

ROBOTICS SEASON COMMENCES

BY ALBERT QIAN
News Editor

Robotics season has begun.

On Saturday, January 7, 2006, members of the Robotics Team 604, better known as Quixilver Team 604, attended a kickoff event at San José State. There, they would discover what their challenge this year would be. Members had to arrive at San José State at 6:30 a.m. to receive their challenge via videoconference from Manchester, New Hampshire.

Sophomore Vice President **Alex Arámbula** said, "The kickoff was great! It's felt really good getting up in the morning knowing that I would be doing something I loved for the next six weeks."

The Robotics Team participates in a competition held by FIRST, a non-profit organization that means "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology." The robotics team has been part of FIRST since the team was founded in 2000.

This year, the team's challenge is to design a robot to manipulate foam balls into low-corner goals and large circular goals over ten feet high. They will be spending the next six weeks designing, building and testing their robot to get ready for the Pacific Northwest Regional in Portland, Oregon and the Silicon Valley Regional, both held

in March. The team this year has high hopes of going to nationals, which is held in Atlanta, Georgia. This year, the robot will be shipped on February 21.

Last year, Team 604 won first place at the Pacific Northwest Regional and placed 36th out of 82 teams at nationals despite having no money to begin the year; they eventually received a grant from NASA.

This year's goal is much higher and team members hope that a national championship will come to the team. President Junior **Amy Qian** said, "We have high hopes this year, with a great team, a lot of support and a little luck, I don't see why we can't go all the way." The team's first tournament is March 2 through 4 in the Pacific Northwest Regional, held in Portland, Oregon.

While hopes are high for a great year, Robotics is still in need of funds, which are used to cover competition entrance fees that range from \$4000 to \$6000. This does not include hotel fees, food costs or parts. That means that the Robotics Team is always in look of support. Even though the Robotics Team has held fundraisers at Starbucks and team dinner nights, they are still in dire need of donations.

As Qian said, "Any donations are graciously accepted and are tax-deductible."



J. Chen Photo

*Juniors **Gabriel Arambula**, **Jennifer Tsau**, Sophomore **Jennifer Mori** and Senior **Joanna Chen** work on a component of their robot. Robotics is hoping for a repeat of their first season, where they finished first at regional competition in Portland and 36th out of 82 at the national competition.*