



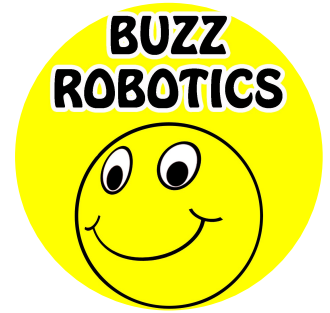
NEW ENGLAND MENTOR CONFERENCE

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Mini Presentations

Your BEST ideas!





Fundraising for All

Creating Buy-In While Reducing Barriers to
Participation

Caroline Marr

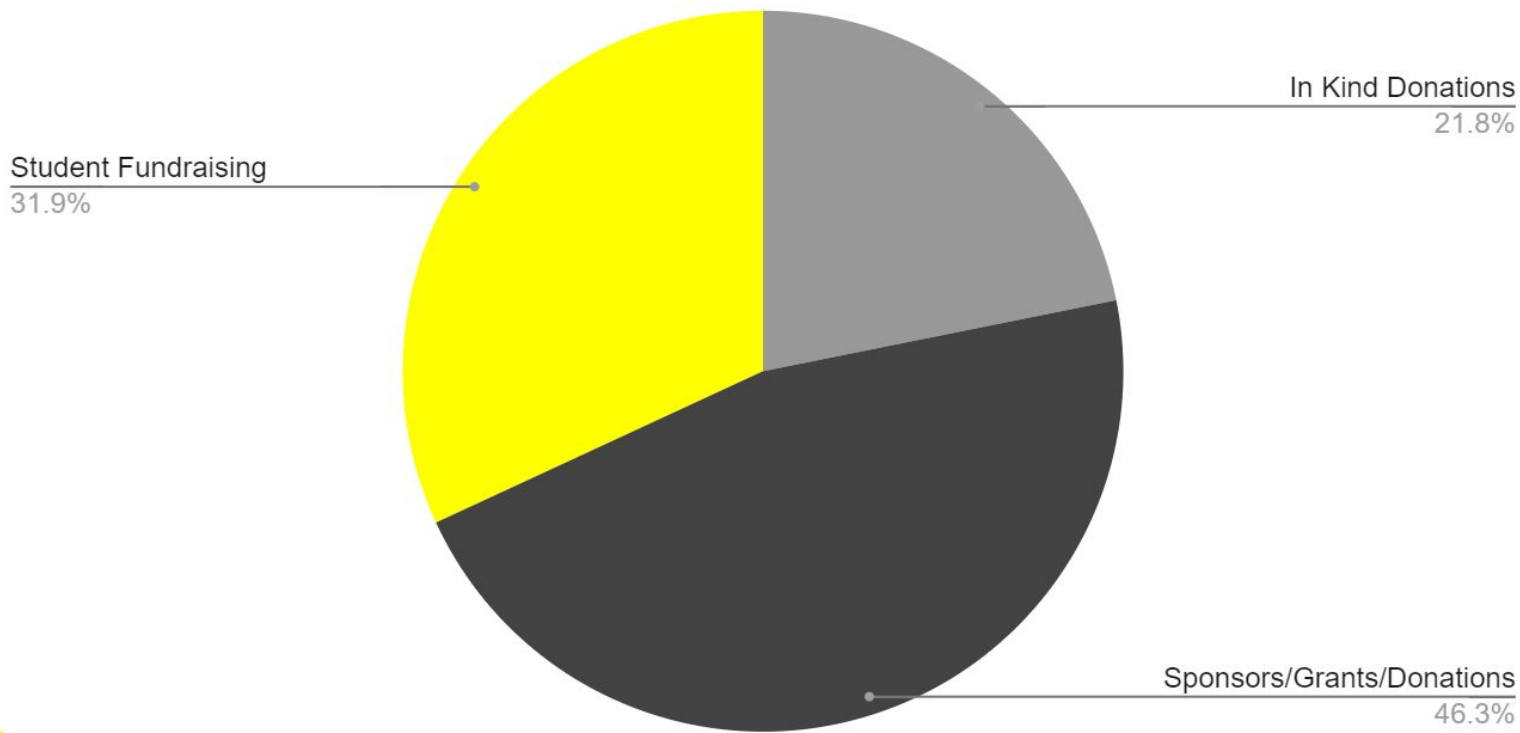
Buzz Robotics 175

- Buzz Robotics Alum
- FIRST Volunteer (19 years)
- Buzz Robotics Mentor (9 years)
- Math Teacher (8 years)

