

Israeli students design robots for contest

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Schoolchildren from all over Israel, including the son of astronaut Ilan Ramon, pitted original robot designs against one another in a national contest.

Winners of the "Robo-Candle" contest in the elementary division were students from Ramat Hefer and their robot, Ruhama, according to a report on the Hebrew news Web site Ynet. The students will represent Israel in an international competition next month in the United States.

Ministry of Education Director General Amira Haim said at the competition that "money and high investments won't win here, but the brain of the Israeli youth who (will) compete in next month's international competition," according to the news site.

Robot entrants to the contest had to navigate a replica of a four-room apartment, find a lit candle in one of the rooms, extinguish it, and return to the starting position, the news site reported, hence the competition name "Robo-Candle."

Ruhama and her pint-sized designers beat the Ramat Gan team on which the younger Ramon, whose father was the first Israeli astronaut and was killed in the Columbia space shuttle disaster in 2003, competed.

In the standard division, students from the Yitzhak Rabin High School in Kiryat Gat took home first place. The Intel factory in Kiryat Gat sponsors the Rabin High School robotics program, provides the students with innovative equipment and provides engineers to serve as advisers

both to the competitors and to the school's course of study, the news site said.

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