

Junior robot builders all!

Added by [Barbados Today](#) on August 1, 2015.
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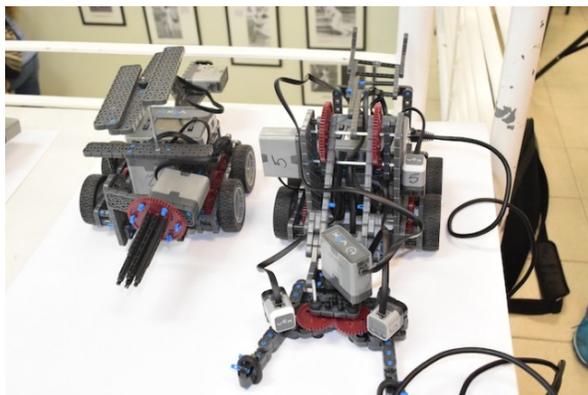
A future engineer or mobile app developer could be coming from the **Junior Robotics Camp**.



Winners of Best Design: Team BAwsome (Jordan Greig, Yaa Marshall, Christopher Clarke and Arin Stevenson) with dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology, Colin Depradine.

Facilitated by the Caribbean Science Foundation (CSF), the four-week programme targeted nine-to-12-year-olds, giving them the opportunity to build and programme their miniature robots. The students provided entertaining demonstrations of their robots, especially **Team Thunderdogz**, with their **Clawbot**, in which sensory elements had been incorporated. Member of **Team Thunderdogz**, Dominic Jordan, described the building process as “a lot like **Legos**, just more bits and pieces”.

Interim CSF executive director Professor Cardinal Warde revealed that the initiative was developed in response to the numerous emails he had received from Barbadians arguing about the provisions made for secondary students in the **Student Programme For Innovation In Science And Engineering (SPISE)** omitting those younger interested parties.



Some of the robots on display.

“A whole bunch of Bajans wrote to me complaining that we’re not helping younger kids; we’re dealing with high school and up,” said Warde. He noted that Barbados was competitively behind in

science, technology and engineering in comparison with Trinidad and Jamaica. Using this project as an introductory sample, Warde said the CSF and the Caribbean Diaspora For Science, Technology And Innovation (CDSTI) hoped to “get some change in the school curriculum [for] . . . more robotics . . . in the primary schools”.

Dean of the Faculty Science & Technology at the University of West Indies, Dr Colin Depradine, stated “a camp like this gives the youngsters a chance to problem-solve, learn how to build things . . . ; most importantly learn to visualize things in 3-D”.



Camper Ian Francis with his Death Machine.

Depradine advised that “science and technology is about the hands and the mind”, not only limited to technological devices such as the iPad and the iPhone. He stressed the importance of expanding the scientific framework to all primary to tertiary students, as well as to those persons in the disabled community who were interested in science.

“We believe that all youngsters who have an interest in a science career should have the opportunity to [pursue such],” said Depradine.

Source: (KK)