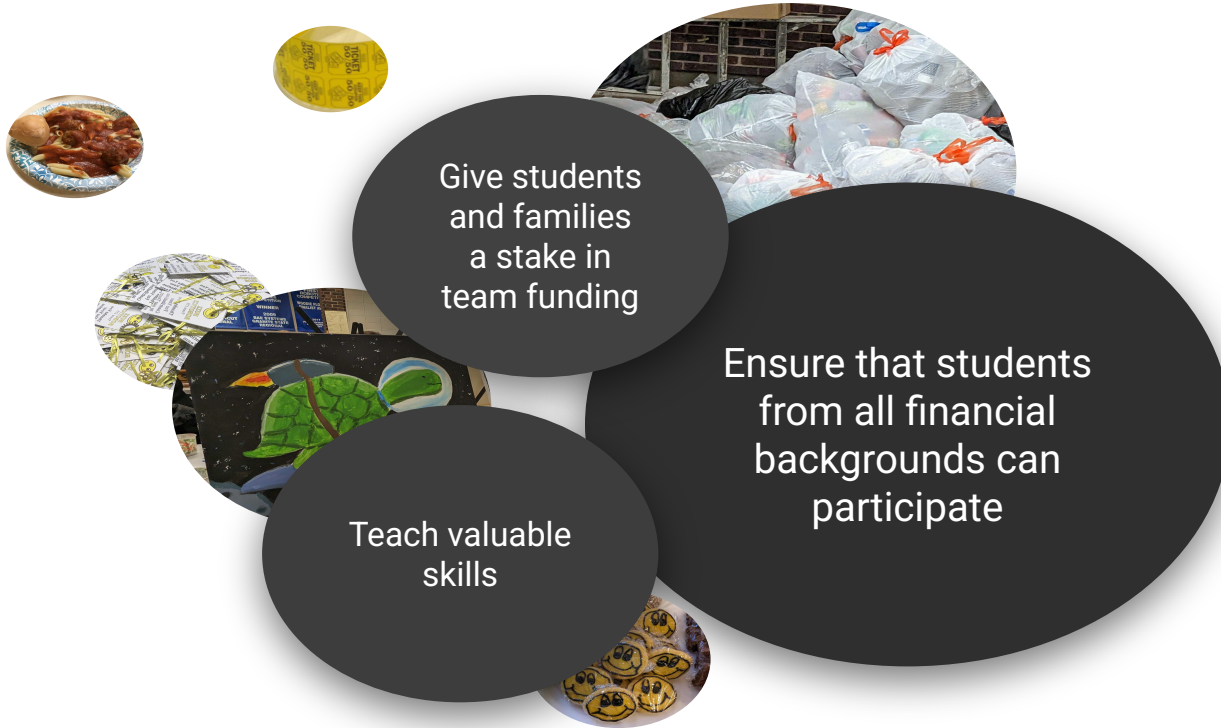


What do I mean by student fundraising?

2024-2025 Expenses



Why do we fundraise?



Fundraising Strategy

Team Policies

Fundraiser Choice





Team Policies



- Each year, we set a team fee that all students are responsible for
 - \$650 as of right now
- Students may fundraise all or part of their team fee
- All students are required to participate in fundraising
 - Not allowed to pay entire fee
- Team plans enough fundraisers for students to raise full amount
 - Planning is shared between mentors, students, and families
- Money split between students according to contribution
 - For group events, profits are split between students who contribute/attend
 - For individual sales, all profit from their sales goes directly to the student

Team Policy Challenge

What if a student raises more than \$650

Money Goes to Team

Pros:

- All students responsible for own fundraising
- Hardworking students can raise overall team budget

Cons

- Disincentivizes students fundraising over \$650
- Creates challenges for students without local connections
- Encourages students to find “creative” solutions

Donate to other students

Pros:

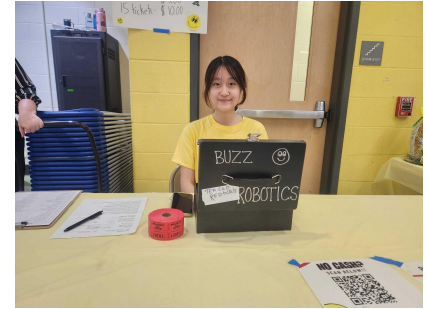
- Incentivizes students to fundraise extra to help funds
- Students have the opportunity to help their friends
- Students with fewer local connections can get help from those with more

