

Opening the Journal of a new 1511 student:

9/17-I went to the Rochester Rhinos pro soccer game Kids' Night, with nearly 7000 people. I saw this sweet robot surrounded by red camo! I recognized them from the Penfield July 4th parade, NYS Fair and the news. I had a chance to drive the robot. It was cool, but I thought I was going to run someone over!

9/30-I saw the robotics team at the PHS Club & Activity Fair. A member told me about FIRST and how they build robots with real engineers! They asked me to join! I did because it sounded fun.

10/5-My first team meeting! I learned about activities & fundraisers students organize year-round. I was excited to get my pair of red camo pants team members wear everywhere to be noticed and have more chances to talk about FIRST.

10/10-We went to the BIG Amazing Maize maze. We had to work in groups to get out. I felt more part of the team after getting lost with them!

10/12-At tonight's meeting we added events to the Thunderbolts list. It tracks 1511's impact on the community and ways we promote FIRST year-round. The goal is to do 1511 Thunderbolts by our 10th year! I learned that 1511's impact has been recognized by the County Legislature, the Town Board and in a 2009 Senate resolution.

10/16-The team walked to support a teammate with Cystic Fibrosis. We wore team gear and raised over \$2K! 1511 also raised \$1,485, with a Harris match, for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. A girl on the team has Leukemia. She's organized a blood drive with the team for LLS!

10/19-I applied for Leadership! Leadership students take on a big responsibility: they train students, lead meetings and subteams and help the team meet our 9 goals. Mentors interviewed me about my leadership experience. I gave a speech to the team on why I would be a good leader. It was nerve-racking, but the team voted me in!

10/23-I just got home from Rah-Cha-Cha Ruckus 6, a Halloween-themed off-season competition hosted by 1511. The news was there! We asked teams to bring canned food, and collected 784 lbs. for Foodlink! I met over 20 teams, some from other states. It was my first time seeing other teams' robots up close. Our team hosts so many events! During build season we build a FULL field! Prior to ship, we invite teams to Rally to test their robots in friendly matches. Our team runs the event, invites tech sponsors to speak, aids teams and opens our shop for repairs. The last 6 years 1511 shipped team crates from Rally. At Championships we host FRC Rookie Meet & Greet to welcome rookies to FIRST. In 2010 the team started Rochester Rampage at the Monroe County Fair, with over 30,000 people! FRC teams played matches on the Rally field. 1511 explained FIRST and promoted FLL, inspiring a woman to start a 4H FLL team that is competing this year. We invited them to Rumble 6, our off-season FLL competition. The Fair is finding sponsors to raise \$1K to start another FLL team. I can't wait to go to these events!

10/26-While making the newsletter for our 70 sponsors, another kid and I found pictures of students giving plaques to Harris' Division President and Engineering VP to celebrate 5 years of sponsorship. He told me how we took our robot to Harris' 50th Anniversary, where HE taught

employees to drive the robot! They also toured Harris. They saw where they manufacture student-designed parts in build season. He told me how last year Harris had to cut charitable funding due to the economy, but chose to keep supporting FIRST. Our strong partnership with our main sponsor is so cool!

11/2-We went to InterVOL to sort medical supplies for countries in need. I wish I was part of the team last year when they helped with the Haitian relief. I'm amazed to see the team has a global impact!

11/8-PTC and the FLR committee asked OUR team to show our robot and present to companies to help spread FIRST to other parts of NY. What an honor!

11/16-Our 5-week Mock Build Season began. We got into 6 groups to build mini robots to compete at our holiday party. The engineering design process we learned building spaghetti bridges and bottle rockets came in handy. I hope this is what build season is like...and that my group wins ;).

11/19-We packed 700+ Thanksgiving baskets for families in need (for the 3rd year). It's good to know we help the community in so many ways! I signed up for Foodlink next week. I used to think the team just built robots.

11/30-Two teammates told me they gained a lot of confidence by presenting at 2010 Championships on PR and spreading FIRST using 1511 as an example. Maybe I'll present next year!

12/3- I read in our team handbook about Achievements - all the fun things I do with the team to earn the cost of my trips, like demoing the robot at an electronics show, playing games with senior citizens & organizing events. The biggest one is the Patron Drive that raises over \$9K each year reaching new sponsors. Students visit 250+ businesses, spreading FIRST!

