



PRESS RELEASE – ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
For immediate release
Information: Educational Services Department (714) 628-4466

Crescent GATE Students Win Top Honors at STEM Robotics Competition

ORANGE, CA (March 19, 2014) – Two teams from Crescent Elementary School, the Mighty Mechs and the Crescent Cougar Bots, placed first and second, respectively, at the VEX Robotics State Championships in Santa Clara held March 12 – 14.

Third grade teacher Natalie Carias and parent mentors led each team of students from Crescent’s third-sixth grade Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program. Twenty teams from elementary and middle schools across California competed.

The Mighty Mechs won the State Championship overall for best Team Alliance score, Top Programming Skills, Top Individual Skills Challenge, and the Overall Excellence award presented by the judges at the event.

The Crescent Cougar Bots placed second as finalists in the Alliance rankings and also was presented with the Amaze award which is given to the team that simply “Amazes” the judges in all categories while being interviewed.

The VEX IQ Challenge, presented by the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation, is a new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) program piloted last year by participating schools in Orange Unified School District. The goal was to promote and highlight STEM education at the elementary level in schools.

Students, with the guidance from their teachers and parent mentors, built a robot using the VEX IQ platform to solve an engineering challenge that was presented in the form of a game. The teams worked together to score points in teamwork matches, and displayed their robot’s skills individually in driver-controlled and autonomous skills challenges.

“To hear elementary students discuss strategy with each other while working cooperatively during the matches was so inspiring, in addition to hearing the communication between the students and engineering judges,” said Mrs. Carias.

Both Crescent robotics teams qualified for the VEX Robotics State and World Championships when they won first place in the VEX Robotics Regional Competition at the Irvine Ranch Outdoor Education Center on February 2. They will head to the VEX World Championships in April.

The Orange Unified School District is located at 1401 North Handy Street in Orange, California.

#