



**ROMEO  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOLS**

## **GOOD NEWS ACROSS 'R' DISTRICT**

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*Indian Hills' Robo Bulldogs, pictured with their coaches, Rachel Miller, left, and Julia Cherfoli, right, show off their second place trophy from the state tournament. Team members are, from left, Jonah Peter, Ben Miller, Jonathan Aymen, Julian Francis and William Cherfoli.*

### **Robo Bulldogs battle at states**

They had a rough start to the day, but the Robo Bulldogs, Indian Hills Elementary School's FIRST LEGO League team, battled back from near the bottom to take second place at the state tournament on Saturday, December 9.

As a result of their performance, team members Jonathan Aymen, William Cherfoli, Julian Francis, Ben Miller and Jonah Peter advanced to the Western Edge Invitational in Palm Beach, California on May 31 to June 2, where they will face teams from across the U.S. and around the world in this two-day competition.

The boys first competed in a regional qualifying event in November, where they won the Champion award. According to their coach, Julia Cherfoli, this means they earned the overall best score in four categories – their innovation project, presentation, robot games, and core values of teamwork, innovation, fun, creativity and discovery. This was the second time in Indian Hills history that a team advanced to the state championship, Mrs. Cherfoli said.



In the early rounds of the state competition, the teammates ran into some glitches. In round one, their robot started spinning in circles in the middle of the table. In the second round it powered down completely.

“We went into lunch at the half-day mark, and we sat down and said, ‘That was bad, right? That didn’t go well,’” Mrs. Cherfoli recalled. “So we made a decision to try to come back and put the morning behind us.”



They switched robots to their back-up bot. From there, the key was to keep practicing and to focus.

Their hard work and persistence paid off.

“They blew their presentation away,” Mrs. Cherfoli said. “They killed it in the next two games. We went from 40th to 16th place and then they did their presentation and ended up second overall.”

Coming back from near the bottom of the pack to place second out of 48 teams was a testament to the fact they never gave up.

“I was really proud of them for being able to come back like that after such a discouraging start,” Mrs. Cherfoli said. “There were things that were out of their control. Once we switched bots it was smooth sailing from there.”



## Save the penguins

For their innovation project, the team created [a video](#) to spread awareness about the plight emperor penguins are facing.

“Did you know that emperor penguins are going extinct?” the narrator asks in the video. “You can help change that.”

Penguins, they explained, are impacted by oil spills, natural gasses and global warming, which is melting the polar ice caps.

They offered energy saving tips for their viewers, and concluded: “Do you feel like what you’re doing isn’t making a difference? Together we can make a difference.”

So far the team has raised over \$1,000 to donate to the Global Penguin Society.