by Luz Salinas and Scarlett Frugoli

Hey Bobcats! You may have heard of Tech Trek, an organization and summer camp that gives girls the opportunity to explore the STEM world for a week from July 12 to July 18 at UC Santa Cruz! Tech Trek is a program that was founded in 1998 by Marie Wolbach with help of the AAUW (American Association of University Women) community action grant, funding which helps fund non-profit school organizations. As summarized from the AAUW website, a 2013 survey was conducted about the lasting effects on the girls who visited the camp and how many girls had gained more confidence in theSTEM field and wanted to pursue careers in STEM.

This year Luz Salinas and Scarlet Lilleland what went through many interviews, essays, and letters, and ended up winning the opportunity to join the Tech Trek community this summer, and we couldn't be more proud! We went to interview the two lucky nominees about how they got in and challenges they faced during the process to join Tech Trek and the teachers that introduced the girls about the opportunity.

About the opportunity, science and STEM teacher, Mrs. Mendoza, said, "I hope the girls don't only have fun, but enjoy learning about the science world." The second teacher we interviewed to get more insight about the tech truck summer camp was Mrs. Miller, who said, "I hope they get an idea of what science and engineering looks like in the real world." We also got the chance to interview the two nominees and get their insight on how they feel about going to camp. "The process is really challenging, but I thought through it […] I've told myself that it was OK if I didn't get in, that opportunities are always open for me" is what Luz had to say when we asked about the challenges she faced while applying, the process overall, and how she overcame those challenges. It was hard don't get me wrong, but it was worth it in the end." Our next interview was with the second nominee Scarlet and asked her about the challenges she faced and how she overcame them, we learned that one of her challenges was being nervous about her interviews that she got over the fear with the help of her parents. About what she was looking forward to during Tech Trek she said, "I'm so happy to go,[…] one thing I'm excited about is being at the dorm at the UC Santa Cruz, and being able to experience college […] I was nervous about my interview[…] My parents practice with me which helped"

We are very proud of our 7th grade girls for facing the obstacles and representing our school this July at Santa Cruz university, you got this girls! We wish you the best of luck. Enjoy learning about the stem field and the college experience!