

**Title of Session:** Math and Science Resources Joint Session - FIRST Robotics

**Moderator:** Jeff Cooper

**Guest Speakers:** Robyn Needel and Patricia Chen

**Title of File:** 20051206robotics

**Date:** December 6, 2005

Room: Robotics (K-12) Group

**MattCu:** Hello everyone. This is my first time using tapped in. I am a senior in college studying to be a high-school math teacher

**RobynN:** I am Robyn and I mentor a FIRST team in the non-engineering stuff

**NehalitaSt:** My name is Neha, I'm from south Florida and part of the RCU, this is my second time in a chat here

**DavidWe:** Hey, Matt. Know about the Math Forum - [www.mathforum.org](http://www.mathforum.org)

**ArefinB:** Hi, I am Arefin Bari, I run FLL and South Florida FIRST, mentor 3 FIRST teams.

**BjB:** a reminder if you are new to Tapped In, please use the Actions menu in the top right of your chat window and click on LARGER TEXT

**RobynN:** Arefin, I am not sure if some of the people here know what FLL is

**ArefinB:** FIRST Lego League

**FreddyS:** Hello, my name is Freddy and I am a mentor for Team 204, Eastern Robotic Vikings out of New Jersey. I am also a volunteer for FIRST regionals and a member of NEMO.

**ArefinB:** A robotics program sponsored by FIRST for Middle and Elementary school students

**RobynN:** Freddy, David here is in NJ...and has expressed interest IN BUILDING ROBOTS

**ArefinB:** They are assigned a different mission every year, they build a autonomous lego robot as well as present their team

**NehalitaSt:** question: are the majority of the people here adults?

**RobynN:** I think so

**DavidWe:** I'm David Weksler. I help start the Math Forum 12 years ago (with a lot of people). I am one of the HelpDesk volunteers for Tapped In. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

**FreddyS:** David what part of NJ are you from

**SusanR** joined the room.

**SungminM** joined the room.

**DavidWe:** I grew up across the river from New York City. Tenafly

**MarieMS:** Hi David, I'm involved with FLL, FRC and Girls FIRST in NH - but I am originally from NJ - headed down there next week. I hear you have a great program in NJ - if you have any interest in discussing women's' programs - I'd love to be able to meet with you and your organization

**JeffC:** I'm Jeff Cooper, facilitate the Math and Science Resource groups here, also on Helpdesk, in education for 15 years... live in Forest Grove Oregon.

**ArthurM:** Hi, I teach technology and science at the high school level, looking for new ideas.

**PatriciaCh:** I am hoping more students will join us...I just signed one up now

**FreddyS:** ok

**SusanR:** I am Sue. I facilitate the K to 3+ Great Resources sessions here..from Canada..Ottawa, Ontario to be precise

**PatriciaCh:** Some of our college students emailed me that they are busy studying for exams and may not be joining us tonight

**RobynN:** HEY Marie...Greg is up in Manchester at DEKA for 6 months, and is dying for social activities...will you let me know what goes on up there he can get involved with?

**JeffC:** OK... I'm about to hand the floor over to Robyn and Patricia... but first I'd like to point out the 10 Steps for Successful Chat note in the top frame. Many of you will want to Detach your chat window... then maximize it... since the text will scroll rather quickly.

**NehalitaSt:** I think I'm the only high school student here. Well, hello. To give you an idea, I'm involved in an engineering interest curriculum for elementary and middle school students and hope to eventually make something permanent in Broward county

**MattCu:** Hi, I am a senior in college studying to be a high school math teacher. This is my first time using Tapped In. My professor said this could be a great place to learn and find out new ideas.

**MarieMS:** Robyn - let's discuss via email - I'm sure I can help

**DennisRM** joined the room.

**PatriciaCh:** I am on email too

**SungminM:** Hi, I am a Science teacher in South Korea.

**RobynN:** Marie, that was my thought

**DennisRM:** Mathematics teacher, Indiana

**FreddyS:** Is there any topics we are going to be talking about?

**FreddyS:** Or is it a open forum.

**PatriciaCh:** What do you all want to know?

**PatriciaCh:** It will help focus this discussion....we could talk about FIRST forever

**ArthurM:** I am on the east coast of Canada, Province of Newfoundland and Labrador (longest place name ever!)

**FreddyS:** Let's talk about what FIRST is and how it got started

**JeffC:** Let's start with Patricia and Robyn discussing FIRST... and we will move on from there.

**RobynN:** Pat, why don't you start?

**PatriciaCh:** I was introduced to FIRST....because my son wanted to opt out of science fair and he liked building things

**PatriciaCh:** I think that is how most people learn about it

**MattCu:** what does FIRST stand for?

**RobynN:** We got involved because our son worked on a solar car project at his high school - he attended a retreat with the group and heard a FIRST rep talk about it

