LYNWOOD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 4, 2026 **CONTACT:** Juliette Funes **PHONE:** (626) 418-4501

Lynwood Unified Students Showcase Engineering Excellence at Regional Robotics Tournament

LYNWOOD, CA – Lynwood Unified School District's emerging robotics program was on full display as student teams from Lynwood and Firebaugh high schools competed against schools from across the region at the District's first-ever VEX V5 "Push Back" robotics tournament on Jan. 27.

Dubbed the Knight City Challenge, the event reflects Lynwood Unified's continued efforts to bolster STEM education by expanding hands-on, project-based learning opportunities that prepare students for college and future careers in engineering and technology.

"This program gives students a chance to see their learning come to life," Lynwood High School robotics coach and engineering teacher Steve Cline said. "They're not just learning concepts, but they are also building something, solving problems together and gaining confidence as they figure things out. This is what engineering is all about."

Five Lynwood Unified student-led teams – four from Lynwood and one from Firebaugh – designed, built and coded their own robots to compete against 23 other groups in a fast-paced tournament. The aspiring young engineers completed a series of complex tasks, including transporting objects in specific containers and goal areas, while troubleshooting and refining their robots in real time.

LHS Team 90262D exemplified collaboration and advanced skills as their robot moved on to the final rounds and earned the title of "2026 LHS Knight." Their robot will remain intact and preserved in its current condition for future teams to study as a model of engineering excellence and design innovation.

Lynwood Unified's robotics program, now in its second year at Lynwood and introduced at Firebaugh this school year, is offered as an extracurricular opportunity that allows students to apply and refine engineering concepts beyond the classroom. Students draw on foundational skills developed through the District's Project Lead the Way engineering curriculum to design, program and refine robots for competition.

For Lynwood High junior Melanie Rodriguez, who joined the robotics program for the first time this year, the experience reinforced both technical learning and teamwork.

- MORE –

“Being one of the only girls in the program had me worried at first, but once I got to know everyone, I saw how supportive the environment is,” Rodriguez said. “We help each other out and share ideas. It’s fun learning how everything works, and it’s exciting to build something together.”

Using their skills in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and computer programming, students plan, design, build and test their robots to withstand the pressures of the competition. Teams documented their work through engineering notebooks, concept sketches and performance analysis while applying problem-solving strategies tied directly to real-world scenarios.

“What I saw was students rising to a challenge and believing in their ability to succeed,” Superintendent Patrick Gittisriboongul, Ed.D., said. “I want to thank Steve Cline for his leadership in bringing this opportunity to our students and our District. Programs like robotics create meaningful experiences that help students work through real challenges, build confidence and prepare for futures in STEM fields.”

Families looking for engaging, hands-on learning opportunities are encouraged to **ENROLL in Lynwood Unified for the 2026-27 school year** and explore programs like robotics that support STEM learning and student success.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

LUSD_ROBOTICS1: Five Lynwood Unified student-led teams designed and programmed their own robots to compete against 23 other regional groups in a fast-paced tournament to complete a series of complex tasks at the VEX V5 “Push Back” robotics tournament on Jan. 27.

LUSD_ROBOTICS2: Students used the knowledge and skills they had gained through their school’s robotics programs to resolve technical issues in real time during the competition.

LUSD_ROBOTICS3: Lynwood Unified’s students draw on foundational skills developed through the District’s Project Lead the Way engineering curriculum to design, program and refine robots for competition.

# # #