

TECHNOLOGY

Greensboro robotics team aims to add diversity to the industry

BY NOELLE LASHLEY GUILFORD COUNTY

PUBLISHED 5:33 PM ET MAR. 09, 2022

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Adding diversity to the STEM fields shouldn't be rocket science, according to a local robotics team.

What You Need To Know

The Nehemiah Community Empowerment Center is working with other local organizations to increase diversity in the STEM fields

Team leadership said robotics team members are able to participate for free due to a grant through FIRST NC, specifically for minority teams to create diversity.

The GeodeBots will compete at their district qualifying event at the end of March with the hope of earning a spot at the state championship

The job search website Zippia estimates only **4.4% of people** in the field of robotics are Black or African American and only 8.5% are women. The Nehemiah Community Empowerment Center is working to change that through their robotics team — the “GeodeBots.”

The organization is partnering with the **Forge** and **FIRST NC** to help students build their STEM skills on the team. It encourages students to explore categories within the team to hone in on talent and interest, including building, programming, electrical engineering, marketing and design.

Builder Keyona Benton said the team helped her discover her “hidden talent” and a passion for the field.

“It helps me build my confidence inside, because if I wouldn't be doing this I would be, like, scared of everything,” Benton said.

“It helps me build my confidence inside, because if I wouldn't be doing this I would be, like, scared of everything,” Benton said.

[Nehemiah Community Empowerment Center](#) leadership said every student on the team is able to participate for free due to a grant through FIRST NC, which is specifically for minority teams to create diversity. Benton hopes the experience will help prepare her for the future.

“It’s very educational. If you want to do something like this when you’re older, you already know how to do it,” Benton said.

The GeodeBots will compete at the end of March as part of the FIRST NC Robotics Competition [Guilford District Qualifying Event](#) with the hopes of earning a spot at the state championship.