

### This Week

- Hammond Participates in Robotics Contest
- Publisher's Notes
- Around the County
- Hammond News
- Political Points Coming to Gazette

### Weekly Refresher

That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well.

- Abraham Lincoln

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# Guilford Gazette

## Hammond Students Build Robot to Compete Regionally



Seated from left to right are Hammond High School robotics team leaders: Jade Stevenson, senior; Lily Brand, senior; Sherri Greer, Sophomore; and Philip Stewart, Senior.

Early on Saturday mornings in the tech lab at Hammond High School, without fail, you will find teachers Mr. Eric Cullings, and Mr. Jeremy Cromer with a host of Hammond students and mentors working together to design and build a robot. Yes, Hammond is known for building robots.

Each year the Hammond Ursa Major Robotics Team enters in the U.S. First Robotics competition, founded by Dean Kamen, the inventor of the Segway personal transportation device,

and a variety of sophisticated prosthetics. The competition brings teams from around the country to compete.

Hammond has competed at U.S. First since the 2008 - 2009 school year.

That year the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) donated six thousand dollars to promote the team, according to Mr. Cullings. The idea spawned at the insistence of Hammond student Robbie Oehrli, now a mentor, who wanted a robotics team at his school.

Everyone on the team is

a volunteer. Mr. Reggie Counts is a computer systems engineer from Elicott City who devotes a considerable amount of time volunteering as a mentor.

Mr. Counts first involved himself to support his daughter, then a Wild Lake High School student, who was instrumental in getting Wild Lake to join Hammond as a joint robotics team. Ms. Counts has since earned a \$5,000 scholarship as a result of her involvement in robotics.

Jade Stevenson, a Hammond senior from Columbia said she "wanted to  
(Continued on Page 3)

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## The Publisher's Notes

I remember my school years quite fondly. I recall my world within the public schools, but I have no deep, searing remembrance of the lives of those outside of my own pursuits. If you are anything like me, your vision was considerably myopic. Now, however, I have the opportunity to visit the schools in our area - interviewing students and teachers alike.

From my bird's eye view, I am utterly amazed at what goes on inside the walls of our public schools in Howard County. This week I interviewed some very bright students who have thrown themselves into the world of math, robotics, and engineering.

The week before, I sat down with students who willingly jumped deeper into American history in their free time. Similarly, the schools recently held a regional spelling bee. I have my own children in Howard County Public Schools. The standard work load can exhaust your typical student. Who really wants to take on a heavier academic burden?

What I see every day, as I search for good stories, is a vast pool of intelligent and dedicated students, teachers, and mentors who spend their free time in pursuit of excellence rather than mediocrity.

Seeing the intensity in which these groups work gives me hope for our community and indeed, our state. We are made up of far more winners than losers.

The Guilford Gazette wants to continue to highlight the victories. Here, we hope that hard work, dedication, and creativity infects everyone.

*Ricardo L. Whitaker*

## Around the County

**"Open Mike Night" Teen Event** - Slayton House Stage - 10400 Cross Fox Lane, Columbia, Friday, March 23, from 7-10 p.m. Guests will enjoy six 15-minute performances by local teens. Admission is \$5 and includes pizza, sodas and dessert. Tickets can be purchased in advance from Town Center by calling 410-730-4744. Tickets also available at the door. Contact Carol Hoblemann at [wlevents@columbiavillages.org](mailto:wlevents@columbiavillages.org) or 410-

730-3987. **Asia Culture Café** The Columbia Association, in collaboration with the Howard County Library System, invites the community to experience the cultures of East and Southeast Asia. This **FREE** family event will be held on Sunday, March 25th from 1:30 – 4:30 pm at Miller Branch Library, 9421 Frederick Rd. in Ellicott City. Enjoy the cultures of East and Southeast Asia during an afternoon of displays, dance performances, and music.



The 2011—2012 Hammond Ursa Major Robotics Team, including students, teachers, and volunteer mentors. This team is competing in the Chesapeake Regional Robotics Competition at the Baltimore Convention Center.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF Ursa Major Robotics Team.

### Robotics from page 1

put my engineering skills to the test." Jade, along with Sherri, Lily Brand, senior from Kings Contrivance, and Philip Stewart, a senior from Jessup, are all part of the robotics student leadership. Philip, the team captain with designs on joining the U.S. Navy said, "we all enjoy robotics. I enjoy the engineering and problem solving." Lily, said that she "used to break things" but now she finds that she "love[s] building things. It's an awesome feeling putting things together", she said.

The team is ready for the Chesapeake Regional Robotics Competition March 9 - 10 at the Baltimore Convention Center. The squad will compete against teams

from across Maryland and the nation for a shot at the final First Robotics event later this year.

The team received its technical instructions from U.S. First the first week of January. Although Hammond has the option to use a kit from U.S. First, "we are getting away from kits and we machine our own parts," said Mr. Cullings. They had to meet a six-week build schedule to be accepted as a competitor into the event.

Prior to January Mr. Cullings and the other mentors had to grow the team. "We posted around the school and we would get other kids to recruit," said Mr. Cullings. According to Mr. Counts, the team worked six to eight hours on Saturdays and two

to three hours in the evenings.

The competition is set up like a sporting event. The teams build robots to perform a specific function, like shooting a basketball. The students operate the robots remotely at the competition.

