

Adapted from an Email by Brandon Stiltner

Photos by Arloe Mayne



Greater Huntsville AIAA Section Pumpkinauts

I want to provide a quick update on the Pumpkin Blast competition. On Saturday October 1, our Pumpkin Blast team – the Greater Huntsville AIAA Pumpkinauts - won 3rd place in the adult category and brought home the Judges' Award for second time in three years. The event was held, again, at Tate Farms, and the weather was superlative.

I also want to congratulate and thank this year's team captain, Colin Moynihan. When AIAA asks for volunteers, most of the time we're asking for only a day. However, Colin has spent much of his time over the last 4 months toward Pumpkin Blast. Colin did an excellent job coordinating the design and build meetings, and made a great contribution of his time to the Section. The same goes for the team members, who also dedicated a lot of their time to designing and building the machine.

This year's Pumpkin Blast team was bigger than ever with 11 active members. This included two new professional members on the team, and multiple new student members, including two Tau Beta Pi student members. We had full participation from the entire team, a truly fantastic turnout.



Final Adjustments

It's hard to express how proud I am of this year's team. I watched the team work through many difficulties and problems. During the competition, the machine had three severe mishaps. Each time, the team collectively worked out and executed a solution. Our perseverance, problem solving, and team work won us the Judges' Award. This type of team work doesn't happen overnight, but is developed in the long hours and nights spent building the machine.

Thanks and congratulations to our Pumpkinauts!
Brandon Stiltner
Greater Huntsville AIAA Section Chair



AIAA Fiffer -Style Trebuchet

From Wikidot:

“Named after the originator of this design, First in Fright, the Fiffer machine uses a remote drop counterweight with a scissoring linkage to power the arm. The design seems both stable and powerful, a useful combination. It allows for a near vertical counterweight drop without the need for wheels or tracks. This eliminates the chances of becoming derailed.”