**RobynN:** For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology

**LizCampoSt** joined the room.

**ArefinB**: hey Liz

**LizCampoSt**: hi!

**PatriciaCh**: thanks Robyn. I type too slow

**RobynN**: lol

**PatriciaCh**: This program is very different...it focuses on being gracious

**MattCu**: is it an organization that you can join? or is it a help program?

**PatriciaCh**: it is big on mentorship and volunteerism

**JeffC**: Here is the FIRST Homepage (hold the Ctrl key down when clicking... or accept popups from this site): <http://www.usfirst.org/>

**ArefinB**: You can find a lot of information about how to start team, fundraising, what is first about at [www.chiefdelphi.com](http://www.chiefdelphi.com)

**PatriciaCh**: it really aims at promoting science, math and technology

**RobynN**: Matt, it's an organization for high school students, anyone can get a team started

**NehalitaSt**: And yes, you can join. You can become a mentor, volunteer or even start your own team!

**RobynN**: but it is expensive - \$6000 for a kit of parts to build the robot and one competition

**ArefinB**: there are over 1000 teams in FIRST.

**PatriciaCh**: and you have FIRST LEGO League for middle and elementary kids

**RobynN**: however, there are grants around and there's always fundraising

**FreddyS**: yeah, for many us, FIRST has affected our lives

**PatriciaCh**: They came out with the VEX games which is cheaper

**FreddyS**: which cost \$250, I believe

**MattCu**: ok, thanks

**ArefinB:** you can buy it at Radio Shack

**PatriciaCh:** People involved....are happy that they are mentoring

**RobynN:** the idea of FIRST is to expose kids to science and technology careers

**NehalitaSt:** No prob Matt, if you have any more questions feel free to ask

**DennisRM:** Very good idea.

**PatriciaCh:** that science and tech can be fun too

**MarieMS:** Hi all, for me, I've internalized FIRST as a way to give students a hands-on view to what science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) can really mean to them. And also a way to learn the real meaning of "I CAN"

**RobynN:** it is so much fun to mentor - I can't imagine not doing it, even though the hours involved are nuts

**DennisRM:** what is VEX??

**ArefinB:** [www.vexlabs.com](http://www.vexlabs.com)

**PatriciaCh:** thanks

**RobynN:** a new program that FIRST worked out with Radio Shack

**ArefinB:** which is cheaper than FIRST

**RobynN:** basic robot kits are \$300, Freddy

**PatriciaCh:** it is cheaper than the big robot

**DennisRM:** oh, okay...so, it is a way to get involved without the high price?

**PatriciaCh:** you still have to build and program

**NehalitaSt:** exactly Dennis

**ArefinB:** ok here is an example of the difference between FIRST and VEX....

**DennisRM:** very good

**RobynN:** the idea is that smaller teams can still compete doing similar things

**ArefinB:** FIRST robots are 28" by 38" by 5ft tall.

**PatriciaCh:** all these programs ...involves kids to think and learn to work together

**ArefinB:** VEX robots are 18" by 18" by 24"

**FreddyS:** Dean Kamen, the inventor of the Segway, created FIRST and saw that many people were not going into the engineering and science fields, so he decided to create a competition and get more students and adults involve

**RobynN:** they encourage "out of the box" creative thinking

**PatriciaCh:** yes

**DennisRM:** very good

**RobynN:** each year, the competition is a combination sporting and thinking event

**PatriciaCh:** there are loads of scholarships for the high schoolers

**PatriciaCh:** that are offered by major universities

**DennisRM:** I assume Purdue is a major university that does this?

**RobynN:** Woodie Flowers is the originator of robots competing - he used that when he taught at MIT - he is Dean Kamen's friend and the father of what we call "Gracious Professionalism"

**PatriciaCh:** yes...you can check that on the FIRST site

**ArefinB:** Purdue has one team

**NehalitaSt:** yes. There are many more universities, too. I think Georgia Tech, RPI, WPI .. I don't remember any more at the moment

**RobynN:** there are currently \$8 million available in scholarship money

**DennisRM:** very good

**RobynN:** RIT is one

**PatriciaCh:** Virginia Commonwealth holds an event, Drexel and Boston University is doing one this coming spring with Northeastern U

**MarieMS:** Cornell U., MIT,

**FreddyS:** after the 6 weeks build season, teams then compete in a three-day regional and hopefully go on to the WORLD championship in Atlanta

**RobynN:** there is a regional at the Naval Academy

**PatriciaCh:** we have 36 regionals

**PatriciaCh:** then as Freddy pointed out...some of us go to Nationals in Atlanta

**RobynN:** teams compete in alliances - last year, each alliance was composed of 3 teams - they all had to work together to accomplish the task of winning the game

**FreddyS:** called triple play

**MelissaSt** joined the room.

**PatriciaCh:** hello you made it

**DennisRM:** "the game"???

**MelissaSt:** yes I did

**MattCu:** What types of tasks are required... ?

**FreddyS:** which consisted of lifting tetra-size shapes on goals

**RobynN:** the idea of the game, which changes each year, is to expose kids to the real world problems of product design - there are money and physical parameters given

