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## Queen of Peace introduces its first Robotics Club

Queen of Peace High School in Burbank is the first all-girls school in Illinois to register in the FIRST Robotics competition for the 2008-09 school year.

FIRST Robotics holds two competitions each year – one in the fall and one in the spring, said Assistant Principal for Instructional Technology Integration Barbara Smith.

Members of the Peace Robotics Club will engineer and build a robot for each competition. This is the first year for Peace's specialized club.

Forty-five students signed up for the club, which is co-sponsored by science teacher Karen Amador and school technical coordinator Joe Piazza.

What makes the competitions so much fun is that students collaborate in teams to build a robot that is unique, Amador said. No two robots in the competition will be alike.

Students are given a set of guidelines and the creative problem solving is up to them. From a box of pieces and parts the students design, build and program their robot.

WiSE Women of Peace members – alums involved in the school's Women in Science and Engineering group – will use their engineering backgrounds to mentor club members as they build their robot.

On Sept. 13 students learned what project they have to create for the fall tech competition. In the spring, students will have a much larger robot to design for the big competition.

The catch is that students have limited time to build their robot. So they will be working hard to complete their project in time.

Team members want to finish the best that they can and earn a chance to compete at the national competition.

Competitions also give students a chance to win college scholarships, gain valuable knowledge and build teamwork skills.

“The robotics initiative is another avenue we offer that provides for the integration of new technologies as well as for learning experiences that nurture creative, collaborative inquiry and problem solving,” President/Principal Kathleen Hanlon said. “We are very excited about the expanding possibilities for scholarships for women in these areas.”

### **Student stories**

Peace sophomore Morgan Mallett is all about hands-on activities that challenge her. She loves to build with Legos and to make things. She even likes math. That’s why when she heard about Peace’s first-ever Robotics Club she knew she wanted to join.

“I want to learn more about robotics and how to program a robot,” Morgan said. “I like working with my hands.”

Junior Collin Davis is excited to learn the mathematics behind programming a robot. “Basically I am a math and science geek,” Davis said. “I really want to learn the cybertronics involved.”