



PRESS RELEASE

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Robotics training ramps up ahead of RoboGames!

Teams from West Kootenays in training

They're off! The fourth annual RoboGames competition has launched, and teams of youth ages 10-16 are hard at work designing, building and programming robots across the West Kootenays. All teams are preparing for the 2016 RoboGames competition to be held on Saturday, February 20 from 9 am to 3 pm at Selkirk College's Mary Hall in Nelson.

RoboGames is a collaborative initiative between the Nelson Tech Club and GLOWS, with support from the Kootenay Association for Science and Technology and Selkirk College. While in past years the robotics training was held exclusively in Nelson at Selkirk College, this year Nelson Tech Club President Brad Pommen developed a series of online training courses, eliminating the need for teams to travel more than 200 km roundtrip weekly to attend. Additionally, GLOWS Program Manager Beth Corven delivered more than 35 Arduino base kits to teams throughout the region in the early weeks of December. As a result, RoboGames 2016 is the largest, most diverse event we have ever attempted to date.

Over 40 teams comprised of 74 youth from across the region will be competing for the title of RoboGames Champions. Teams range from first time novices to veteran competitors. All will have the opportunity to compete in one or more of the following events:

1. **Obstacle Course:** Robots maneuver an obstacle course as quickly and carefully as possible.
2. **Line Following Course:** Robots utilize the obstacle course, except that they follow the line from end to end with speed and accuracy judged.
3. **Robot Soccer 1 on 1:** A pile of robot soccer balls is located in the center of the obstacle course. Competitors vie against an opponent to try to grab the most robot soccer balls to their side in two minutes.
4. **Special Trick Competition:** Competitors program their robot to do their evil, or not so evil, bidding by coming up with something cool and crazy for their robot to do. Examples are dancing, telling a joke, fetching an object... competitors are encouraged to use their imagination!
5. **Robot Battles:** Two robots enter the open arena to compete as gladiators in the ultimate destruction event. Judges determine the winner based on meaningful hits, overall match polarity and gamesmanship.

All teams will be using the official RoboRED Arduino kit provided by RoboGames. This official base kit contains the starting materials which can be supplemented by teams as they progress. Code examples, photos and tutorials are provided online to ensure that all hardware works together and eliminates guess work when hooking it up. Each team decides which components they will use, what they want their robot to do, and what it will look like.

In January, Pommen will travel to up to six locations to provide hands-on robotics training to mentors and youth, with online training provided to all locations upon demand. The actual competition will take place in the basement of Mary Hall at Selkirk College's Tenth Street Campus in Nelson.

The goal of GLOWS is to promote science and technology learning among our young community members by making science and technology fun, accessible and non-intimidating. Ultimately we hope that these youth will incorporate scientific and technical learning into their future education and career choices, enhancing community vitality and

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sustainability as our region moves into the middle of the 21st Century. Making technical learning less intimidating is a crucial early step toward encouraging the region's young people to incorporate science and technology in their future learning and career plans, thus increasing the region's chances of retaining technical talent in the longer term. The Nelson Tech Club is a community organization for technology enthusiasts who gather to share ideas, knowledge, resources and opinions in a friendly and collaborative atmosphere. The NTC firmly puts its money where its mouth is, living by its motto of "Build, Learn, Share."

GLOWS and Nelson Tech Club wish to thank the supporters of the 2016 RoboGames:



*Working together to be the best for our communities,
our environment... our future!*



*"Take Care Of The Land,
And The Land Will Take Care of You."*



DROP MANUFACTURING