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MVCTC students compete in Trebuchet Competition

Clayton, Ohio – Miami Valley Career Technology Center (MVCTC) students in Eric Houston’s Applied Physics classes held a trebuchet battle on December 13, 2012. Teams from four classes came together in the morning and competed against each other in a round-robin tournament. Each team competed three times, with students engaged and excited about math and science for over two hours. The winning team consisting of **Kat Cook** (Power Technology junior from Milton-Union), **David Terrell** (Power Technology junior from Preble Shawnee), **Brett Huber** (Heavy Equipment Operator junior from Miamisburg), **Logan Boone** (Construction Carpentry junior from Tri-County North), **Clark Campbell** (Auto Technology junior from Miamisburg), **Joseph Fullmer** (Auto Technology junior from National Trail), **and Tyler Gunckle** (Auto Technology junior from Franklin Monroe) went undefeated and earned a class pizza party.

A trebuchet is like a catapult that uses a heavy weight to power its throw, rather than a spring or other type of elastic energy. Students were given a few restrictions (length of arm, height of axle, and amount of counterweight), but there was a lot of flexibility in the design process. After a lot of hard work researching, designing, and constructing the trebuchets, students tested their ability to throw small rubber squash balls, and made modifications and improvements through experimentation. Eventually, each class selected their four best trebuchets for competition.

The competition took the form of a battlefield, with teams firing squash balls at each other in a live medieval-style fight. If one’s target was hit, he or she is out. After twenty minutes, the team with the most trebuchets still standing (out of the four they started with) is declared the winner. Or, if a trebuchet is able to hit the opposing team’s “castle” – a target at the far end of the battlefield – they automatically win!

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