**FreddyS:** programming, human control

**DennisRM:** you program your robot to do these tasks?

**PatriciaCh:** yes

**DennisRM:** very good

**FreddyS:** for 30 secs

**NehalitaSt:** yes, they have an interface program

**RobynN:** the teams get the kit of parts and game rules, then have to figure out how they want to design the robot

**NehalitaSt:** \*\*sorry that's for FLL

**PatriciaCh:** also autonomous mode is being used too

**MattCu:** how is a winner determined?

**FreddyS:** each match is 2 mins and 30s

**RobynN:** the FIRST Robots have an autonomous mode

**RobynN:** programming is in C

**FreddyS:** 30 secs is for autonomous which [means] there is no human control

**PatriciaCh:** by highest score....every year's game is scored differently

**ArefinB:** <http://soap.sigmacatrobotics.com/v2/?page=database/movie/2005/florida>

**DennisRM:** can you use the VEX robot or do you have to spend the \$6000 to join the competition?

**ArefinB:** here is a link to bunch of movies

**PatriciaCh:** some years it is double the loser's score

**RobynN:** winners are determined by points...HOWEVER, you cannot win by too many points, as your seeding is based on the losers score

**ArefinB:** You can go through the list and watch some videos of the matches

**FreddyS:** and robots must follow either a line like back in 2004 game FIRST FRENZY

**RobynN:** and you have to be gracious to your opponents because they may be your partners in another game

**PatriciaCh:** you have to watch the games...

**MattCu:** I'll have to watch some of the games to see

**PatriciaCh:** yes...graciousness is a hard concept for kids

**ArefinB:** I posted a link above with the game

**PatriciaCh:** we lend tools, equipment ...cheer each other on...

**NehalitaSt:** I'm sure you can go to a regional near you and see it first hand

**PatriciaCh:** absolutely...you must see all of this in person....



**RobynN:** the Chief Delphi website Arefin is sending you to is the major message board for everyone involved in FIRST

**PatriciaCh:** The World event in Atlanta is like the NCAA Final Four

**MarieMS:** Dennis: There is a competition using only Vex kits, but FIRST Robotics Competition is the \$6000 competition.

**FreddyS:** I'm Freddy204 and I am on like 2-4 times a day

**NehalitaSt:** ([www.chiefdelphi.com](http://www.chiefdelphi.com))

**DennisRM:** thank you Marie

**ArefinB:**

<http://soap.sigmacatrobotics.com/v2/?page=database/movie/2005/championship> here are the videos from Championship in Atlanta

**MattCu:** You compete in teams, so for example if a scholarship was one of the prizes, does each member of the team get a scholarship?

**FreddyS:** There are 3 different competitions, FIRST Lego League for middle schoolers, and VEX AND FIRST for high schoolers

**ArefinB:** no

**ArefinB:** Depends on who applies for the scholarship

**PatriciaCh:** no....you have to be applying to that university...and apply directly

**MattCu:** ok

**MarieMS:** Students apply for scholarships separately- these have nothing to do with the teams, other than the fact that the scholarships are open only to FIRST robotics students

**PatriciaCh:** the kids do not get money for winning at all

**FreddyS:** each competition had different costs and kit of parts

**PatriciaCh:** only trophies

**NehalitaSt:** and pride

**FreddyS:** and a "banner"

**MattCu:** I see.

**RobynN:** there are also competitions for CAD design, a 30 second animation made using professional computer animation software, awards for the mentors, and the biggest award of ALL IS the Chairman's Award

**ArefinB:** and a lot of fun

**PatriciaCh:** Bragging Rights so to speak

**FreddyS:** that's what everyone wants to bring back to their school

**PatriciaCh:** yes

**RobynN:** they get the satisfaction of knowing that they can solve a real world problem

**PatriciaCh:** and survived Built Season

**RobynN:** they also network with amazing people

**RobynN:** yes, it sounds funny, but we have to kick our kids out of school at midnight

**ArefinB:** [http://www2.usfirst.org/2005comp/Section\\_9\\_The\\_Awards.pdf](http://www2.usfirst.org/2005comp/Section_9_The_Awards.pdf) here is a copy of all the awards that were given out in 2005

