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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EAST PALO ALTO ROBOTICS TEAM #8048 QUALIFIES FOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

*Hope Horizon EPA's Team, Independent of any Highly-Resourced High School, with Students from 10 schools & Coached by Local Tech Workers stuns Local Competition with their Win*

**EAST PALO ALTO**, Calif., March 11, 2024 – The Churrobots, the Hope Horizon East Palo Alto Robotics Team #8048, was part of the winning alliance at the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) [Silicon Valley Regional](#) on Feb 29-Mar 3, 2024, held at the Santa Clara Fairgrounds in San Jose.

Despite many obstacles, including challenges with the bumper, the main student who drives the robot being sick, and a lower rank that did not reflect their actual performance, they managed to stay competitive. They have now qualified for the World Championships and are looking to fundraise \$40,000 for their trip to Houston April 17-20, 2024. This will be their first time at the World Championships.

Angel Fernandez, the electrical sub-team lead, is thrilled at this opportunity. “When I first joined this team, I wasn’t too sure about it. I was thrown right into wiring on my first day and it was intimidating to jump right in. But then it was so cool to see it all work together,” Fernandez said. “I for sure never imagined going to Worlds.”

The Churrobots are a community team based in East Palo Alto, drawing students from over 10 different schools. The overwhelming majority of the students will be first-generation college

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students, and many alumni have already gone on to study fields of engineering at schools like University of Michigan, Harvey Mudd, and UC Irvine.

The team began in 2019 with two students who were highly motivated to continue their experience after graduating from the FIRST Lego League team at Hope Horizon EPA. The Churrobots use the garage of one of their coaches as a workshop where they design and build an industrial-size, semi-autonomous robot over the course of six weeks.

Greg Corsetto, the lead coach, thinks the world championships will be an important marker for the students' lives. "I think the whole experience there will mean a lot to them and encourage them in their career pursuits or future goals beyond high school," said Corsetto. He has seen significant growth in the team over the past few years. "This year, we attempted our most complex robot yet, in terms of functionality and abilities on the field to score. The students have upped their game and follow the whole process through from designing to building to test and troubleshooting."

The team is composed of students and adult mentors and has strong family support. Corsetto notes, "Not only are families helping their students to balance their schoolwork and robotics, but families have also been involved in supporting the team by providing meals and planning celebrations. That effort has helped distribute the workload that the coaches normally take on and families have taken on more team ownership."

In the FRC competition, teams are seeded following a round-robin format, and then teams form alliances of three to compete in the playoffs. During the Silicon Valley Regional, the Churrobots (Team 8048) joined Alliance Number 1 captained by Blazing Bulldogs of San Jose High School (Team 581) and Citrus Circuits of Davis, CA (Team 1678).

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The Churrobots are fundraising to send the team to Houston; supporters can visit

<https://hopehorizonepa.kindful.com/?campaign=1292995> or follow the team's Instagram page @churrobots.8048

### **About Hope Horizon East Palo Alto**

Hope Horizon East Palo Alto (formerly Bayshore Christian Ministries) is a 501c3 non-profit organization founded in 1984 and located in East Palo Alto, Calif. Its mission is to equip the youth of East Palo Alto and the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park to grow spiritually, gain life skills and develop as leaders so they have hope and a future. Hope Horizon EPA offers after-school, evening, and summer programs, using a relational, wholistic and collaborative approach to empower the next generation of community leaders. Our vision is that our alumni are active in their faith, possess hope, purpose and marketable skills and give back to their communities. To learn more, visit [www.HopeHorizonEPA.org](http://www.HopeHorizonEPA.org).

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