



## Happy New Year from AMRoC Fab Lab! A Look Back and a Look Ahead

AMRoC, Competition, Education, Entrepreneurship, Esports, Events, Fab Lab, First Friday at the Fab Lab, Foundation for Community Driven Innovation, Manufacturing, Programming, Projects, Resources, Robotics, STEM, TechSports, Training, Volunteer



In some respects, standing on the cusp of 2022 may not feel much different than it did a year ago. We're all still facing the challenges of COVID-19 and many things remain socially and economically difficult, as well. But at AMRoC Fab Lab, we worked hard throughout the year to carve out a safe, inspiring, creative and empowering space for people of all ages and believe we were pretty successful in our efforts.

Just as we were able to celebrate a [garland's worth of achievements](#) during [2020](#), we hit a number of exciting benchmarks in 2021, as well, and are heading into the new year full of hope backed by a great team and thoughtful planning. Here's a glance back and a look forward!

## 2021 Highlights

2021 kept us hopping. Over the course of the year we:

- Provided STEM education programming for over 500 youth, through in-house robotics programs, summer programming, and virtual and hybrid



[ROBOTICON youth STEAM showcase](#) programming

- Launched over 25 new small businesses, over 80% owned by People of Color,



more than 50% Women owned, through our [Equity in Entrepreneurship](#) program, organized in collaboration with Grow to Greatness Ventures and other great community partners, with support from Truist, Truist

Foundation, Florida Blue, and Guidewell

- Hosted a virtual [Gulf Coast MakerCon](#) through our [Month of Making](#) event
- Hosted Aviation Day events in partnership with Infinity Aero Club

- Hosted a visit from Mobius Mobility to showcase the amazing robotic technology of this state of the art wheelchair system



- Had a great year of [First Friday at the Fab Lab interviews](#), and some great video interviews with [Florida Inventors Hall of Fame inductee, Dean Kamen, founder of FIRST](#), including the one below by one of our AMRoC youth robotics team students, all in partnership with our great friends at PLUGHITZ Live.

## A Student Conversation with Dean Kamen - FIRST Looks

- Helped dozens become certified automotive technicians through our partnership with US Auto Training
- Introduced youth and adults to drone technologies through our partnership with Tampa Drones
- Trained youth and adults in the use of Computer Aided Drafting, 3D printing, laser cutting and machine shop skills
- Partnered with the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame to host the [Young Innovators Challenge](#)
- [Launched Florida's first HADO active gaming experience](#) in partnership with Green Mouse Academy/HADO-USA
- Launched the first of our [All the Colors career diversity series](#)
- Built an [indoor aquaponics wall garden](#) in partnership with WellFed Community, using the opportunity to raise awareness around food insecurity and ways to address it



We also enjoyed continuing Uptown Tampa Community Conversations, partnered with the Caribbean American National Development Organization (CANDO) for a fabulous Caribbean Heritage and Juneteenth

event, joined in University Area Community Development Corporation Partnership Coalition events, helped celebrate the opening of the new Idea Victory Charter School and the Uptown Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting for our down the mall neighbors, New Tampa Players, were front and center at Tampa Innovation Partnership annual Innovation Gathering and had a blast at Eckerd Connects Elf Town.

And we got a ton of great press from our friends at Fox 13 Tampa Bay all year long, highlighting everything from our youth robotics programs (see below) to [HADO](#) and [Equity in Entrepreneurship!](#)

### **A Look at AMRoC Fab Lab by Fox 13 News**

But we're not resting on our laurels. There's still plenty to do in 2022!

## **Looking Ahead in 2022**

We're expecting to move in 2022, to a new location in University Mall as RITHM at Uptown development proceeds. While picking up and relocating the Fab Lab won't be easy, redesigning and reorganizing AMRoC is also an exciting prospect, and one we think will ultimately help us better achieve our goals for the new year, which include:

- Starting competitive youth drone teams
- Starting a youth Factory Automation Challenge program
- Growing our youth robotics programs by at least 15%
- Launching at least another 20 new small businesses through our Equity in Entrepreneurship program



- Launching a STEM Educator Training program
- Adding aeronautics and aerospace education programming
- Expanding our machine shop and related shop education programs
- Hardcopy and digital reference library collection in partnership with the Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative

In February, you'll find us at the Florida State Fair with a Robotics & Drones exhibit. We also hope to be able to host in-person Gulf Coast MakerCon event in the spring, youth robotics and drone competitions at AMRoC throughout the year, along with other special events and programs, and a return to regular Open Make events.

We couldn't do any of these great things though, without the help of our amazing volunteers, our donors and [sponsors](#), and all our amazing [community partners](#). As we head into the new year, there are lots of ways you can get involved and help Make the Future for Uptown and beyond.

## How You Can Help Make the Future

### ***Donate!***

Now through the end of January, one way you can help is to contribute to our [Facebook fundraiser](#), Facebook pays all the processing fees for you, so

100% of your donation goes directly to AMRoC's nonprofit organizer, the [Foundation for Community Driven Innovation \(FCDI\)](#). You can also contribute through our [PayPal Giving Fund](#).

However you donate, your contribution is tax deductible.



Almost all equipment at AMRoC Fab Lab has been donated, and dozens of volunteers contribute their time and expertise. But AMRoC tools and equipment require maintenance, and we've reached the point where

newer equipment can be better to teach with and also has the added benefit of better safety features. There are also costs associated with all our programs, in addition to just keeping the lights on and paying the rent. Here are just a few examples of how your contributions can help:

- \$50 can subsidize an elementary school student for a full year in our VEX IQ youth robotics program
- \$100 can cover the participation of a middle or high school robotics program student
- \$200 will help pay for consumables used in our 3D printers or prototyping materials
- \$300 can cover the cost of a team registration fee for our middle school program
- \$500 can provide a scholarship for an Equity in Entrepreneurship participant
- \$1000 can provide multiple scholarships for a variety of programs, or go towards the cost of new equipment

As little as \$5 makes a difference, and lots of \$5, \$10 and \$20 contributions add up, so any and all donations are appreciated.

### ***Volunteer!***



If you're interested in being a volunteer or mentor in any of our programs at AMRoC, visit [amroctampabay.com/volunteer](https://amroctampabay.com/volunteer) to learn how you can help. You can also [sign up for our monthly newsletter](#) at the website, and check

out the [calendar page](#) for upcoming programs.

FCDI is a [Great Nonprofits Top Rated organization](#) and you can see more photos and stories from FCDI and AMRoC Fab Lab constituents and beneficiaries on our [Great Nonprofits page](#).

Thank you for helping us help others and continue providing **#MakingthatMatters** for more people in the University area and beyond!

***Happy New Year from all of us at FCDI and AMRoC Fab***