



**SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Mar. 29, 2023

**Students Form Robotics Team and Compete in  
FIRST Tech Challenge SoCal Regional Championship**

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) would like to recognize the students who formed the robotics team, SaMoTech Robotics, and competed in the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Tech Challenge SoCal Regional Championship.

SaMoTech went into the FIRST Tech Challenge regional championship competition ranked third in all of Los Angeles and made it to the semi-finals.

“It is amazing how far we have come this season. Starting off from completely nothing and becoming one of the top teams in LA is incredible,” said founding member and Santa Monica High School (Samohi) freshman, Brandon Kirbyson.

Even though FIRST Tech Challenge ranked SaMoTech third as they entered the regional competition, they earned the number one ranking at end of the regular season. Additionally, they were the only team to have an undefeated record in the qualifying matches and set four of the top 10 record scores in the region.



“It feels amazing that we made it to the SoCal championships because we have spent so many hours building, testing, coding and making iterations to our robot,” said SaMoTech founding member and Samohi freshman, Georgia Rowe. “Seeing it all pay off in competitions makes me really proud of what our team has accomplished.”

SaMoTech Robotics was originally founded in fall 2022 by six Samohi freshmen, who also started the John Adams Middle School (JAMS) robotics team. SaMoTech Robotics is now nine members strong including the six founding members, three of whom are part of Samohi’s

Project Lead the Way pathway, another Samohi freshman, an eighth grader from JAMS and an eighth grader from Lincoln Middle School.



“After having so much fun and success with JAMS Cyberdragons, I was so excited to continue doing robotics in high school,” said Kirbyson. “A few other people shared the enthusiasm so we decided that we would just form our own team, SaMoTech.”

As SaMoTech looks to the future they have already started planning all the things they need to learn over summer to be ready for next season.

To learn more about SaMoTech Robotics visit: <https://samotechrobotics.com/>.

*Written by Diana Bouchaaya, Communications Specialist*

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