Cons

- Allows some students to coast based on the effort of others
- Can make some students feel left out
- Some student privacy issues

Fundraiser Choice

- All fundraisers should make >\$1000
 - Exceptions can be made for very low effort fundraisers
- Plan fundraiser calendar in advance
 - Avoid over-taxing the same groups
 - Match fundraisers to most profitable time frames
 - Select appropriate fundraisers for team energy level
- Avoid low profit margin sales
- Play to team strengths
 - For us: Focus on team-planned events and activities



Fundraiser Choices



Fundraising Successes

- Team fee fully funded:
 - No student has paid any amount of team fee for two years
- 2024 Worlds:
 - Team attended worlds in 2024 for the first time since pandemic
 - All students who wanted to attend were able to attend
 - Students did not pay at all to attend worlds
 - Key mentors also able to attend without paying



Future goals

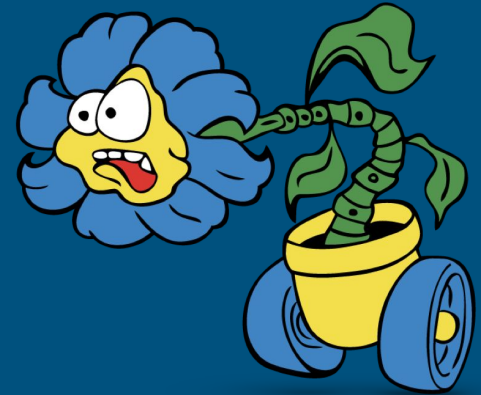
- Solve issue with students who over-fundraise
- Continue to support students who struggle with fundraising
- Incorporate incentives for acquiring grants/sponsors



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Competitive Mentality



NE Mentor Conference, August 3, 2025

About Me - Sean Stevens



FRC Stats

- Team 341 Alum: 2009 - 2012
- Team 341 Mentor: 2014 - Present
- Team 341 Drive Coach: 2015 - Present
- Strategy, Design, and Mechanical

Education and work

- Drexel University class of 2017
 - BS/MS in EE
- Work for ASI Drives as an EE
 - Motor performance



The fire we gather around



The robot is a tool that helps us accomplish our other goals:

- Grow
- Challenge ourselves
- Face adversity

Trying to build the best robot possible fuels student growth

- Positive feedback loop

Growth Mindset

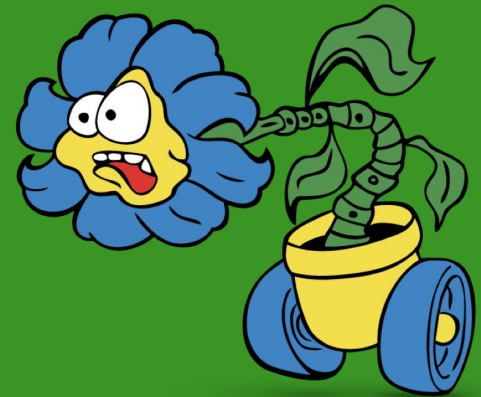


Play to improve

- **Focus on the process of playing, not the results**
- Every opportunity to iterate is a chance to get better
- Show up with a game plan
- Be relentless about the details
- Learn from your mistakes and correct them
- One match at a time



Other important topics



“You can’t be great without the greatness of others”

- FRC is built so you **MUST** depend on other people
 - Teammates
 - Mentors
 - Alliance partners
 - Volunteers at your events
- Understand your role and work to be great at it
- Help as many people get better as possible



Rent is due everyday



- “Success is never owned, only rented”
- Pay the rent by:
 - Working hard
 - Caring about your work
 - Trying to improve
 - Trying to keep a level head
 - Not having an ego
- If you keep paying the rent, you will keep moving towards success

Sacrifice for the unknown

"Sacrifice for the unknown." Be willing to give everything you have for something that may never happen. Take a leap of faith.