**PatriciaCh:** yes....they all want to stay to work on the robot

**ArefinB:** I never left until 2 in the morning

**FreddyS:** yea

**RobynN:** lol, our teachers made us go home

**ArefinB:** There have been days when Engineers drove us to school

**ArefinB:** the next day

**ArefinB:** cause we never left

**PatriciaCh:** we do too on our team

**RobynN:** lots of pizza, pot luck suppers, tons of fun

**FreddyS:** I remember the days we stayed at school until 11:00

**PatriciaCh:** the adults stay behind

**FreddyS:** ever night m to f

**PatriciaCh:** sat and sun

**PatriciaCh:** but we love it

**FreddyS:** yea

**ArefinB:** If there is one thing I miss from High school is being a student on a FIRST team.

**FreddyS:** yea, I agree with Arefin

**PatriciaCh:** you are heading for bigger and better games

**TeresaHa** joined the room.

**RobynN:** Hi Teresa

**PatriciaCh:** hello

**FreddyS:** HELLOO Teresa

**TeresaHa:** Good evening all

**RobynN:** long time no see

**TeresaHa:** lol

**NehalitaSt:** clearly, FIRST has impacted so many people and having a good mentor makes it all the better. it's the inspiration and enthusiasm that really keeps us going

**TeresaHa:** seems like years lol

**ArefinB:** Is that Teresa from PINK?

**RobynN:** My son made his decision on which college to attend based on whether they had a FIRST mentoring team

**TeresaHa:** No I'm from Baltimore MD

**ArefinB:** oh ok

**PatriciaCh:** I know that a few of our students studied engineering because of working on the robot

**PatriciaCh:** lol..my two kids too

**LizCampoSt:** Yes, that's true on our team to a very large degree

**RobynN:** my son also

**FreddyS:** There not only [is] a robot head to head competition but there [are] also awards that teams go out for

**MarieMS:** I'm an engineer - I WISH I had FIRST when I was going to school!

**PatriciaCh:** by mentoring....they are giving back to the community

**RobynN:** which is also Part of FIRST

**PatriciaCh:** me too....

**PatriciaCh:** for you teachers....what questions do you have?

**FreddyS:** like team spirit

**FreddyS:** community service award call Chairman Award

**MarieMS:** Can I ask a question? - There are many of us on this chat who are part of the FIRST community - for those of you who are not - does this make any sense? - what are you looking for that may help you understand how FIRST can help you as an educator?

**FreddyS:** there are numerous

**TeresaHa:** thanks Jeff

**RobynN:** there are kids at our high school who are the first to attend college in their families, and FIRST is helping

**JeffC:** links to scholarships?

**JeffC:** I've got a few links up in this room... but I know that \$6K is going to stop a lot of schools from even trying... let alone the time commitment.

**RobynN:** there should be links on the FIRST website

**PatriciaCh:** if you go [to] the FIRST web site...you see it on the left

**TeresaHa:** Marie are there any templates that solicit sponsorship

**FreddyS:** Yea the competition cost and the time commitment are tough at times

**ArefinB:** <http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/scholsh.htm>

**ArefinB:** there is the link to the scholarships

**ArthurM:** Well, as I teach in a small community and a small school, and I don

**RobynN:** NASA is a huge sponsor and has some grants - other large companies put in a lot of money

**NehalitaSt:** well for the first timers, NASA helps out and gives 6k

**MarieMS:** 6K is the price for the "big robots" - you can participate in many ways for far less. VEX costs less than 2K to start and participate.

**PatriciaCh:** If the students participate on the VEX level.....it is doable

**ArthurM:** don't know of any nearby FIRST competitions, it sounds expensive. But VEX might be a start.

**PatriciaCh:** our kids fundraise as well as asking companies for donations

**NehalitaSt:** Arthur, where are you from?

**ArthurM:** East coast of Canada, Newfoundland

**PatriciaCh:** some school districts combine to make one team to spread the cost

**RobynN:** yes, and something to consider - attend a regional event in your area, wherever you are - bring administrators, other teachers, parents and kids...by next year's competition you will have figured out how to compete

**NehalitaSt:** hmm it seems that the closest team to you, Arthur, is from Montréal

**JeffC:** Has anyone attempted to align Robotics with NCLB Standards?

**MarieMS:** Hi Teresa, There are lots of ways to get money - many people on this chat have identified ways to go about it - the most important thing to remember is that FIRST is a community - we help each other - and you can get many ideas and a lot of help to fundraise and to start a team from members - many meet at Chief Delphi - [www.chiefdelphi.com](http://www.chiefdelphi.com) - to help one another

**RobynN:** the FIRST LEGO League is for kids 3rd through 8th grade, that costs \$600 for the first year and \$250 after that...not sure about the Junior FLL, which is a new program this year for 1st through 3rd graders

**ArthurM:** That is an air trip for sure.

**PatriciaCh:** I heard that some schools have that as part of curriculum

**PatriciaCh:** I have seen their lesson plans or such

**RobynN:** where are you Arthur?

**TeresaHa:** thanks Marie

**PatriciaCh:** such

**PatriciaCh:** I use the concept to teach my kids...measurements..scale etc

**NehalitaSt:** Sorry Arthur, you can always start a team in your area and take a special trip down for the regional competition. It would work well as an incentive to the students.

