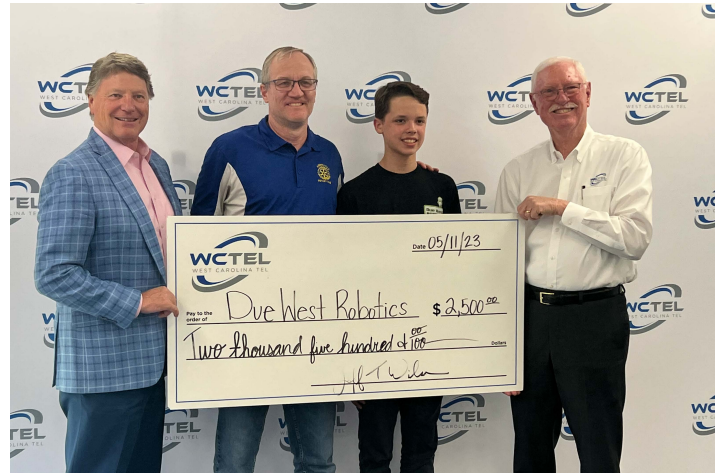




## Due West's Robotics team receives boost from WCTEL

*Due West, SC*



May 12, 2023 – Representatives from Due West's Robotics Team met with WCTEL on May 12 to discuss the team's accomplishments, future plans and their upcoming international competition at the WPI International Invitational Competition June 9-11 in Worcester, MA.

Lee Logan, WCTEL board member and Freshwater Coast Foundation executive director, presented the donation, along with WCTEL CEO Jeff Wilson.

"These students are our future, and seeing their accomplishments and preparation is proof that our future is indeed bright," Logan said.

Due West Robotics is a 501(c)3 nonprofit recognized as a model rural STEM program. It's mission is to educate and inspire young people in all things S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) related.

"Our students and program have inspired others in rural areas to realize they can create sustainable opportunities for their youth while being highly competitive with teams from larger areas," says Due West Robotics President Charles Angel.

A Due West group of 4th-8th graders competed in February at the South Carolina FLL state championship, qualifying for the WPI International Invitation event where they will compete against 96 of the top FLL teams in the world. To learn more about this event at <https://www.roboticsforeveryone/fll-open>.

The team must raise \$12,000 to cover expenses to travel and compete in the international competition. To support their efforts, WCTEL, in partnership with the Freshwater Coast Community Foundation, provided a donation of \$2,500.

"These young students are examples of innovators, hard workers and a bright future," said Jeff Wilson, WCTEL CEO. "I'm proud they will be representing Due West internationally in June, and I am pleased to be able to support their efforts."

Angel has been leading Due Wests Robotics since 2012 and has seen six Due West Robotics teams advance to the international level of competition.

"Seeing our youth compete at the highest level is incredible," Angel says. "When students see what is possible, they begin to dream even bigger."

Max Stoltzfus, 13, Due West, is one of the eight-member team (the Hydro Squishies) who qualified to compete internationally.

“Participating in Robotics has changed how I think about everything,” Stoltzfus says. “I’ve learned so much through its core values, especially teamwork. I’m also learning at a higher level.”

*Photo from L-R: WCTEL CEO, Jeff Wilson; Due West Robotics President, Charles Angel; Due West Robotics Member, Max Stoltzfus; WCTEL Board Member and Freshwater Coast Community Foundation Executive Director, Lee Logan.*

### **About WCTEL**

About WCTEL West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. was formed in 1952. Since its beginning, West Carolina Tel has not only met its primary goal of providing basic telephone service to the rural areas of Abbeville and McCormick counties and the Starr and Iva areas of Anderson County, but has also been able to provide the enhanced services others have come to expect in metropolitan areas of the United States. As new services were being developed, West Carolina renewed its commitment to giving customers access to the latest in advanced technologies, including overbuilding its network with fiber to keep stay ahead of the demand for more bandwidth and advanced communications. To learn more, visit [www.wctel.com](http://www.wctel.com).

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