

Dollar Bay HS SOAR Program recognized

May 29, 2013

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DOLLAR BAY - The Dollar Bay High School Student Organization of Aquatic Robotics has won another award, and at their regular meeting Tuesday, the members of the Dollar Bay-Tamarack City Area Board of Education heard the details of the award.

Bob Staple, account executive for the Upper Peninsula region of School Employers Trust School Employers Group insurance agency, said the SOAR program received the SETSEG Education Excellence Award for Community Engagement for the robotics program, which has been used to help employees at the Isle Royale National Park determine the level of infestation of zebra mussels at the park's docks and other locations.

Staple said 26 schools in Michigan received awards in eight categories. There is also an Intermediate School District category.

Article Photos



Kurt Hauglie/Daily Mining Gazette

Bob Staple, account executive with school insurance agency School Employers Trust School Employers Group, holds a sign the agency gave to the Dollar Bay-Tamarack City Area Schools Board of Education during its regular meeting Tuesday. The sign recognizes the district for winning the SETSEG Education Excellence Award for Community Engagement for the Dollar Bay High School aquatic robotics program. The program is now eligible to win an overall award in the autumn. Looking on is K-12 principal William Rivest and board member Steve LeClaire.

"Dollar Bay is the only U.P. district to get the award," he said.

He's very impressed with the work teacher Matt Zimmer and his students have done in the robotics class.

"What an innovative program," he said.

Staple presented to the board a trophy, a sign indicating the district is an award winner, and a check to the district for \$400.

"You've got a great school district here," Staple said.

At a Michigan Association of School Boards meeting in the autumn, Staple said an overall Education Excellence Award winner will be chosen, and the SOAR program is eligible.

"This is only the first step," he said of the Community Engagement award.

William Rivest, K-12 principal, said Zimmer and his students chose to submit an entry in the Community Engagement category because that is the purpose of the aquatic robot.

"They worked on it to improve the community," he said.

In October, the SOAR program won a National Park Service Hertzog Award for Outstanding Youth Group for the Midwest Region. This past spring, the class won the NPS national award for the robotics program.

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