**RobynN:** there are regionals everywhere - where are you located?

**ArthurM:** Robyn, on the east coast of Canada, Newfoundland

**ArefinB:** there are two regionals in Canada

**ArefinB:** greater Toronto

**ArefinB:** and umm..

**PatriciaCh:** Arthur. how long is the bus ride

**SusanR:** . o O ( a fair distance from Montreal )

**ArefinB:** someone help me out please

**JanetL** joined the room.

**RobynN:** we are going to explore some foundations for grants this year

**MarieMS:** Montreal?

**ArefinB:** what is the other regional called in Canada

**ArefinB:** one is greater Toronto

**ArthurM:** Bus and ferry, about 24-30 hours one way to Montreal.

**LizCampoSt:** Waterloo, right?

**FreddyS:** Very good regional, I must say of Waterloo

**ArefinB:** yes

**ArefinB:** If you want more information about the Canada regionals, I can give you someone's contact info.

**NehalitaSt:** Arthur

**NehalitaSt:** there is an FLL tournament this Saturday in Newfoundland

**RobynN:** Arthur, you should go, it's really neat

**NehalitaSt:** you could visit that to get an idea of what elementary/middle-school level students can do

**NehalitaSt:**

<http://www.firstlegoleague.org/calendar.aspx?pid=210&action=showevent&eventid=920#>

**RobynN:** they are amazing

**RobynN:** Arefin, what are the missions for this year's competition?

**FreddyS:** Yea, I mean if you get a group of students that are interested in science, they will absolutely love it

**PatriciaCh:** Ocean Odysessy

**FreddyS:** FIRST is a great competition

**PatriciaCh:** I checked...there isn't any FRC team in your area

**RobynN:** actually, if you want to be really correct, it's Cooperation...Dean is in the process of patenting that idea

**MarieMS:** Hi Freddy, I would say the challenge is to have students who MAY be interested in STEM try FIRST out - and learn how wonderful Science and Technology can be - and then they too will be hooked!!!!

**FreddyS:** ok Marie

**NehalitaSt:** Arthur, do you think you would be interested in going to the FLL regional? It's in Salmonier, NL

**MarieMS:** Freddy --

**PatriciaCh:** it is hard to start...but you do get a lot of support from the community

**RobynN:** You know, everyone can watch the FIRST kickoff in January at the NASA website

**PatriciaCh:** FIRST that is

**FreddyS:** The competition and FIRST start on Jan 7.2006

**FreddyS:** Can't wait

**RobynN:** colleges and industry love FIRST

**JeffC:** Note: If you would like to come back to this group room... click the "add to my favorites" link in the top frame of the main window (not the Detached chat). You may also join this group by letting us know so that we may send you invitations.

**FreddyS:** ... FIRST Kickoff 2006 : 31d 04h 13m

**PatriciaCh:** this is also good for kids who are competitive but not in sports

**ArefinB:** can be found on this site...

**NehalitaSt:** does anyone have any more questions?

**ArthurM:** Nehalita, I'll be about an hour drive from Salmonier this weekend, so I might make it if circumstances permit. It is a middle school event?

**SaraRe** joined the room.

**NehalitaSt:** it's at St. Catherine's School

**RobynN:** it's neat to see how the "boring" stuff the students are taking in school comes alive for them...they look at physics and math in a new way

**PatriciaCh:** yes..FLL is a middle school event

**NehalitaSt:** \*1 but it's for elementary and middle schools

**NehalitaSt:** so to answer your question, yes

**PatriciaCh:** they have a competition for younger ones too....you may see it there



**BjB:** Hi, Sara. Glad you could join the discussion

**RobynN:** these competitions let kids feel good about being smart

**FreddyS:** I think we should tell everyone our own personal stories of FIRST and how it affected our lives

**SaraRe:** Thanks :D Would have been here sooner, but I was in class.

**SaraRe:** FIRST seriously made me reconsider my major. Music and arts was my life until FIRST, and now I'm an engineering major.

**ArefinB:** sorry about that.. i was having problems getting in the room

**ArefinB:** Robyn asked me for the missions ...

**MarieMS:** Freddy - I think that's a terrific idea - especially if there are students here - because this is about IGNITING Student enthusiasm in STEM

**NehalitaSt:** Arthur, you can contact Clare E. Button and probably get any extra information --

**PatriciaCh:** what type of engineering

**NehalitaSt:** 709-738-1888

**ArthurM:** I teach at the high school level but I might check it out (FLL event)

**RobynN:** Arthur, the missions Arefin is referring to are the tasks the Lego League kids must accomplish

**ArefinB:** if you go to [firstlegoleague.com](http://firstlegoleague.com) ... you will be able to find all the missions and challenges for this year's game

**SaraRe:** FLL is great, actually, My high school's team is looking to mentor a team at our local middle school next year.