This year's contest, Robot Rumble, is a game that pushes the teams to have their robots to shoot as many baskets as possible in a drill lasting two minutes and 15 seconds.

Other Howard County high school teams participating in this state-wide event, include, Atholton, Glenelg, Mt. Hebron, Marriotts Ridge, and River Hill.

Hammond, Atholton, and Wild Lake will also participate in Washington, DC in late March.



# March Scholarship Deadlines Approaching

## **Call Me Mister:**

This scholarship is for black males who would like to become a teacher and attend college out of state for free. The Call Me Mister program is offered at four historical black colleges in South Carolina: Benedict College, Chafin University, Morris College, and South Carolina State University. If you are interested, visit [www.callmemister.clemson.edu/index.html](http://www.callmemister.clemson.edu/index.html) or call 1-800-640-2657.

ability in some specific area or have exhibited leadership qualities and performed community service. The deadline for the application is March 15, 2012 and can be downloaded from <http://hcfbeca.community.officelive.com>.

## **Columbia Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Scholarship and Awards:**

This scholarship is for African American high school seniors. The minimum GPA must be 2.5. An essay is also part of the application and an interview may be required. The deadline for this scholarship and awards is March 10, 2012. Applications are available in the counseling center.

## **Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Kappa Phi Lambda Chapter:**

The Alpha Foundation of Howard County funds the education programs and efforts of the chapter, which is based in Howard County. These programs include the presentation of nine scholarships to high school seniors who have excelled academically. Scholarships are reserved for applicants planning to attend two or four year colleges or universities. All applicants must be African American and residents of Howard County or enrolled in a Howard County school. Applications must be post-marked no later than March 14, 2012 and are available in the counseling center.

## **NEW: Howard County Foundation for Black Educational and Cultural Achievement:**

This scholarship is for African American students who have been Howard County residents for at least 15 months prior to the date of the scholarship award. Applicants must have a GPA of 2.5 and must be US citizens or permanent US residents. Applicants must have demonstrated a special talent or ability in some specific area or have exhibited leadership qualities and performed community service. The deadline for the application is March 15, 2012 and can be downloaded from <http://hcfbeca.community.officelive.com>.

## **NEW: Maryland PTA Scholarship:**

This scholarship is offered to students who plan on pursuing a career in education in the public schools of Maryland. Financial need, academic record, and student resume will also be considered with each application. All applicants must have a 2.75 un-weighted minimum grade point average. The application is due on March 15, 2012. Please see your counselor for an application.

(Continued on Page 5)

**Scholarships from page 4****Jewish Community Services (JCS) General Scholarship:**

This scholarship is for Jewish students from single parent homes. The factors that the JCS Scholarship Committee will consider are financial need, academic performance and potential, extra-curricular and community activities, part-time and summer employment, and Jewish community involvement. The deadline for this application is March 15, 2012 and the website to obtain an application is [www.jcsbaltimore.org/jcs-scholarship-program](http://www.jcsbaltimore.org/jcs-scholarship-program).

**Newhoff Scholarship:**

This scholarship will be awarded to a Jewish student with documentation of a diagnosed learning disability. Students do not need to be from single parent homes to be eligible. The Jewish Community Services Scholarship Committee will consider factors such as financial need, academic performance and potential, nature and impact of learning disability, extra-curricular and community activities, part-time and summer employment, and Jewish community involvement. The deadline for this application is March 15, 2012 and the website to obtain an application is [www.jcsbaltimore.org/jcs-scholarship-program](http://www.jcsbaltimore.org/jcs-scholarship-program).

**Maggie J. Brown Spirit of Columbia Scholarship Award:**

This scholarship is given each year to students who have exhibited extraordinary efforts in community service to benefit Columbia residents, reside on assessment paying property or has a parent who works full-time on or owns CA assessed property, and have a cumulative grade point average of C or better (2.00). The deadline to apply is March 15, 2012. To apply, go to the following website: <http://www.columbiaassociation.org/pdfs/getinvolved/SpiritColumbia.pdf>.

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# Political Points

Political Points is a new feature to Guilford Gazette. In upcoming issues we will attempt to keep you informed about news and events regarding your elected representatives, and provide clear and concise information on how their decisions might impact you right where you live.

Some of the information we provide might seem elementary to those who regularly keep up with the political world. But there are others of us who are not so well-versed regarding the activities of government or the electoral process. Political Points is where you come to learn more and participate in the process more effectively.

Political Points is informational, so we will not try to sway our readers to one side of the political spectrum or the other. We will, however, endeavor to provide you with the bare facts. In cases where an explanation of a pending bill might be required, we will provide arguments from the left and the right, and do our very best to maintain balance.

We hope that you will enjoy our newest feature.

Primary Election Day: April 3, 2012

## *Hammond News*

### **Advanced Placement Exam Registration Ends March 15**

Registration for Advanced Placement exams ends on March 15 at 2:30 pm. AP exams are administered May 7 through 11, 2012. For more information visit <http://www.hammondhs.org/APTest.htm>.

### **Annual Hammond Bull Roast Set for March 18**

The Hammond Boosters Club is planning their annual big event, the Bull Roast. It is set for March 18 between 4 and 8 pm. The Boosters are looking for donations for the planned auction. For more information or to buy tickets for the event visit <http://www.hammondboosters.org/bull-roast>

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