

## COMMUNITY AND OUTREACH

Robotics @ Maryland (R@M) began as a small team focused solely on building autonomous underwater vehicles (AUV) for the RoboSub competition. Over time, that mission grew. Today, R@M builds three autonomous systems: Qubo, an AUV; Terry, a Mars rover prototype; and Testudog, a quadruped robot. While our technical reach has expanded, our foundation remains people-driven: using robotics as a platform for education, mentorship, and community.

This year, R@M's outreach efforts were demonstrated on **Maryland Day**, held on April 25th. With an expansive course setup designed, our goal was to make robotics tangible for all. Visitors could swim Qubo through a Robosub course recreation, drive Terry across terrain, and watch Testudog walk in real time. Props and themed displays mimicked competition exactly, drawing in crowds who may never have considered engineering as something accessible to them. The energy attracted parents, kids, alumni, and even the President of the University of Maryland. Members staffed stations for hours, breaking down PID loops, sensor fusion, and autonomous navigation into conversations that met each visitor where they were. Our goal was the same as ever: make engineering feel less like a mystery and more like a possibility.

Our **Design Review** events extend that mission into the academic community. Held each semester and open to faculty, sponsors, peers, and anyone curious about the engineering process, these nights offer a transparent look under the hood of everything we build. We share what works, what is confusing us, and how we plan to improve. We talk honestly about system tradeoffs, failed approaches, and open design questions. This openness invites real feedback. Sponsors and faculty push back on our assumptions, point out gaps in our reasoning, and offer perspectives we would not have reached on our own. The result is better engineering and stronger communication skills across the team.

R@M also builds community from the inside out. Each spring, we carry on our **Pi Day Tradition**: members stand outside McKeldin Library and get pied in the face by anyone willing to make a donation. What started as a lighthearted fundraiser has become one of our most visible moments on campus, a reminder that engineering clubs are made of real people who do not take themselves too seriously. Passersby stop, laugh, and ask what we do, which opens more conversations about robotics than any flyer ever has.

In the fall, R@M co-hosted a **Cookout** with Terrapin Rockets, another engineering organization on campus. Over burgers and volleyball, members from both clubs connected around a shared identity: students who build things, solve hard problems, and want to be around others who do the same. Events like these strengthen the broader engineering community at Maryland and remind us that collaboration starts with simply showing up for each other.



Fig. 1: Teaching kids how to drive Qubo on Maryland Day.

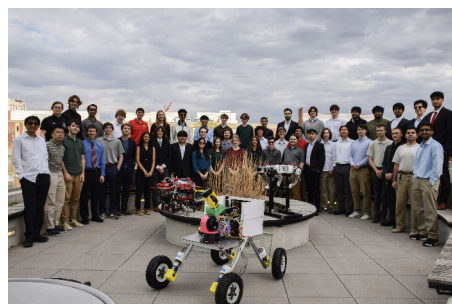


Fig. 2: R@M members at the Spring 2026 Design Review.



Fig. 3: Photo Collage from Pi Day



Fig. 4: R@M co-hosting a cookout with Terrapin Rockets.