



WEE WAA News

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RISE OF THE ROBOTICISTS: From left, Wee Waa High teacher, and mentor for the robotics project, Steve Druce, a student from North West University, Seattle Anna Fitch, Douglas Anderson, University of South Australia lecturer Adam Jenkins, Jordan Morrison, Montana Jones, Tom Pattison, Abby Downes, Charles Young seated, Cait Downes, Noah Platt and science teacher Sharon Grellman on Friday. The students are building a robot, with the help of a visiting team of experts, to contest the FIRST Robotics Asia Pacific final in March.

Students tackle robot challenge

Wee Waa High School students and their teachers are on a roll with robotics.

The school is ahead of many country high schools in taking students into the world of the future - robotics and mechatronics.

Students have embarked on a project which will see them compete, with their robot, in the FIRST Robotics Asia Pacific final on March 18 and 19 at Olympic Park in Sydney.

A NASA engineer and a robotics experts spent a day and a half at Wee Waa High School last week to help the 'Robots in the Outback' Rookie team get underway with building a robot that they will then take to compete at the FIRST Robotics Competition regional event in Sydney.

The FIRST Robotics Competition began in the US but is now a global robotics program funded by Fortune 500 companies which have an engi-

neering, science and IT dimension to their business.

The purpose of the competition is to encourage young people around the world who have an interest in science, IT and engineering, and to assist them in fast tracking their experience and skills.

Wee Waa High School was one of the few NSW schools invited to participate in 2016 and it was an opportunity principal Annabel Doust and teacher Steve Druce didn't want to miss.

"Opportunities to give our students the chance to be a part of a global education program like this don't come along every day," said Mrs Doust.

"To participate meant the school had to find \$15,000 in a few weeks to compliment the generous Google Australia funding of close to \$25,000 that covered the cost of the robotics equipment and the Robotics Mentors who spent a day and a half with us at

Wee Waa High School on Thursday and Friday helping us to build the robot and to discuss our team's winning strategy for the competition.

"It's quite incredible really, one of the robotics gurus Google has engaged for us is a real life NASA engineer," said teacher and students' mentor for the project Steve Druce.

"Our team of 10, who have called themselves the Bush Bots, are learning from the best."

The first level of the competition sees schools from across Australia compete, along with a few visiting teams from India, San Francisco and Taipei.

"We have the next five weeks to design and build the robot before we head to Sydney to compete in the FIRST Robotics Asia Pacific final" said Steve.

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Students Charlie Young, Montana Jones, Noah Platt, Abby Downes and Douglas Anderson put the robot - IT- though its paces with visiting robotics guru Aaron Sanders.



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