**ArefinB:** <http://www.firstlegoleague.org/nobanner.aspx?pid=17940>

**NehalitaSt:** it would be good for your high school students also. many high school students mentor FLL teams -- it's a very maturing job and something that is very rewarding

**ArefinB:** there is the direct link

**FreddyS:** Well then I will start

**NehalitaSt:** the floor is yours Freddy

**ArefinB:** There is an FLL competition this Saturday in South Florida... all the volunteers minus me and few others are high school students

**MelissaSt:** I'll be helping out in an FLL competition this Saturday

**ArefinB:** the same one I am talking about.

**ArefinB:** Actually two of the volunteers are present in this room right now.

**NehalitaSt:** FLL is also very inspiring to high school students in the respect that we can see what elementary and middle school students are capable of

**MelissaSt:** particularly those of us who did FLL in middle school

**SaraRe:** It's a great recruiting technique too because a lot of high school students in FRC work right along with the FLL students.

**ArefinB:** I mentored over 8 FLL teams throughout my high school career

**ArthurM:** Is VEX off the shelf at Radio Shack (now The Source in Canada)? I don't recall seeing it, but I will check tomorrow.

**ArefinB:** they are a lot of fun to work with

**RobynN:** a lot of FIRST teams bring the FLL kids in to work with them, the younger kids love it

**PatriciaCh:** yes it is

**PatriciaCh:** it is about \$300

**ArthurM:** It might be nice to get the high schoolers experienced before they try mentoring.

**SaraRe:** yeah, they are. and I think they're worth it

**RobynN:** you can build and program with THE VEX kit off the shelf, but if you want to get more creative, there are additional things you can buy - more programming capacity, extra parts, etc

**NancyJK** joined the room.

**RobynN:** VEX kits would make a great holiday gift

**ArefinB:**

[http://www.chiefdelphi.com/media/img/cdf/cdf16194d5e629495a183c805a0f1913\\_1.jpg](http://www.chiefdelphi.com/media/img/cdf/cdf16194d5e629495a183c805a0f1913_1.jpg)

**JennyCB** joined the room.

**ArefinB:** one of the vex robots I built... that's just with one kit

**RobynN:** they are like a 21st century Erector set

**RobynN:** Hi Jenny...

**PatriciaCh:** VEX is a good way to introduce the students to FIRST minus the major \$\$ cost

**SaraRe:** I know my FRC team is buying one to play with gear ratios and to teach a lot of information to the girls that hasn't been taught too well previously

**RobynN:** Jenny is one of FIRST's Senior Mentors

**PatriciaCh:** there is a lot of info on that on the web that can be shared with them

**JennyCB:** Hi all, my first time doing this.

**ArefinB:**

<http://www.chiefdelphi.com/forums/pictures.php?s=&action=single&picid=12179&direction=DESC&sort=date&perrow=4&trows=3&quiet=Verbose> not sure how many kit they used... but definitely more than 2

**NancyJK:** I agree about the Vex kits, our team has 4, but we also have a Vex team to use them.

**FreddyS:** Well, the first time I hear about FIRST was in 8th Grade and it was when they use to televise the competition on ESPN but that the old days. Then in my 10th grade, I was watching a TV special on PBS on FIRST and how it affected those teams' lives and what they gain from it and then I found out that my school had FIRST team towards the end of the year and I decided to join. So Jr year, I join and been involved ever since. I did everything from planning team functions to working with my fellow members on awards and cheering the team on.

**PatriciaCh:** hello welcome

**TeresaHa:** hi Jenny

**SaraRe:** And what did you get out of it, Freddy, because I think that's the most important part :D

**ArefinB:** Hey jenny... welcome

**FreddyS:** Well.

**ArefinB:** life

**FreddyS:** LOL THAT TRUE

**ArefinB:** that's how I describe it

**RobynN:** friends

**JanetL:** How do I join the group?

**PatriciaCh:** this group?

**NehalitaSt:** you mean First Robotics?

**SaraRe:** the signature of my email says, and I think it's even quoted in a chiefdelphi spotlight, "if FIRST isn't your life, you're doing something wrong"

**JanetL:** Yes

**JanetL:** This chat group--or am I already a member?

**KateMSt** joined the room.

**JanetL:** you did, but it didn't work

**PatriciaCh:** I can check

**PatriciaCh:** welcome Kate

**JennyCB:** Janet is the Senior Mentor for DC.

**PatriciaCh:** are you in Canada?

**RobynN:** Hi Janet

**KateMSt:** hi

**JanetL:** Hi people!

**ArefinB:** hello Kate

**ArefinB:** and Janet

**KateMSt:** yes, I am in Canada

**ArefinB:** glad you could join us tonight

**ArthurM:** I'll check out the VEX kits and accessories, the price seems right, and I could use it in tech class to generate interest.