[HERB BROOKS - DREAMER OF DREAMS](#)



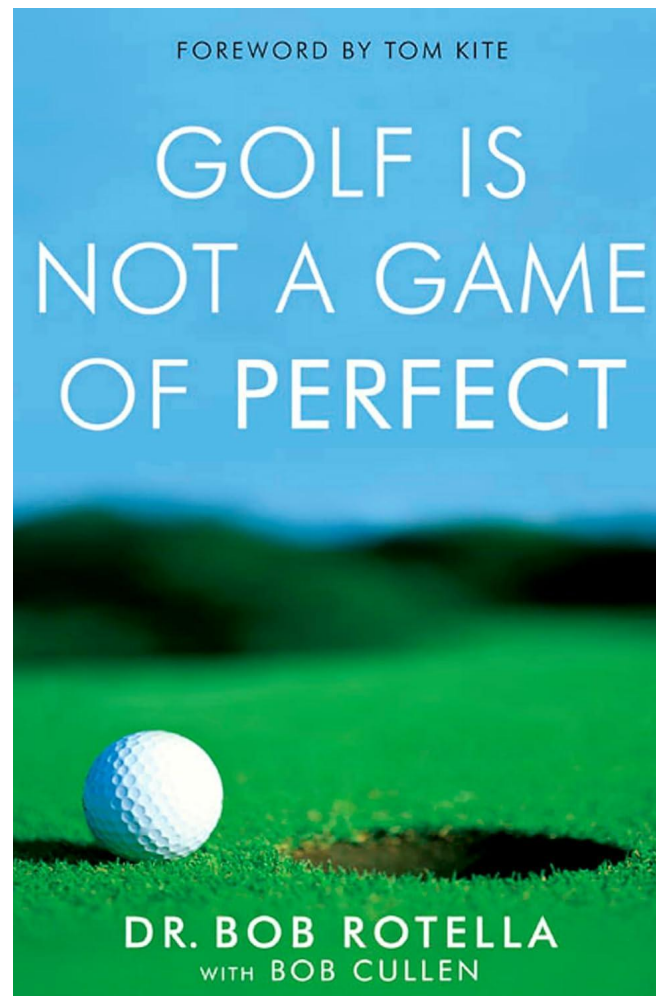
Further reading



Golf Is Not A Game Of Perfect

By Dr. Bob Rotella

Full audiobook
available on
YouTube!



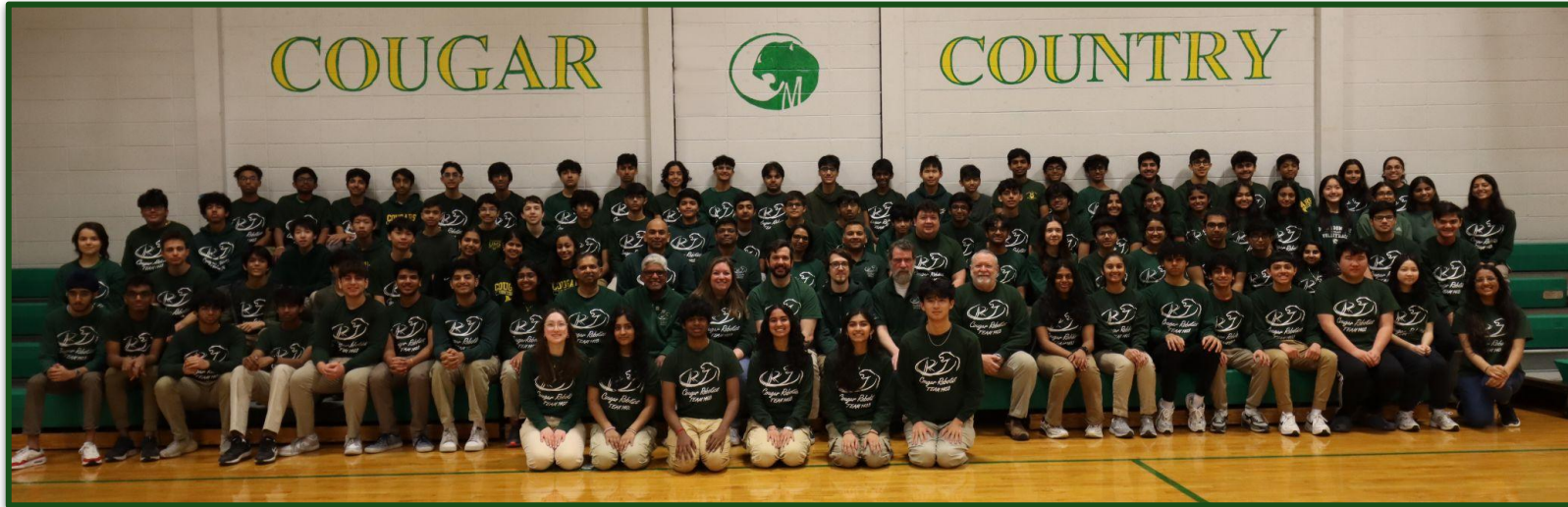


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TEAM 1403

- 100+ Students, 2 teachers, 2 mentors, and 6 parents
- 8 sub teams - Logistics & Robot
- *"We are a small business that doesn't generate revenue"*



