

Redeemer Community Partnership

South Los Angeles

Spring 2012



Let the Children Come to Me

The Eagles' hit "Hotel California" was reverberating from Club Nokia across a sun-splashed deck high above LA Live. Waiters plied Hollywood celebrities and mini-skirted news interns with Tequila Sunrises. It was 10am on a Sunday morning and I was clearly not at church.

Within this colorful setting, the Lord began orchestrating a beautiful plan to bless children in our neighborhood. The Good News Foundation, a secular organization of LA broadcast journalists, wanted to create some good news. They had invited me to their Sunday morning fundraiser to receive 10 laptop computers on behalf of RCP.

A few weeks later a friend and I met at Starbucks to discuss how his passion for teaching science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) could connect with Adventures Ahead, possibly in some grant writing. The next steps were not clear, but Ajoy and I decided to pray about what the Lord might have.

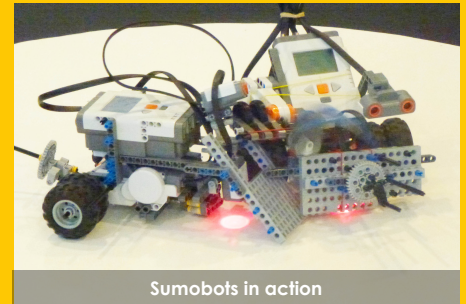
Then came a call from our friends Mike and Juanita Thompson in Shoreline, Washington. Mike, a math teacher and robotics team coach, wanted to bring his students to South LA to help us launch our robotics program. We began to sense that something exciting was afoot.



Adventures in Robotics Spring Break 2012



Learning the importance of teamwork



Sumobots in action



Soccer goalie



The Good News Girls



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us know or fill out and return the
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Over the next couple weeks Ajoy pulled together an excellent advisory board and wrote a proposal. Google soon announced that RCP was one of 12 award recipients nationally and 24 internationally for its Roots In Science and Engineering (RISE) program. They would provide \$10,000 to purchase Lego robotics kits and curriculum to launch Adventures in Robotics. Our students would use the 10 laptops from the "Good News Girls" to program their "bots."

Next, a wonderful group of volunteers stepped forward to coach the team after Mike's students returned home. Lisa and Eric Barlow, who will lead this effort, live in our neighborhood and have experience coaching a school robotics team in New York.

"Robocops" and "Angry Birds," the students learned basic programming and science skills for three hours each day Monday through Friday.

"We used the Scientific Method to do science."

"It taught me about programming!"

"I learned to keep on trying and to have good sportsmanship."

"I learned that teamwork is the key to a better robot."

When asked in a survey if they had fun and would do it again, the student response was unanimous: YES! "Adventures Ahead should have Robotics because then we could be a Robotics Team. And then I can become a Computer Expert," exclaimed Jeanette, a fifth grader.

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--Jeanette, 5th grade student

Over Spring Break, the CyberKnights from King's High School in Shoreline, Washington spent eight days teaching our students to design, build, and program robots. The kinder to 2nd grade room was filled with chirping bots: goal keepers, long-legged kickers, cheering birds, and more. The 3rd-5th graders built and programmed SumoBots: robots programmed to push their opponent out of a circle, while remaining inside.

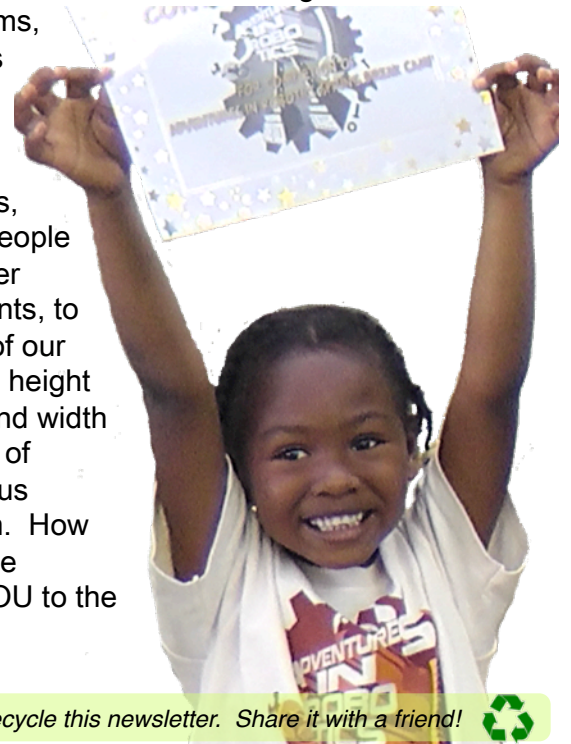
The kids showed remarkable concentration over extended time periods as they worked in teams, solved problems together and built their unique 'bots. Working in teams with names such as

Do you want to volunteer with our robotics team?

Come check out one of our Robotics Team days! June 2nd, 16th, & 30th from 10am-12pm at the Adventures Ahead tutoring center. Contact Lauren for more information:

lauren@redeemercp.org

Jesus told his followers, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them." We may envision a particularly caring church nursery worker as the embodiment of this command. But clearing a path for children to meet Jesus and discover his purposes in their lives is a broad endeavor. Clearing away hindrances is challenging work. It's going to take math teachers and high school robotics teams, grant-writers and charitable television broadcasters, along with people of many other kinds of talents, to show each of our students the height and depth and width and breadth of the love Jesus has for them. How might God be recruiting YOU to the cause?



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