**ArefinB:** Kate... are you from 771?

**TeresaHa:** hi all

**PatriciaCh:** we have Arthur online who is from Newfoundland

**JanetL:** You do need some accessories for VEX if you want to compete

**SaraRe:** a Tech class is WONDERFUL to get kids interested in the program, I wish my school had one.

**MarieMS:** Arthur, you might also like to check out the VEX challenge on usfirst.org and see if your students can get "ignited" to try to solve an engineering problem.

**JanetL:** You can still sign up for the VEX challenge in some areas--but there is a fee for competition

**JennyCB:** There are also some discounts available for Vex

**NehalitaSt:** I first learned about FIRST in school and got into it this season (2005) -- ever since then my life has been changed inside out. I changed from wanting biomedical engineering to electrical engineering and I learned how to program the robot in one season. Ever since I got involved in robotics, I have been more actively interested in my community. Right now I'm working on a project with two other high school seniors to build mini curriculums to interest elementary and middle school students in engineering. We made a presentation in front of the ASEE today (many professors around the country from colleges all interesting in engineering in education) and have gotten a lot of positive feedback. This all happened because I, BY CHANCE, joined robotics. I've been hooked ever since.

**ArthurM:** What is the ballpark \$ for VEX accessories needed for competitions?

**NancyJK:** I think the Vex discounts have ended.

**TeresaHa:** Well I have papers to grade and lessons to write. I have enjoyed the atmosphere is the chat. When will you be back on?

**FreddyS:** I mean, it gives students a forum, a forum that students that are interesting in science, tech, engi, etc and they don't have to be made fun of because it. also, life lessons are learn from it, respect, how to deal with a limited budget and go to regional, unity and belief in science. '

**JanetL:** I have heard the battery pack \$50, the programming module \$100

**JennyCB:** Vex kits with add on for about \$500.

**ArefinB:** pretzel

**LisaPer:** hey everyone

**RobynN:** sounds right, Janet...also I think for competition, they can use 3 kits

**PatriciaCh:** hi Lisa and Greg

**RobynN:** hi Greg

**ArthurM:** How is the VEX module programmed? Computer interface or ?

**PatriciaCh:** Theresa: we will let you know

**RobynN:** Hi Lisa

**NehalitaSt:** Anyway, still being a high school student, I have homework due tomorrow. I'll be on as soon as I finish. Goodnight, hope to see some of you again

**TeresaHa:** thanks a lot good night all

**LisaPer:** g'night!

**PatriciaCh:** good night

**GregN:** hi all

**RobynN:** gee, Greg - everyone knows you!

**JanetL:** And there is a standard educator discount of 10% I believe from Radio Shack but there were some better discounts around

**ArefinB:** is that Greg Needel?

**GregN:** yes

**ArefinB:** cool

**GregN:** nobody knows me

**ArefinB:** how is it going man... long time no talk... since like IRI

**PatriciaCh:** Robyn...do you want to talk about your involvement?

**RobynN:** sure...meet Greg, everyone

**GregN:** it is going well....a lot of things have been changing for me

**RobynN:** he is the reason my husband and I are involved

**GregN:** yea they tag on to everything I do j/k

**PatriciaCh:** Sara ..you are a mentor of a team right

**LisaPer:** lol Greg.. I don't think I ever got to say hi to you at iri.. so hi :p

**RobynN:** he brought FIRST to his high school, then took it with him to college where he has mentored a number of teams...we stayed on at his former school

**RobynN:** yeah, Greg, you are right

**GregN:** hi Lisa...I am sure I met you in the chaos which was IRI

**VirginiaAM:** Hello

**GregN:** I think you were covered in Perdue garb

**LisaPer:** haha, that I was.. :p

**SaraRe:** I would like to see SWE get more involved with FIRST. I know they've had some support in some places, but I think a lot of girls get scared away from engineering because they don't realize that it actually CAN be a girl's world

**RobynN:** Greg, I did not mention what you have done or where FIRST has led you...that's your story

**LisaPer:** we're trying to here Sara

**LisaPer:** with RCU

**LisaPer:** slow process.. seeing that I'm not in it myself

**FreddyS:** I was on the team as a member in hs and now I am a college student mentoring my hs team and its cool to teach the members and take a step back and learn from them. I honestly, mean to the heart, it wasn't for FIRST, I probably would have not a career path to walk down.

**LisaPer:** but I'm working on membership

**RobynN:** We have a great time with the kids and at the competitions

**SaraRe:** I've spoken to the Rutgers chapter, but they don't seem to have the interest or the time.

**LisaPer:** invite them to competitions

**LisaPer:** definitely

**SaraRe:** They wanted to be more involved, but then the NJ Regional left Rutgers campus and now most of them can't seem to find the time.

