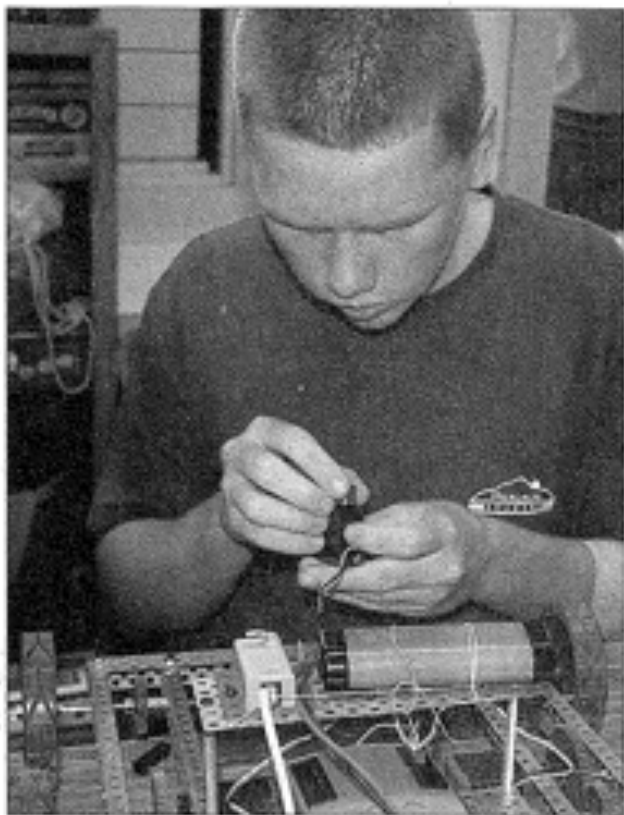


Rockin' robots



PHOTOS SPECIAL TO WEST HAWAII TODAY

ABOVE: Russell Laros builds a robot during a robotics course at Hualalai Academy.
LEFT: Students, from left, Aidan Marvick, Collin Maynard, Tristan Kilkenny and Anthony Palleschi field test their robot during class.

Hualalai students learn how to build them in new course

SPECIAL TO WEST HAWAII TODAY

Hualalai Academy has been offering a full robotics course as part of its Wednesday arts and sciences block and this year was designated a "School of the Future" by the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools and the Hawaii Community Foundation for its commitment to collaborative,

project-based learning, and its robotics course supports all of those things.

"Students benefit from this course because they can learn and use engineering skills. They also utilize their critical thinking through trial and error when building and they can use their problem solving to figure out complex challenges. We have eight different collaborative teams working in

this course," said teacher Bonnie Steger.

Students on the Tumblers team expressed their enthusiasm.

"I like taking robotics and I love controlling the robots we've built in our team," said Stephen Gonzalez.

"We are issued challenges in speed, movement control and durability," Anthony Ward said.

Hoyt Thomas added, "I

like to learn about computer science and I enjoy the collaboration."

The course is based on the VEX robotics curriculum and kit. The program offers high impact on a wide variety of students and cross-curricular learning in math, science, technology and engineering. There are also leagues across the country that issue challenges and offer competitions.