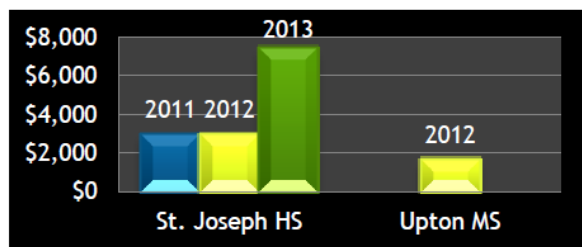


## SJPS Foundation Success - Robotics Club

### Effect on Students

Students are working side by side with volunteer engineers, programmers, and marketing professionals. Last year alone, they gave over 1,800 hours of their time to mentor the students and help them achieve a love for science, technology, math, marketing and business. Over 16 community mentors have been actively involved over the last three years (from Whirlpool, Bosch and Liberty Steel).

Through FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics, students learn what it is like to be given a challenging problem and then to work through it. Students are able to gain so much more through this real life problem solving experience than they could in the classroom alone.



### SJPS Foundation's Support

This program could not exist without funding from the Foundation. The yearly budget is \$30,000 and includes \$5,000 just for the entry fees. The students also work hard to earn money through fundraisers and building relationships with area companies for additional sponsorships.

"The hardest fun you'll ever have."  
- SJHS Student

### Teachers & Students Involved

2011 - Vic Vroegop & Jim Berry (25 students)  
 2011/2012 - Vic Vroegop & Craig Jeffers (32 students)  
 2012/2013 - Vic Vroegop (45 students)  
 2013/2014 - Vic Vroegop & Cheri DeVries (82 Students)

### Team Accomplishments

2010/11 District Champs, finished 63<sup>rd</sup> in State.  
 2011/12 Finished 37<sup>th</sup> in State, mentored 2 new teams.  
 2012/13 Finished in top 1/3 of state, mentored 1 new team; hosted District competition.

### Student Success

Numerous students on the team earn summer internships at Whirlpool. Two students have earned \$20,000 scholarships to the University of Michigan, and one student has earned a \$5,000 Society of Mechanical Engineers Scholarship to Michigan State University. We expect this list to increase as more students start to take advantage of the opportunities through FIRST.

### The Future

The Robotics and Digital Fabrication Lab at SJHS features leading edge technology which offers a high quality learning experience for students. Two classes devoted to robotics called Mechatronics have also been added to the curriculum.

Upton Middle School now has a Robotics Club in place that will feed the high school club and the interest continues to grow. Consideration is being given to an elementary school Lego® robotics program.

This year, St. Joe will be hosting its second FIRST Robotics District Competition. This will again bring 40 teams with over 1000 people into our great city at the end of March (typically a slow time for tourism) for three days to stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants and shop in our stores.