FIRST Team 1511

Chairman’s Executive Summary 2015

1. Briefly describe the impact of the FIRST program on team participants with special emphasis on the 2014/2015 year and the preceding two years.

95% of our alumni go to college; 88% pursue STEM careers. Focused on technical skills: CAD, programming, documentation, mechanical; students also gain business skills: leadership, speaking, interviewing, time management, problem-solving, public relations. Mentors learn to manage, network, collaborate and volunteer at FIRST events. Our Advisor discovered his interest in STEM went beyond teaching and got a degree in administration. We’re an all-inclusive family with fun, friends and belonging.

1. Examples of role model characteristics for other teams to emulate.

Our community outreach, leadership, technical emphasis, marketing, enthusiasm and dedication to excel secures our future and gives us resources to help other teams grow via workshops, materials, advice, mentorship and funding. Our latest focus has been getting others to help us spread FIRST to make a bigger impact. We run our own events, start new teams, and volunteer and mentor all levels of FIRST. Other teams know they can count on us for anything. We’ve helped over 400 FRC teams in 11 years.

1. Describe the impact of the FIRST program on your community with special emphasis on the 2014/2015 year and the preceding two years.

Our MEGADrive collected over 9000 items: food, kids’ books, and blood units for local charities and kept over 7000 lbs. of electronics out of the landfill. We sorted medical supplies and collected money for international relief efforts. We’ve raised over $10k for charity walks, boxed food for over 800 families, packed toys for over 2000 kids, gave 30 copies of The New Cool to local libraries and cleaned-up our town each year! Over 100 businesses yearly hear about FIRST during our Patron Drive.

1. Team’s innovative or creative methods to spread the FIRST message.

In 2013, 1511 was a National Make a Difference Day Honoree for our MEGADrive with FRC340, featured in USA Weekend Magazine reaching 22.5 million households! We demo to unique audiences with other teams: an environmental festival, semi-pro soccer and baseball games, state and county fairs. We host robotics events to spread FIRST: a Week 0 event, an off-season, a rookie Champs event and 3 FLL events, publicized in the media. We “Make it Loud” through social media including a daily online newsletter.

1. Describe the Team’s Initiatives to help start or form other FRC Teams.

Our many events and demos promote FIRST to various audiences, including the 4H rural community, inspiring FRC4203 to start a team. We’ve met with schools from various states to talk about starting teams. A former 1511 mentor wanted to start his own team so we helped start FRC5433 by having their students join our meetings and lending them a robot to compete in our offseason competition. Winnings from the National Make a Difference Day Award were used to start and sustain teams, $8,250 total.

1. Describe the team's initiatives to help start or form other *FIRST* teams (including Jr. FLL, FLL, & FTC).

1511 has a successful program to form FLL/Jr.FLL teams, sponsoring 155 teams in our 11 year history, 28 this year. Our 4 LEGO camps in Penfield and Gates reach over 100 kids per summer inspiring them to join or start teams. We offer FLL team grants, resources on how to start FLL teams, a sample curriculum and host coach training seminars. We brought FLL to 4 Penfield schools, started Penfield Jr.FLL and last year formed our first FTC team. We used MADD grants to sustain 1 and start 2 FTC teams.

1. Describe the team's initiatives on assisting other *FIRST* teams (including Jr. FLL, FLL, FTC, & FRC) with progressing through the *FIRST* program.

1511 emphasizes team sustainability. Globally, we help teams with team structure, recruitment and fundraising. We have many team resources on our website; our Rookie page is linked on FIRST’s site. Our patron drive is part of the FIRST fundraising toolkit. We fund team supplies and registration fees. We inspire kids to continue in FIRST with shop tours, driving our robot at schools, FLL Camps and events. 1511 student mentors inspire FLL/FTC grads to join 1511 and FRC. FTC6996 is our feeder team.

1. Describe how your team works with other *FIRST* teams to serve as mentors to younger or less experienced *FIRST* teams (includes Jr. FLL, FLL, FTC, & FRC teams)

Our students are mentors for Jr.FLL, FLL& FTC teams. In 11 years, we’ve mentored 44 FLL and FTC teams. Our events help FLL and FRC teams get ready for competition. We have mentored 23 FRC teams year-round, providing rookie resources, tools and hands-on help. We've held trainings for inner-city mentors, opened our leadership boot camp to others, hosted a FIRST workshop for FRC Teams by FRC teams. We invite other teams to work with us to make our events stronger and share our experience.

1. Describe your Corporate/University Sponsors.

We have several types of sponsors, Harris, our main corporate sponsor, is a high tech supplier of military communication systems, public safety, government and commercial customers. Our Patron Drive sponsors, over 50 a year, provide a local connection, and range from small family-run businesses to international companies. Some sponsors: Chamtek, Drelick Welding, Debbie Supply, provide us with gifts in kind, making or donating parts and services. We also consider our school as an amazing sponsor!

1. Describe the strength of your partnership with sponsors.

Harris provides more than funds: 11 mentors this year, student-designed parts, military-grade tablets, tours for our FLL teams and mentor recognition! The Director of Finance visits during Build and competition. Mentors are year-round, involved in school curriculum and team building. Other sponsors provide late-night welding and parts. We invite them to our events and send them newsletters and thank-you’s. Our school is a big supporter, providing us endless time, space, tools and 3 advisors.

1. Describe how your team would explain what *FIRST* is to someone who has never heard of it.

FIRST was created to break cultural norms, inspire students to pursue STEM careers, and look up to STEM professionals as role models. It prepares students to be the world’s future leaders with ideals like Gracious Professionalism. Every year the game is different to test students to their limits on creativity and practical applications. It exposes students to different career paths, from engineering to marketing to math. Students gain STEM knowledge and life skills from professional mentors.

1. Other matters of interest to the FIRST judges, if any.

Our new focus has been advocating for STEM funding. As the NYS representative, we went to DC to learn from FRC27. We’ve visited several state representatives who have supported a $250,000 grant to start and sustain FIRST teams in NY. Our events, large impact demos and community service, have introduced FIRST to a potential audience of over 650,000 in 3 years! All students work on the robot and are encouraged to lead. Wearing our red camouflage, from New York to MIT to Cairo, we promote FIRST!