Team USA Wins Gold and Silver Medals at an International Olympic-Style Robotics Competition, the FIRST® Global Challenge.
For Immediate Release

Rockville, Maryland. August 20, 2018 -- Five high school students from Maryland represented the United States of America at the 2018 FIRST® Global Challenge (FGC), an Olympics-style robotics event that took place from August 15-18, 2018 at the Arena Ciudad de México, in Mexico City. Only one team from each nation was invited to participate in this international challenge to foster understanding and cooperation among the youth of the world as they use their abilities to solve the world's problems (http://first.global). Teams from 185 countries, 6 continental teams were invited to create a collaborative international community, building bridges between high school students with different backgrounds, languages, religions, and customs.

Each team designed and built a competition robot from the same kit of parts to ensure that all teams were on a level playing field. The teams were judged for their technical capabilities as well as their performance in a "sport" where 3 robots compete as an alliance against another alliance. This year's event, called "Energy Impact," had alliances transporting power cubes to different energy plants, installing solar panels, and activating windmills to score points for the alliance. Additional points could be scored if both alliances cooperated by sharing fuel. Team USA's robot, named "G-Wiz," won 8 out of 8 qualifier matches, winning the team the FIRST Global Challenge Silver Medal. The team's design won them the Gold Medal for the Zheng Hang Award for Engineering Design, awarded to the team whose robot exhibits excellent engineering and displays elegance and effectiveness during the Challenge.

"*FIRST*® Global Challenge brings together teenagers interested in science and technology from all over the world and enables us to and share knowledge and build friendships that last a lifetime," said Anika Seth, a tenth grade student. In addition to having a competitive robot, Team USA built bridges with other FGC robotics teams internationally. "As a team, we need to help others, and spread STEM internationally. To do this, we created 16 tutorial videos and spent many early mornings mentoring teams from Comoros, and Bosnia and Herzegovina," says Arjun Oberoi, a ninth grade student. At the event, the team helped over 20 other teams including teams from Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Czech Republic, and the Navajo Nation from Utah.

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