12/5-I volunteered at the U of R FLL Championships with 25 teammates who reffed and judged, while others demoed our FRC bot. I was surprised to see so many more shirts with Harris & FIRST 1511 like I saw at qualifiers. I didn't know we've sponsored 63 FLL/JFLL teams, starting 19 this year. And 15 of us mentor them! It makes sense as 1511 hosts 4 FLL summer camps and coach seminars for 100+ kids and adults every year. It is cool to know our team has funded the FLL winners to go to Champs for the last 3 years!

12/11-Leadership Boot Camp! It taught me about leadership and gave me confidence to lead. We did an obstacle course where each kid had a mock injury (I had a broken arm). We had to get everyone from point A to B safely. We practiced presentation skills by giving speeches on the fly.

12/12-The team went skating with alumni and FRC2999 members. They started in '09 when 1511 mentored them their rookie year 4X/week, providing tools, mentors and a crate. They laughed about how we helped 2999 finish their bot first.

12/21-Following 1511's mantra of spreading FIRST, I organized a presentation for potential sponsors at a PMI conference. I got a standing ovation! Who knew robotics would teach me public speaking? I think I sparked their interest in FIRST.

1/5/11-We celebrated 1511 Day! Team Leader Larry told us about the history of 1511 and where alumni are now. One works at Harris, another is interning there. It would be cool to get a job with our sponsor and come back to mentor. We also ate cake and a kid stuck his face in it! I'm going to fit in here!

1/8-KICKOFF! While we brainstormed at school, some mentors and alumni helped rookie teams build the kit chassis, an event we planned.

1/9-I'm sick. Can't go to robotics. :(The weekly team email said we have a daily webcast now. I got to see what the team is doing and join in Integration Meetings, reviewing bot design and progress. I read our daily blog and Wiki engineering notebook to see what was done. While browsing FIRST's web resources, I found our website linked there!

1/17-Local teams FRC1405 & FRC1551 came for programming help. As the only Rochester team to Beta Test for the last 2 years, I learned the workings of FIRST's control system and how to communicate the info to other teams. Our presentations at Ruckus and Kickoff helped them figure out the new system. I liked helping FIRST make the controls better.

1/25-Our team captain presented robot trophies to our new and former team leaders for Thank a Mentor Day! Students signed a poster to thank our 13 Harris & 14 community mentors who volunteer their time to help us. When I first learned to use the mill, Mentor Tony took me through all the steps. Now I have the skills to mill parts! I'm glad I got to thank him.

2/2-With an alumnus, I mentored FRC73, now at a new inner-city STEM school. I used my new skills to help design their drivetrain in CAD. I heard about how our team mentored them in '09 and helped FRC3173 last year with Inventor and structural design. Teams call our shop Thundermart because they can get tools and parts. We've assisted many teams with LabVIEW and C++, providing training over the past 3 years. We share our C++ code & LabVIEW scouting system data with teams during competition. We've assisted 200+ FRC teams with everything from programming & team structure to emergency robot support at competition.

2/9-My friend told me about the Women in Technology Day at Harris. She met and talked to women in engineering and ate lunch with USAF Lt. General Kenne. She, Senator Gillibrand and other politicians spoke and mentioned FIRST Team 1511. We are famous!

2/14-I'm going to give the year-end report to the Board of Ed who recognizes 1511 for being a well-run student program! We'll show off the '11 bot and thank them for their support. With 1511's input, our school's renovations nearly tripled our work area. Our shop is full of new equipment. I take a few tech classes with 1 of our 4 teacher advisors, the head of the tech dept. Our awesome assistant principal always comes to competition with us. I also heard our principal and superintendent and Harris' Director of Finance will come to FLR! Our partnership with the school has enabled 1511 to excel in not only building a family, but making sure 1511 is here to impact future students.

8/16/14-Four years have passed. I ran my last 1511 demo at the Rhinos soccer game before I go to college for engineering. I saw a kid with the look I must've had when I first saw the robot. He seemed excited when I told him about FIRST and 1511. He's going to be a freshman at PHS so I asked him to join!

When I joined 1511 it was to build a robot. I didn't realize then we were also building people. The Harris, PHS, Rochester and FIRST communities have come together to make 1511 an inspiring experience for us and everyone we meet. This team has had such an amazing impact on my life I can't wait to come back to mentor. Makes me think of our team motto, The Thunder Just Keeps Getting Louder!