Urbandale High School HyperStream Club Achieves Top Honors And Leadership Award
The Urbandale High School HyperSteam Club finished with a strong second place and received the prestigious Student Leader Award during the IT Olympics at Iowa State University
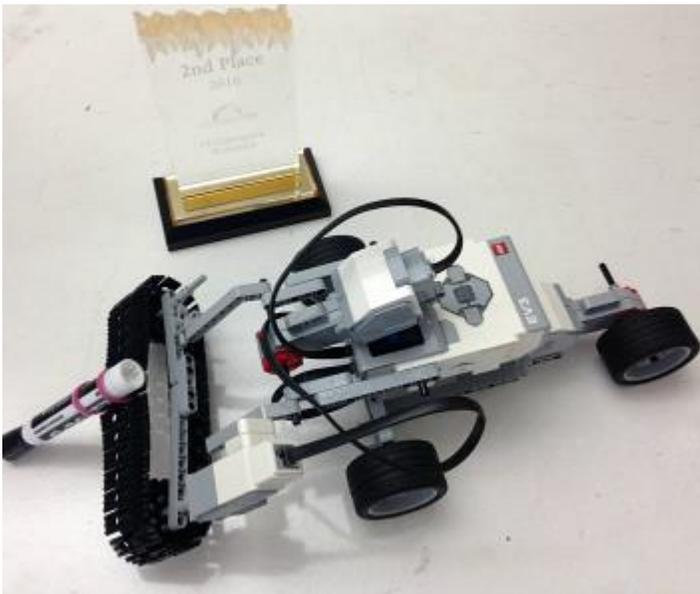
URBANDALE, Iowa – May 18, 2016 – If designing a robot that can battle other robots, write a sentence and climb stairs seems like a project one would most likely find on a college campus or hi-tech innovation lab, then it may come as a surprise to learn that students in the Urbandale High School (UHS) HyperStream Club are not only designing these very robots but are receiving awards in recognition of their outstanding technological talents. On April 29–30, 2016, high school students from across the state gathered in Hilton Coliseum at Iowa State University for an opportunity to demonstrate their exceptional coding, design and collaboration skills during the renowned 2016 IT Olympics. Students competed in three areas: a sumo-style competition where one pre-built robot tries to push the other robot off a circular mat, a real-time robot challenge where students must build a robot that can write the words, "It is fun!" and a robot that can climb stairs, as well as present a community service project promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) that they completed in their local area. At the conclusion of the competition Team Urbandale, also known as Kylo-RAM, finished with a strong second place—the highest place finish by an Urbandale team in the history of HyperStream. See UHS HyperStream robots in action here: https://www.youtube.com/uhsengineering

UHS HyperStream Club members Blaine Price, Austin Lamm, Riley Stuart, Ethan Spidle and John Clapham.

"The great value of competing at the IT Olympics is that you and your teammates get real-life experience in solving real-world challenges," said UHS student Blaine Price. "A big tip for all students interested in technology or science—get involved in HyperStream!"

For seven years, the Technology Association of Iowa (TAI) and the Hy-Vee Corporate Technology Team have partnered with UHS to support a HyperStream Club. HyperStream Clubs are an initiative of TAI to generate interest and expand opportunities for high school age students in the area of technology, with the long-term goal of having more young people become involved in technology-related fields. The UHS HyperStream Club meets weekly with the Hy-Vee Corporate Technology Team to learn everything from project management, to team leadership, to multimedia, to robotics, to back-end programming. Earlier this year, the Club received a generous donation from Hy-Vee, Inc., in order to purchase three new EV3 robotics kits as well six Robot C licenses used to program the robots in the competition. The Club is also thankful for the mentorship of Anthony Devick who regularly helps students build their capacity in App development. TAI and Iowa State University developed the IT Olympics as a way to promote interest and exploration of information technology through a fun, unrestricted learning environment that encourages collaboration and experiential learning.

UHS HyperStream Club's writing robot.

"I'm very proud of our students for their great efforts in working together to achieve Urbandale's highest place finish in the IT Olympics," said UHS Math Teacher and HyperStream sponsor Sarah Jacques. "Improving on our third place finish last year with a second place finish this year demonstrates their commitment to each other and to achieving a common goal. In addition to the Robotics and App venues, we'd also like to expand into the Multimedia venue to support students interested in PR and Marketing."

In addition to capturing second place in the IT Olympics, the UHS HyperStream Club's community service project of presenting and promoting STEM to Webster Elementary students finished in the top five in the state. Club members demonstrated robot battles and talked with over 100 Webster Elementary students about STEM, problem solving and HyperStream. One more surprise was in store for the UHS HyperStream Club when out of all students in attendance, their teammate Riley Stuart was selected by Workiva of Ames as the recipient of the IT Olympics Student Leader Award and a $1,500 scholarship.

Riley Stuart wins the $1,500 Workiva IT Olympics Student Leader Award and Scholarship

"Being part of the Urbandale HyperStream group was an amazing way for me to have fun, while also gaining experience in a field that I am interested in," said Stuart. "I am so humbled to have received the IT Olympics Student Leader Award and am excited to see how I can continue with STEM at Iowa State this fall."

The Urbandale Community School District is thankful to Hy-Vee and TAI for their dedication and support of UHS students as they pursue STEM-related interests during their UHS Intro to Engineering and Design course, UHS Principles of Engineering and Physics course and their after-school HyperStream Club. The District congratulates these extremely talented and dedicated students for their compelling second-place finish, their admirable mentorship of Webster Elementary students and their extraordinary capacity for leadership.

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The Technology Association of Iowa (TAI) unites Iowa's technology industry by addressing the needs and challenges of technology organizations and providing them with the tools they need to succeed. TAI works to drive public policy, foster diversity and develop Iowa's future talent pool, connect industry leaders and businesses to resources, and promote Iowa's tech sector, member firms, and organizations. TAI's members work together to support the industry and advance Iowa's reputation as a technologically advanced state. TAI fuels the technology sector that makes Iowa a great place for world-class technology organizations. To learn more, visit: www.technologyiowa.org

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About Urbandale Community School District
The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The District serves over 3,900 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale District supports an increasingly diverse student population where 51 languages are spoken. Building on the existing foundation of excellence in education, Urbandale is transforming education throughout the District. By implementing innovative Quality/Continual Improvement strategies that create learning environments that more fully engage, challenge and motivate students, Urbandale is taking transformation from theory into practice. Urbandale prepares students for becoming lifelong learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. To learn more, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com and follow on Twitter @UrbandaleSchool.

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