



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagstaff Academy 4th Grade Girls' Robotics Team Heads to State and U.S. Championships

Longmont, CO – December 12, 2024 – Flagstaff Academy Charter School is thrilled to announce that their 4th-grade girls' robotics team, Team 473B, has achieved an extraordinary milestone. The team has qualified for both the 2025 Colorado State Championship VEX IQ Elementary Robotics Tournament and the 2025 VEX Robotics U.S. Open Championship in Iowa.

This impressive accomplishment comes after their stellar performance at the St. Vrain Valley School District Robotics Tournament held at Mead Elementary, where the team was honored with the Teamwork Champion Award. This prestigious award highlights the team's exceptional robot performance during match play and collaborative performance with another team from Mead Elementary School.

Team 473B Members:

- Markayla Hyde
- Avery Lam
- Samantha Talluri
- Aaradhya Thakar

Staff Advisors:

- J.R. Kerbel, Elementary School Technology Teacher
- Tim Joe, IT/Help Desk Technician
- Shawnette Thomas, 2nd Grade Paraprofessional

Reflecting on their journey, team members shared their excitement: "I felt that we had accomplished something really big," said Samantha Talluri. "It was only our first year competing, and we got into state!" "I felt we collaborated well and used each other's ideas to make our robot the best," added Aaradhya Thakar.

When asked about their favorite part of being on a robotics team, the girls unanimously agreed: “Having our friends around for support, working as a team, and coming up with new ideas to make our robot better.”

The U.S. Open Championship will bring together teams from around the globe, showcasing various games and challenges across six distinct tournaments for all ages.

“We are incredibly proud of Aaradhya, Samantha, Avery, Markayla, and the coaches for their incredible hard work and innovation,” says Flagstaff Academy Executive Principal, Katie Gustafson. “Their success is a shining example of the PRIDE values that we teach at Flagstaff Academy: Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Dependability, and Empathy.”

About Flagstaff Academy:

Flagstaff Academy is a preschool through eighth grade public charter school located in Longmont, CO. Flagstaff Academy is now in its nineteenth year of operation, serving approximately 800 students and employing nearly 95 faculty and staff.

The school’s mission is to “develop students who are equipped to be well-rounded, ethical leaders in the world community with a foundation based on science and technology.” The school’s curriculum is rich with experiential arts, hands-on science exploration, character education, and innovative technology integration. Learn more at www.flagstaffacademy.org.

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Photo Caption: The Flagstaff Academy 4th grade robotics team: Aaradhya Thakar (left), Markayla Hyde (back center), Avery Lam (front center), Samantha Talluri (right).

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