



Delano Orange Crush Robotics receives grant to support STEM education

BY BEN ERNHART
Editor

Last Friday, Congressman Tom Emmer and representatives of We Work for Health (WWFH) presented members of Delano High School's Orange Crush Robotics a STEM Talent Pipeline educational grant of \$5,000 for Delano Partners in Education.

WWFH's STEM Talent Pipeline program was created to support existing and developing STEM initiatives nationwide. The goal of the grants is to provide additional investments in STEM education, attempting to develop the next generation of STEM professionals.

Delano Partners in Education will use these funds to support and expand Delano High School's Orange Crush Robotics Team, which offers students the opportunity to engage with STEM topics while they build competitive robots. This educational grant will support robotics team activities offered for students in grades 9 through 12.

"Delano High School is preparing our kids to be the leaders of tomorrow's economy through STEM education," said Emmer. "I am excited to see this new opportunity coming to students in Delano."

"We are so grateful to We Work for Health for recognizing our robotics program. We are looking forward to using this generous grant to expand

the opportunities for our students to interact with STEM topics," said Barry Voight, Principal of Delano High School.

The Orange Crush Robotics team demonstrated how their robot works in competition for those in attendance.

"We're very excited to be here today to share our love of robotics with you," said Ross Anderson, Orange Crush's head coach. "Thank you for coming out, and thank you for the grant."

Each year, Delano's Orange Crush Robotics team competes in First Robotics Competition (FRC). The season

starts with a video reveal of the competition challenge, the game that will be played for the duration of the season across FRC.

After the game reveals, teams have six weeks to build a robot before the competition season begins. The competition season runs for seven weeks. However, each club is limited to two regional competitions per season, meaning each club only has two opportunities to reach the FRC World Championship.

This year's team took 19th at the Great Northern Regional and 20th Minnesota 10,000 Lakes Regional.

Also in attendance at the event was Delano High School's government class. During his remarks to DHS students, Emmer spoke of the importance of STEM education, the economy of the future, and the role artificial intelligence (AI) will play.

"We need dreamers and thinkers, we've always needed dreamers and thinkers, but today we need you to be thinking and dreaming beyond the 21st century," said Emmer. "You guys are the ones that are going to have to rein this (AI) in and make sure it's used for good stuff."



Delano Orange Crush Robotics demonstrates how its robot works in competition.

PHOTO BY BEN ERNHART

