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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COACHING CHANGES IN CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S ROBOTICS TEAM,  
THE ROBOLANCERS (FRC TEAM #321, FTC TEAMS #5320 AND #6676)**

Philadelphia, PA –At the end of June, Daniel Ueda who has been the beloved Head Coach of Central High School's FIRST robotics team, The RoboLancers, will be leaving the School District, moving on to the GRASP Laboratory at the University of Pennsylvania as the Associate Director for Education and Outreach. His primary responsibility will be to develop and support K-12 robotics education programs locally and nationally in both real and virtual learning environments. This work will include maintaining Penn's role as an operational partner of FLL and a university partner of Jr. FLL; identifying funding sources; curriculum development; developing relationships with schools, the School District, local and national tech and education organizations, local businesses, and policy stakeholders; and developing new approaches to STEM education.

Ueda states: "The move to this new opportunity is the definition of bittersweet. I have absolutely loved teaching at Central and coaching the RoboLancers and I will cherish every day I spent there for the last six years. After eleven years of being in the classroom, I can unequivocally state there is no education as valuable as one that is project-based with very high standards and personal responsibility. The RoboLancers team has provided that for so many students over the years, just as it has provided me with a tremendous amount of knowledge, tools, and resources. I am very eager to take what I have gained at Central and bring it to a larger audience."

While they are sad about the loss of Dan Ueda as their coach, the RoboLancers are excited to welcome physics teacher Michael Johnson as their new robotics coach. Mr. Johnson holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a Master of Science Degree in Education from the University of Pennsylvania. He has taught for five years in the School District of Philadelphia, most recently at Franklin Learning Center High School, where he was the 2014 recipient of the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching. In addition to teaching physics over the past year, he developed and taught an introductory engineering course. Mr. Johnson brings technical expertise, plus a wealth of knowledge in organizational dynamics, learned through his volunteer work in non-profit management since 2010.

"I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to coach Central High's legendary RoboLancers!" Johnson said. "Since I first met the RoboLancers in May, I've been impressed with the students'

knowledge, professionalism, and enthusiasm for their work — both on their robots and in their educational outreach. The team has a good grasp of the technical side of their work, and I look forward to further engaging their passions in engineering through robotics.”

The RoboLancers coaching staff also will be joined by Ms. Darcel Bonner, a 1995 graduate of Villanova University with degrees in Biology and Secondary Education. In addition, Ms. Bonner has a Master of Science Degree in School Administration and Science Curricula. Ms. Bonner has been teaching for 20 years, eleven of which have been at Central High School. She currently also is the Science Department Chair.

Ms. Bonner states: “As an educator, I believe my role is to prepare students for the vigor of science and engineering courses at the college level. I believe getting accepted into college is one thing, but graduating with a degree in a STEM-related field is a much more challenging task. I want my students to be able to say that they when they left Central, they were fully prepared for all of the challenges that come with pursuing a degree in STEM. I want the team to experience their most successful year in 2014-2015, but I do not want success to be just measured by how well the team performs in competitions. My hope is that each and every member of the team will grow as both students and leaders at Central High School, and that their involvement in with the RoboLancers will be the vehicle for their growth.”

The Central High School RoboLancers are a student-operated, adult-mentored robotics team that was founded in 1999 as FIRST Robotics Team #321. The program started with five students from the school and grew into an organization of more than 125 students and ten student mentors. They work with a \$20,000 per year budget and compete in two or three competitions per year. The RoboLancers host various STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) training and outreach programs all over Philadelphia and the team has become a shining example of what students in a struggling urban setting can do if given the opportunity. Additional information about the RoboLancers can be found at <https://www.robolancers.com>.

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