technology, and engineering careers to young people. Pretzlaff hopes to make the competition an annual event for students at the school and to gradually include more teams in the tournament.

Congratulation to the Ardrossan Bison Robotics Team and their teachers Richard Pretzlaff and Mitch Bell—winning the FIRST Lego League’s Strategy and Innovation award is a huge accomplishment.

Ardrossan Junior Senior High serves close to 900 students in grades 7 to 12 and is one of 12 junior and senior high schools within Elk Island Public Schools. More information about the school can be found by visiting www.ardrossan.ca.

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