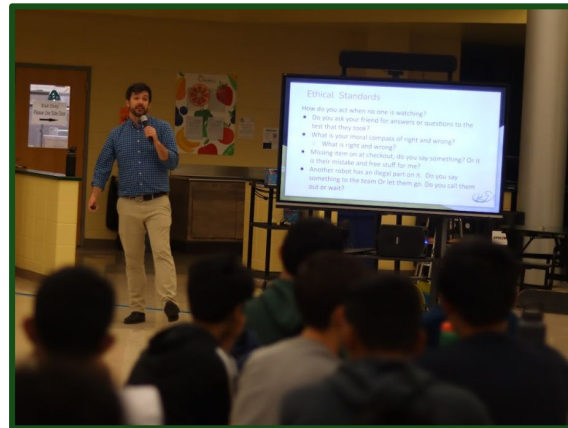
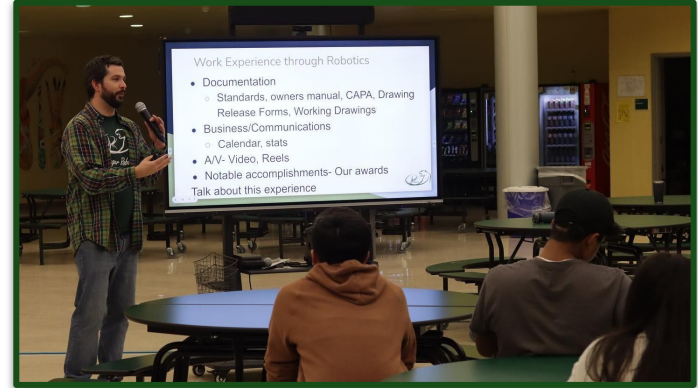
BIG COUGAR, LITTLE COUGAR

- Ice breakers
- Design challenges

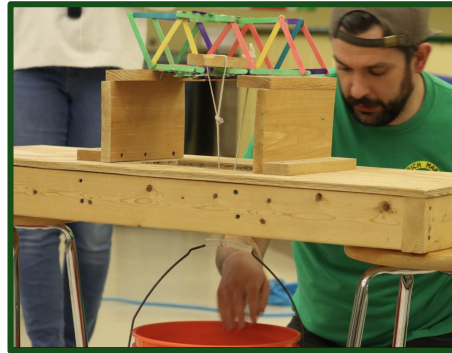
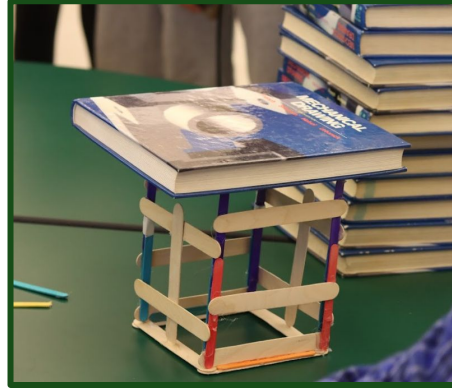


COUGAR CLASSES

- Presentations on topics including:
 - Culture
 - Standards
 - Ethics
 - Business etiquette
 - Branding
 - College apps
 - Storytelling
 - Mental health
 - Cooking



