

## District III

Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia

On February 26, 2022, I attended the West Virginia Robotics Education & Competition (REC) Foundation Robotic Aerial Drone (RAD) Competition signature event at Fairmont State University in Fairmont, West Virginia. This was an indoor drone competition for middle and high school students.

There were more than 80 students flying their multirotor aircraft through an obstacle course with the goal of moving ping-pong balls from



District III display at the West Virginia REC RAD drone competition. (L-R) District III VP Mark Radcliff, event organizer Todd Ensign, and AMA Leader Member Ed Waske.



Drone teams utilize their aircraft's propeller wind to move ping-pong balls to designated areas to score points. Fun for all!



A student flies his drone through a course obstacle and earns bonus points.

the wind of their rotors into designated areas to earn points. Each school had three-person teams that would work together in order to move the balls and score points for their schools' team.

The drones had no autonomous features and had to be flown within visual line of sight using eye and hand coordination. The competition was extremely well organized and professionally presented, thanks to event organizer Todd Ensign, Ed.D Faculty, Fairmont State University.

Several aerospace companies were on hand to show students the aviation career opportunities available in the world today. The list of exhibitors was impressive, including NASA's IV&V program, NASA LARC, Engine & Airframe Solutions Worldwide (E.A.S.W.), Aurora Flight Sciences, Fairmont State Aviation Program, and Pratt & Whitney.

I felt that it was important to attend with a display about AMA and what model aviation is about. I set up a flight simulator, which had a steady line of students flying RC models. Fellow AMA member Ed Waske, owner of E.A.S.W., assisted with Control Line and glider models explaining how model airplanes led him into an aviation career.

This event was an eye-opener for me. Ed and I had several schoolteachers and administrators asking what AMA is and if we could make presentations at their schools about how model aviation can be utilized for a student's future aviation career. We need to attend events such as this to promote our clubs and model aviation.

If you want to learn more, go to [www.roboticseducation.org](http://www.roboticseducation.org).

Until next month, stay safe and fly safely.



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