



Global Business Solutions Inc. (GBS) is a technology company that helps solve business problems. Since 1994, GBS has been providing superior customer care services for Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky companies. To one Northern Kentucky organization, however, GBS and founder Gaby Batshoun is far more than a technology company. Trained at Northern Kentucky University in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Gaby has been involved in robotics for years, starting as coach for his son's pre-high school robotics club.

When it came time to continue that interest in high school, Gaby's research led him to Covington Catholic. For the school and for Gaby and his son, that was the beginning of a great relationship.

Covington Catholic's (CovCath or CCH) involvement with robotics goes back to 2014 when the high school had an active robotics program based on the VEX platform, the largest high school robotics competition in the world. That was the beginning of Covington Catholic's commitment to expand beyond robotics and embrace a full STEM curriculum. STEM is the integration of math, science and technology skills applied to the process of problem solving, within an engineering framework. Under the leadership of Bob Rowe, Covington Catholic's principal, an academic staff was assembled to move STEM forward.

Bob Lind was brought on as the Director of STEM programs. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) was adopted as the framework for the program. PLTW is the industry leader that provides STEM curriculum and professional development and certification of teachers for over 10,500 schools nationwide. Bob is a certified PLTW Master Teacher specializing in the principles of engineering curriculum. Three additional PLTW certified teachers have joined Bob on the

STEM staff. Covington Catholic earned designation as a PLTW Distinguished School in 2018, one of only 133 schools nationwide and one of only six in Kentucky. The growth of STEM activity at the school has been phenomenal. This coming year, 30 students will attend a robotics class at 7:00 a.m. More concretely, this fall, CovCath will open a new \$3.5 million-dollar building dedicated to meeting the needs of the STEM program. The 16,585-square-foot building will house two robotics labs, rooms for welding, prototype assembly and a 200-seat auditorium to be used for lectures, guest speakers and shared with the school's arts departments. Financial support from GBS, as well as their technology expertise, has been a major part of making the new building a reality.

STEM at CovCath provides students the opportunity to work collaboratively, identify problems, apply what they know, persevere through challenges and find unique solutions. The program also has an entrepreneurial component. Students participate in product building projects and competitions. They develop business and marketing





plans and work with real world mentors to test their ideas and experience the rigors of product development. The potential deployment of cutting-edge technologies, robotics, machine learning and advanced automation exposes students to the ethical and moral implications of innovation. Students not initially drawn to the STEM disciplines often grow to see the value of problem solving from an engineering perspective. Art and architecture students have participated in the program and have achieved success academically and professionally. A recent graduate with architecture aspirations who learned to love robotics now interns at GBS and coaches the robotics team.

Batshoun and GBS have been strong supporters of the STEM initiative from the very beginning. Gaby helps coach the robotics team and sits on the school's advisory board and board of directors. GBS provides technology services for the school campus. Gaby's son had a successful high school career in the STEM program and begins the 2018 academic year continuing his education at the J.P. Speed, School of Engineering in Louisville, Kentucky.

The partnership of GBS and Covington Catholic High School is a fine example of business integrated into the community to the mutual benefit of both. It is one reason GBS is proud to have been selected a finalist by the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce for its Business IMPACT Awards, which recognize businesses impacting the community through innovation, creativity, strong business practices and leadership. It is a celebration of success and the strength of the Northern Kentucky business community. ❖

Global Business Solutions is located at 916 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky. For more information, call 859.451.5900 or visit www.gbs-inc.com. Look for information about Covington Catholic HS's STEM Wing open-house at www.covcath.org