COUGAR CLASSES: DESIGN CHALLENGES



COUGAR CLASSES: CULTURAL

- Guest team presentations
- Students familial culture
- Team culture





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Talk Like a Robot

Levi Fitzpatrick

FRC 2064
The Panther Project
Southbury / Middlebury, CT



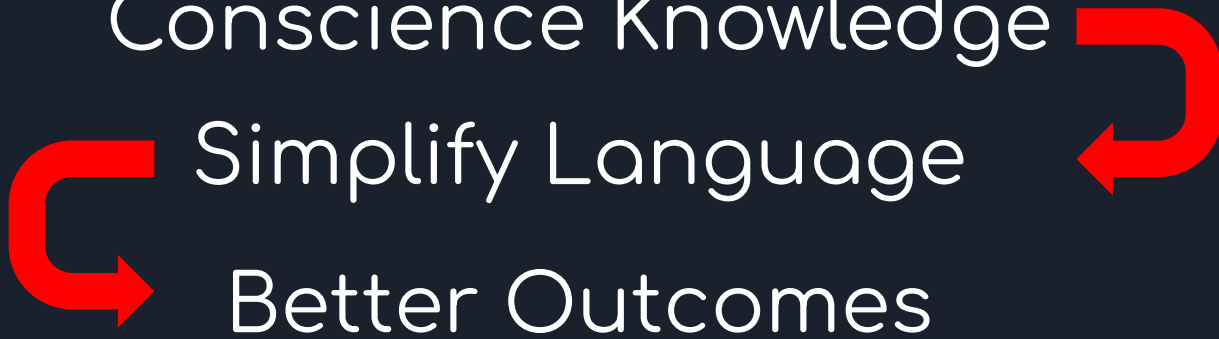


Goal

Conscience Knowledge

Simplify Language

Better Outcomes





Talking Like a Robot

“Breaking down robot functions and subsystems into their fundamental instructions.”





Identifying the Problem

- Varying Skill Levels
- Under Explanation
- Assumed Knowledge
- Changing interests
- Lack of inclusivity



“The intake goes and gets a note.”

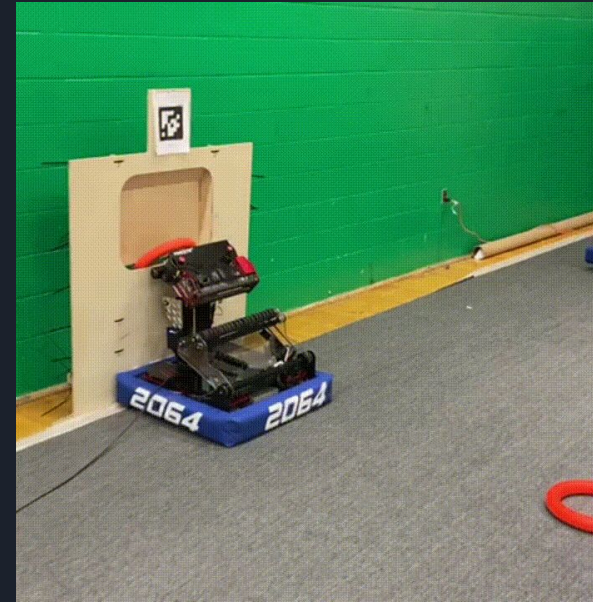
Intake rotates from a ‘Stowed’ Position to a ‘Ground’ Position

Intake wheels spin inwards

When we detect a note, stop intake wheels and transition to ‘Handoff’ Position

Intake wheels spin outward

Intake rotates from ‘Handoff’ Position to ‘Stowed’ Position





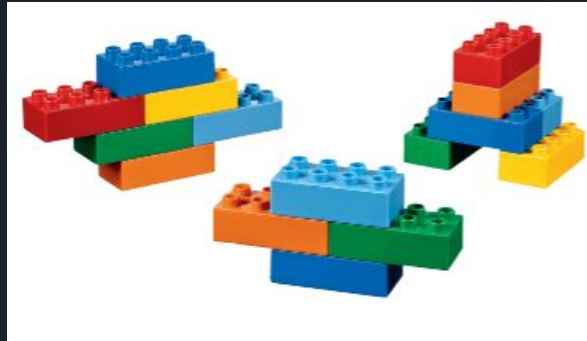
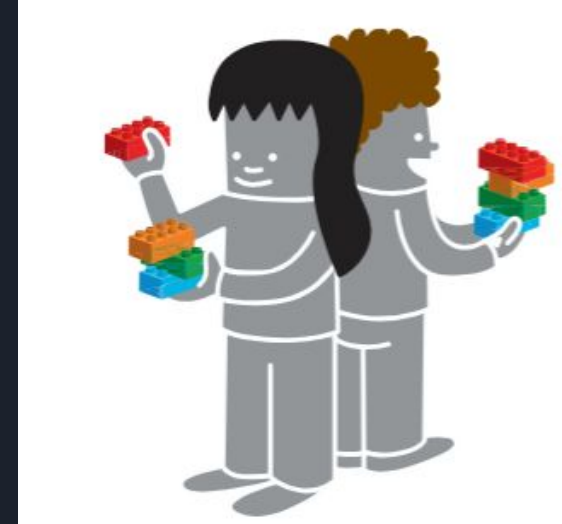
How This Relates to Student Success

