



RISE **STAR**

Robotics Whiz

Bryce Longacre

By Tracy Blanscet

AT 3 YEARS-OLD BRYCE LONGACRE'S PASSION FOR ENGINEERING WAS ALREADY APPARENT WITH EXTRAVAGANT LINCOLN LOG AND LEGO CREATIONS. NOW, THIS 17 YEAR-OLD SENIOR IS THE KEY COMPONENT ON THE WORLD CHAMPION ROBOTICS TEAM AT MURRIETA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL.

Photo by Janice Rumsey



Bryce's mother, Janet Rumsey, knew that her son had a unique talent at a young age when her child brought her creations that seemed well beyond his age-level, some including electrical parts from other toys or household items. His talents were fostered in programs and camps geared around Lego engineering and different types of robotics including Mindstorm, Technic, and Vex. Bryce even managed to become a part of the high school robotics team in his 8th grade year.

When it comes to robotics, Bryce is a Jack-of-all-trades. He does everything from the design and engineering to programming and electrical work. He's been a team leader for one of the Murrieta Valley High School's 3 competitive robotics teams since his sophomore year. The robotics advisor, Mr. Kevin Bradley, stated, "He has the most mechanical mind I've ever witnessed."

The MVHS robotics teams go head-to-head against top teams from around the world. Each year the goal is different, so the robots are specialized to perform certain tasks known in advance. According to the Vex competition manual, the program is designed to help students "cultivate life skills such as planning, brainstorming, collaboration, teamwork and leadership, as well as research and technical skills. Bryce

has even developed his speaking skills, since part of competitive robotics involves being able to explain the project and design to the judges. A natural leader, Bryce is the go to guy for all of the robotics teams at his high school. This Eagle Scout also volunteers with Thompson Middle School's robotics program teaching them how to turn the bots they dream up into functioning machines.

Recognizing Bryce's exceptional talent, step-dad, Mark Rumsey, has involved him in projects with his engineering company since the age of 13! One such project in which Bryce took the lead was designing and building a prototype for a "dance" wheelchair. The chair, commissioned by the University of South Florida's dance department, had omnidirectional wheels and sensors in the seat that allowed graceful changes in direction with minor body motions. This was a rewarding project has remained his favorite because it allows those without the use of their legs to dance. Last summer a private company recruited Bryce to work on a top-secret

engineering project. The company not only trusted his technical skills, but his discretion as well.

Engineering isn't Bryce's only passion. He helped to start the mountain biking team at his school and earned his letter in the sport. He is also a gifted photographer. He's combined his love of science and art to create some unique and interesting long exposure shots.

Bryce's future is certainly bright and promising, but he's not waiting for a company to discover him. He's already been researching companies that he'd be proud to work for someday. Wherever this kid lands, he's sure to build a successful future! ■



