



MINION BOAT NEEDS A RIDE

TRANSPORTING THE “MINION RESEARCH PLATFORM”

WHEN THE STUDENTS of the Maritime RobotX Logistics Team at Florida’s Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University needed to get their “minion boat” to Hawaii, they couldn’t rely on despicable, little, yellow animated characters to get the job done. Instead, Landstar transported the Wave Adaptive Modular Vessel (WAM-V), a.k.a. the “Minion Research Platform.”

Embry-Riddle’s “minion boat” needed to arrive in Hawaii in time for the December 2016 Maritime RobotX Challenge – a competition hosted by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), where future generations of scientists, creators and engineers compete with uniquely designed and manufactured robotic boats. The vessel being shipped for the competition took

Embry-Riddle’s student team nearly 18 months to create.

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not lie in the transportation of it. That’s where we come in,” says Jeff Hurley, Landstar vice president of LTL, expedited and international services.

After careful consideration of the specific needs for shipping the vessel, Landstar teamed Embry-Riddle up with an experienced agent who could coordinate and offer the customer a cost-saving approach to their shipping needs.

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Coordinating the transport of large, heavy, high-value, and time-critical project cargo is a specialty of the Charlotte Express Center Inc., an independent Landstar agency owned and operated by Ike Tate.

“Project cargo that is high-value and high-risk takes a lot of coordination and it’s important to keep the customer informed during the entire process. Our agency’s experience with cargo like this made this transport happen seamlessly,” said Tate.

“We understood that the university team had little knowledge of freight packaging, and they were putting their trust in us to provide them with a custom approach to get their one-of-a-kind creation to its destination, without damage,” explained Landstar Manager of Air Freight Operations Ann White. To secure the customer’s trust, before

shipping, Landstar took the time to educate the team at Embry-Riddle on the step-by-step process of packaging and crating the “minion vessel” for transport.

“The advanced support Landstar provided not only helped to ensure the cargo would arrive at the competition site intact, but also reassured the customer and deepened the customer-client relationship. That’s where Landstar excels above other companies offering similar logistics services to small and medium size shippers,” explained Hurley.

Landstar also provided the school substantial savings on the shipment in a competitive bid for the job. The experience of Landstar and its agency allowed for efficiencies in shipping the vessel, which resulted in cost savings.

“The savings Landstar offered, compared to other bids, enabled us to send four additional students to

Hawaii for the competition,” said Eric Coyle, Ph.D., an Embry-Riddle Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering.

The logistics solution that Tate’s agency provided the university included transporting the “minion boat” by air to Hawaii in time for the competition, and bringing it back home to the Daytona Beach campus by the less expensive and slower mode of ocean freight transport. The agency’s plan, which included the additional custom shipping support, saved the RobotX team close to \$6,000.

“The beauty of being part of Landstar’s multi-modal network is always being able to tailor a solution for the customer,” explained Tate. “We were able to meet the needs of Embry-Riddle and transport their cargo in the most cost effective and timely way.” ★