



Robotics Team Scores Coveted Spot on AZ State Competition

Desert Mirage students to compete in U.S. Open Robotics Championship in Iowa



February 13, 2017 - Phoenix, Arizona – Desert Mirage Elementary School students represented the [Pendergast Elementary School District](#) in a [Vex IQ Robotics](#) competition for the first time. The school began preparing in January 2016, when several students and staff attended a Vex robotics match to observe a competition. After months spent writing grants, raising tax credit funds, and even using personal donations from the teachers, they were able to secure materials for five teams.

On February 4, 2016, the Desert Mirage teams attended the West Valley Robotics Championship to work to secure an invitation to the State of AZ Competition. All five teams performed secured a spot in the 16 team Championship Round. Desert Mirage's 8th grade Team Bastion earned the highest score, which qualified them to represent the West Valley in the AZ State Competition. The state-level Middle

School Match will be held on Saturday, February 25 in Chandler. If this first year robotics team continues on their current path and wins on the 25th, they will be eligible to compete in the World Championships this spring!

As a result of their outstanding performance on February 4, Desert Mirage's 8th grade Team Bastion received an invitation to participate in the **CREATE U.S. Open Robotics Championship - VEX IQ - Middle School Division** to be held April 4-5, 2017 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The team is currently in the process of fundraising the necessary travel and competition costs to give these students a once in a lifetime opportunity to compete at the national level.

According to Dr. Lily DeBlieux, Pendergast Superintendent, "This is an outstanding example of our Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics Academy (S.T.E.A.M.) preparation at work. These students, under the direction of their coach, Chris Strickland are learning to apply what they are studying. We are so proud of them and we hope our community will step forward to help with donations for their competition. The future is now and our students have proven they are creative thinkers, problems solvers and amazing challenge seekers. We wish them the best of luck and we believe in their capabilities and success."