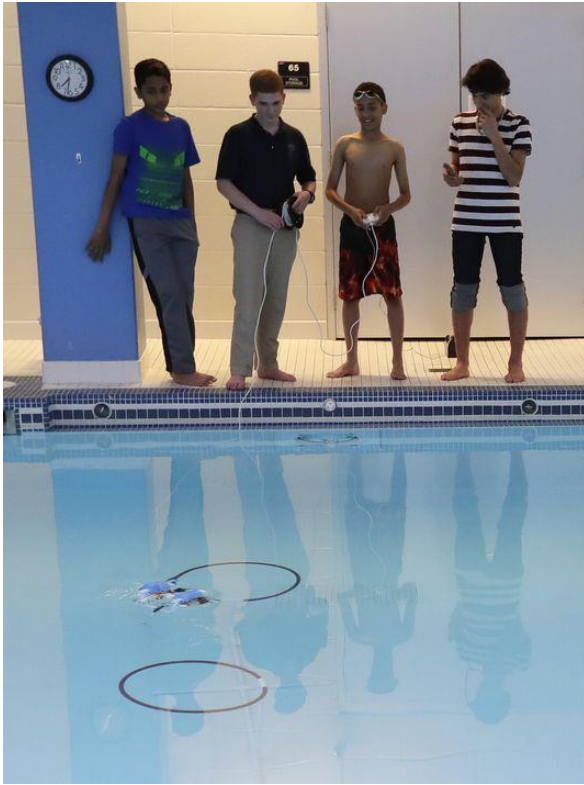


Green Bay-area STEM students headed to nationals

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(Photo: Adam Wesley/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)
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GREEN BAY - It Might Work will find out if they picked a good team name Saturday.

A group of six students from the Green Bay area left Thursday morning for Georgia Tech to find out how their Remote Operated Vehicle fares in the 2017 National SeaPerch Challenge against almost 200 teams from around the world.

All Dhruv Bansal, Thomas Coyle, Noah Glodowski, Miette Grega, Jayden Jude and Karam Shahrouri have to do is pilot the vehicle they designed through an obstacle course, then pick up and hang a few cubes and loops of rope on a rack.

The hard part is all of this takes place underwater.

The team, under the direction of [Proto GB](#)'s Dennis Rockhill, created a buoyant vehicle that's waterproof, fast and highly maneuverable from a kit of little more than PVC pipe, wiring and motors.

It's harder than it sounds.

Bansal casually points out, the team's name.

"We're not sure how it'll go. It might work," said Bansal, who attends Foxview Intermediate School in De Pere.

[SeaPerch](#) aims to teach basic science, engineering, teamwork and innovation with a marine engineering theme. It focuses on STEAM principles that build interest in science, technology, engineering, art and math.

The Green Bay-area team placed in the middle of the pack last year — its first time competing. This year's group isn't sure what to expect, but it's clear the students are having fun along the way.

"I like building and robots and STEM and STEAM and the other variants," said Jude, who attends Bay View Middle School in Howard. "We'll either do horribly or we'll do amazing. There's no in-between."

Rockhill said the team also learns skills like cooperation and problem-solving.

"These guys are learning tenacity," he said. "They're learning the grit to work through challenges. I love watching them try to work through it all. They don't always get to it, but when they do, it's like they won the Olympics."

Shahrouri, who attends Parkview Middle School in Ashwaubenon, said he's enjoyed the camaraderie and exposure to STEAM skills.

"Everybody comes from different schools, but we've become good friends," Shahrouri said. "I think (SeaPerch) is very important because it's our future. Technology has impacted the modern revolution more than anything else. I want to learn more about how it works and what we can build with it."

It Might Work raised the roughly \$5,000 needed to make the trip to Georgia thanks to local businesses, the Navy League and the North Coast Marine Manufacturing Alliance, which sponsored a regional competition earlier this year. The group built its model in Proto's workshop above the Brown County Central Library and tested it in the YWCA of Greater Green Bay's swimming pool.

Glodowski, who attends Aldo Leopold Community School, was drawn to It Might Work thanks to his brother, Izak, who participated last year and now serves as a mentor and unofficial mascot. Their mom, Mackenzie, said she wasn't sure what to expect as the two boys showed an interest in robotics and engineering.

"You watch each one take turns and they each get to shine. It's pretty impressive. They all do what they need to do," she said. "It's definitely become a part of our family. We've gotten to see and do things we otherwise wouldn't have."