

PUBLIC RELEASE

growingSTEMS Overview

Welcome to The Hive: A growingSTEMS Center in Southern Maryland. The Hive is a community-based STEM Center that hosts programs and activities for people of nearly all ages.

This handbook provides you and your family with a guide to all the programs offered at the Hive. It outlines our rules and expectations for those who participate in our programs, outlines individual programs and their associated events, and offers answers to commonly asked questions.

Mission, Vision, and Core Values

growingSTEMS is an organization designed to support Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and raise awareness for STEM programs. Started as an outreach initiative by FIRST® Robotics Team 836: The RoboBees, growingSTEMS (growing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Students) is a 501c(3) non-profit organization with the goal of promoting STEM awareness and education in Southern Maryland and beyond.

At growingSTEMS our mission is to ignite a lifelong passion for learning and innovation by providing accessible and engaging robotics education to children of all ages. We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to explore, create, and excel in the world of robotics, and we are committed to empowering them with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in an increasingly technology-driven world.

The Core Tenets of our STEM Programs

History

Our longevity is largely due to the founding of a non-profit organization, called growingSTEMS to support our team. The non-profit was created after our departure from our local school system, caused by Mr. B – and several key staff in the school system – retiring in the same year. We were left without a facility and tools, both key to a successful robot. Our mentors took it upon themselves to start growingSTEMS to provide the funding, facility, and resources we lost from the school system. With generous donations from our community, we were able to secure machining tools, rent a facility, and continue our program.

Our organization was also able to secure long-term sponsors and leverage our space to start other robotics programs. Some of these programs are methods we use to secure funding, such as our VEX summer camps and combat robotics, which have proven to be one of our biggest sources of revenue.

Funding

growingSTEMS is funded via a mixture of corporate sponsorship, grants, community donations, student dues, and fundraising. Fundraising typically takes the form of several community events at which the team provides a service; like robotics competitions, bounce houses, and demonstrations with our robots. Students and families, as well as mentors, take part in and support these events throughout the year.

STEM Programs

growingSTEMS has a total of four STEM programs currently operating under our umbrella. Our goal is to continue to expand our teams to allow for opportunities for additional students.

Currently, The Hive offers VEX IQ programs, a FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team, a combat robotics program, and a series of summer camps. These are designed to create an ecosystem of programs appropriate for students of all ages and experience levels.

VEX IQ

FRC

The FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) is an international high school robotics competition. Each year, teams of high school students, coaches, and mentors work during a six-week period to build game-playing robots that weigh up to 125 pounds. Robots complete tasks such as scoring balls into goals, flying discs into goals, inner tubes onto racks, hanging on bars, and balancing robots on balance beams. The game, along with the required set of tasks, changes annually. While teams are given a standard set of parts, they are also allowed a budget and are encouraged to buy or make specialized parts.

Combat Robotics

Summer Camps

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Last update: **2026/06/27 16:28**