- Students are more active participants in conversations
- Constant learning reinforcement
- Easier for them to pursue what their interests are on the team
- Clearer communication with everyone



6 Brick Back to Back Challenge

- Students pair off
- One builds a model, and then explains to the partner how to build the same model
- The partner builds without looking or asking questions





Takeaways

- Talk in a way to accommodate students of every skill level
- Have meaningful discussions with students
- Reinforce learning at every step





Talking Like a Robot

“Breaking down robot functions and subsystems into their fundamental instructions.”

More Student
Agency

Better
Communication

Knowledge Growth





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FRC@2064.team





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Unified Robotics

Getting Started in Unified Robotics

Jamee Luce, *FIRST* Senior Mentor, Maine



Unified Robotics: What is it?

From the Special Olympics:

“Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

In Unified Sports, teams are made up of people of similar age and ability. That makes practices more fun and games more challenging and exciting for all. Having sport in common is just one more way that preconceptions and false ideas are swept away.”

Unified Robotics: Who participates?

Mentors:

- Current Team Members
- Great way to recruit new members

Athletes:

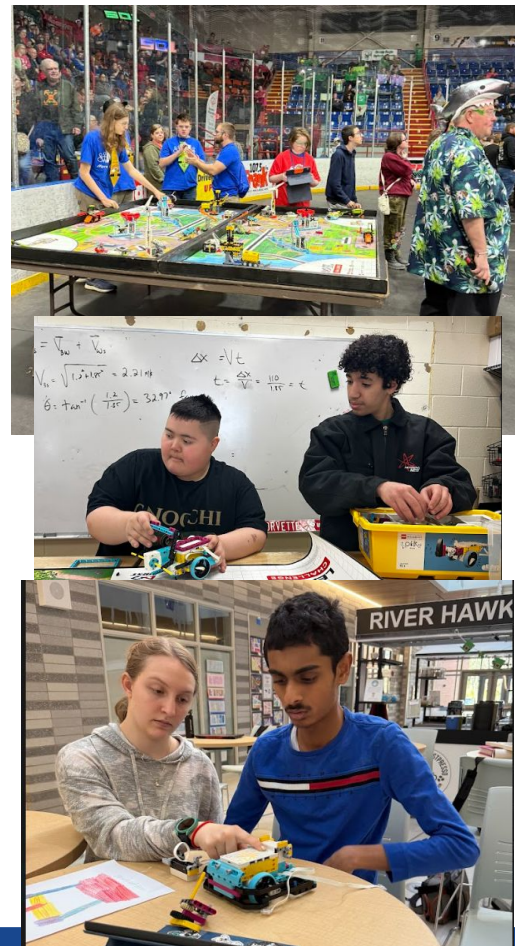
- High School aged students with intellectual disabilities

Adults:

- Current mentors and coaches who provide support as necessary
- Great way to recruit new mentors and coaches

Unified Robotics: Competition

- Different in each state/region
- Reflect the core values of Special Olympics and *FIRST*
- Examples:
 - Maine: *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge Field Kit SUPERPOWERED
 - Massachusetts: *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge Field Kit REPLAY
 - Connecticut: *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge Field Kit REPLAY
- Competitions Examples:
 - Maine: Integrated into Pine Tree District Event
 - Massachusetts: Showcase at Greater Boston District Event
 - Connecticut: Showcase at Waterbury District Event
 - NE DCMP: Video showcase in *FIRST* booth



Unified Robotics: How do I get involved?

- In New England, connect with your State Representative:
 - **Maine, Vermont, Rhode Island:**
 - Jamee Luce, jluce@firstinspires.org
 - Andrea Harvey, aharvey@sad15.org
 - **Massachusetts:**
 - Josh Miranda, josh@nutrons.com
 - **New Hampshire:**
 - Jamie Deer, jamie.ellen525@gmail.com
 - **Connecticut:**
 - John Niski, jniskifrc@gmail.com



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