

Hilliard Middle School Gifted Students Build Underwater Robots

Over the last four weeks, Nassau County 4-H worked with a gifted middle school class at Hilliard Middle School to construct *SeaPerch* robots. The *SeaPerch* program is a nation-wide teaching tool that allows students to build underwater Remotely Operated Vehicles, also known as ROVs. This is a unique opportunity for students to learn STEM skills (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) in a hands-on way. Using a prepared kit, students built the frames and control boxes for their robots. They also waterproofed and mounted their own motors. Finally, they used their problem-solving skills to work out any kinks they discovered while building the robots. This activity allowed youth to practice important skills such as measurement, drilling, and soldering. After finishing the construction of their *SeaPerch*, students had the opportunity to test their robots at the Hilliard Recreation Center pool. The students did a great job with their robots - they maneuvered them to swim, dive, and even race! Thank you to Bettina Conner for making this partnership with 4-H possible. We would also like to thank our 4-H volunteers, Doug and Katie Gates, and the Hilliard Rec Center for letting us invade their pool with our robots. If you would like to learn more about opportunities available through Nassau County 4-H, please call 904-530-6353.

