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MAKING ROOM FOR ROBOTS

GREENVILLE, N.C. — As the new year begins, Uptown Greenville is becoming a training ground as students have six weeks to design, build, and test their robots for the FIRST Robotics Competition.

FRC is a global competition in which teams of high school students, along with their coaches and mentors, build game-playing robots weighing up to 120 pounds. Designed to combine the excitement of a sports format with science and technology, it welcomes team members of all skill levels, technical or non-technical.

Two teams with more than 80 students from Pitt County Schools will be able to use the 27' x 54' practice field located at Pitt County Robotics and Technology Solutions of Eastern Carolina at 627 Clark Street. There the field elements will be set up for testing robots on a full-size field — but only once the instructions are announced on Jan. 6.

“Every year we have to build new field elements to practice the game,” says Bill McClung, coach and mentor for Pitt County Robotics. “Forty-five hundred teams from around the world are waiting to find out the game details and start building robots.”

Testing and practicing with the robots with all the field elements in place is an important part of the process, and the field will take up a large part of the building, McClung said. The space has also been used for setting up robots to bring to Freeboot Friday, McClung said.

Pitt County Robotics, a program that exposes students to STEM careers and projects using the FIRST robotics program, partners with Pitt County Schools and C.M. Eppes Middle School, where the teams meet.

For more information contact McClung at juhling@suddenlink.net or visit www.firstinspires.org or www.pittpiratesrobotics.com.

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