

## Aurora students win back-to-back Canada Cup

The team Équipe Francobotique representing École élémentaire catholique Saint-Jean and École intermédiaire catholique Renaissance won the robotics competition at the FLL Canada Cup for the second consecutive year as part of the 2021-2022 First Lego League competition.

The team, consisting of girls from Grades Four to Seven, also finished in third place for the Champions Award.

This was the final competition of the season.

En route to the Canada Cup, the girls won some awards at regional and provincial tournaments. The girls came in first in the York Region Robotics Qualifying Tournament in 2021, came in first in the Ontario West Provincial Championships this past January and also brought home the Implementation Major Award at the Ontario Innovation Celebration this past March.

“This team started in Grade Four at the elementary school in their library. We worked with them on smaller robots and then they aged out of that program and that is how this team came to be,” said head coach of the team Renée Northrup.

“They won the Canada Cup. They were overall champions at the Canada Cup last year. So, our oldest members, are now in Grade Seven. Next year they will be in Grade Eight, which is the last year they can compete in this particular age group.”

Having won the provincial championships in January, the girls had the opportunity to go to the national championships in Houston, T.X. But due to a lot of travel restrictions, the team declined.

Instead, they chose to go to the Canada Cup.

Speaking with The Auroran, members of Équipe Francobotique, reflected on this past year in a positive way.

“Along with all of the things that we learned, we're very thankful for everyone who helped us along the way. Our coaches, the other members of my team. All of the volunteers, none of this could have been possible without them,” said team member Amélie Heng.

This year, filled with plenty of challenges saw many accomplishments for Équipe Francobotique.

Earlier in the year, as part of the First Lego League season, the team created the WasteBuster App for residents in York Region. Anyone who used the app, was able to find a solution for products they would have originally thrown away.

But the toughest part throughout this journey, was spreading the word.

“The most difficult part about our experience and the WasteBuster app was probably spreading the word, since there are so many people in the community,” said Grade Seven team member Kaiah Sanderson.

Flipping the script, when asked about some of the most enjoyable moments throughout the year, everyone's face lit up and there were plenty of memories along the way.

Grade Five team member Arabelle Sanderson shared that sleepovers and spending time with the team was the best part. Kaiah Sanderson professed her love for the group. Amélie Heng said feeling that sense of accomplishment was the best part and Suzanne Northrup said learning how to code an app was the best part for her.

The girls confirmed they will continue to keep the app running and members of the community on Android are able to download it.

As Grade Six team member Danielle Northrup alluded to, next year the girls would like to be on the international stage. It would mean the world to them to bring a trophy back to Aurora.

Équipe Francobotique, which began with 10 team members in total, was shaved down to six members for the Canada Cup. Some students could not commit for the course of the year.

Véro Heng, Madeline Northrup, Danielle Northrup, Amélie Heng, Claire McWhinnie, Suzanne Northrup, Arabelle Sanderson, Kaiah Sanderson and Luke Deplaedt began the year.

Representing the team at the Canada Cup were Amélie Heng, Suzanne Northrup, Danielle Northrup, Madeline Northrup, Kaiah Sanderson and Arabelle Sanderson.

**By Robert Belardi**