**RobynN:** that's a shame

**GregN:** I guess I will talk about my involvement with FIRST...

**MarieMS:** Hi Sara - I don 't know if you are aware - but FIRST has a major strategic initiative going to increase involvement of Girls in FIRST programs - I am on the board for that activity - we are working with Girls Scouts America, NASA and several other prominent organizations - we'd love to include SWE

**JennyCB:** Better yet, get the Regional Committee to send VIP invites.

**FreddyS:** And also, when you are on a team in FIRST

**FreddyS:** everyone is there for you

**FreddyS:** other teams, mentors

**SaraRe:** I actually called Girl Scouts after I saw one of their girlsgotech commercials because I was stunned that they didn't have a link to FIRST on their website. I hope it's changed since then!

**MelissaSt:** ok, I too shall have to be going; ap calc test to study for :/. goodnight everyone, hope to chat with you again

**FreddyS:** its a competition but everyone gets along

**ArefinB:** I will be back in a few... I got a final exam in the morning



**LisaPer:** good luck!

**FreddyS:** I met a lot of people through FIRST and talk to some mentors in here from other states like Lisa and Arefin

**ArefinB:** thanks Lisa ...

**SaraRe:** Here's the way my advisor explained FIRST competitions to a new student we got this year "It's crazy competitive, but it's a lot of fun. We all know how hard it was to get there and how much effort it took, so we try to treat everyone as though they were our team members"

**JennyCB:** Sara, this is definitely something FIRST needs to follow up on

**MarieMS:** We have a new board member from Girl Scouts who is a DYNAMO - she's working to address these and many other activities. If you or other young women have ideas of what you feel would resonate - contact me: [MarieSchulmann@yahoo.com](mailto:MarieSchulmann@yahoo.com) - I'm in the middle of working with multiple women to write a white paper to initiate a new set of activities - would LOVE your input.

**RobynN:** Sara, that's how we have found it

**SaraRe:** I think so, FIRST is a great thing for the girls, I wish more girls knew about it.

**SaraRe:** the first year my school had a team (2003) I was the ONLY girl involved.

**LisaPer:** Sara.. we used the "bring a friend" approach

**PatriciaCh:** good luck on exams

**LisaPer:** we actually have a given amount of participation points the students have to achieve

**RobynN:** we need to get more girls involved in LEGO League, then they will stay

**LisaPer:** and they get more points if they bring their friends

**SaraRe:** We've grown since then, I think our team has at least 8 or 9 girls, maybe more.

**LisaPer:** and we've gained about 8 girls

**LisaPer:** nice

**PatriciaCh:** Sara do you know about the RCU

**JanetL:** In Maryland/DC area we are going to send invites to the student chapters of SWE, IEEE, NSBE, and ASME--to a kick-off so we can get them involved.

**SaraRe:** I do and I've been told to join a lot, but I keep forgetting

**GregN:** while in HS I started a team which impacted me to go into engineering. After I graduated I went to RIT for engineering. While in Rochester I have been involved with the creation of 4 teams, a regional event, and a lot of other stuff. Over the years I have volunteered at many events doing all sorts of jobs for FIRST. Right now I am working at DEKA research in Manchester NH, and I know I will be involved in FIRST for many more years to come.

**PatriciaCh:** the December issue is on the welcome page if you want to read it

**BethSw** joined the room.

**GregN:** but the real reason I am so involved is that I see the good that this organization can, does and will bring to many people across the world

**PatriciaCh:** Hi Beth

**RobynN:** Hi Beth

**LisaPer:** definitely Greg

**FreddyS:** Well I g2g to go but if anyone wants to talk more about FIRST my aim is MrMentor204 and we have mentor chats starting in Dec and some members are in the, know about it and get talk to you about getting involve

**BethSw:** oh look, that's where the chat is

**SaraRe:** As a college mentor student I'd love to do whatever I can do to spread the message of FIRST. I said it in a post a few days ago, the reason I'm still involved is because I want people to catch on to the pride and spirit I have for the program.

**RobynN:** Greg, what are some of the things you have gained from your involvement? in general terms

**GregN:** that's a tough question mom....

**RobynN:** Freddy was mentioning a few things...I wondered what you thought

**FreddyS:** Good Luck and hope to see all you teachers at the regionals

**GregN:** I have met a ton of people who share similar interests, I have gotten jobs, I have found a way to give back to the community in a way that I can apply my education.

**GregN:** I am sure there are more but they don't sound as good

**RobynN:** lol

**JennyCB:** Greg discovered he is a great announcer!

**RobynN:** he is awesome at play by play

**GregN:** jenny, I was looking at a calendar today and I might be able to do the FLL thing you asked if you still need it

**ArefinB:** Greg I got a question for you... what is up with you and John starting to MC... that's going to like take mine and Tytus' chance away?

**ArefinB:** lol

**FreddyS:** Good Luck

**GregN:** haha...anytime you want to take the mic away from me that is fine

**JennyCB:** Greg, email me. It would be great. FLL tournament Jan. 21

**PatriciaCh:** Well..I got involved because my son joined and then followed by his sister.....at this point..it has been 6 years and I mentored my first FLL teams this year.....what I see is growth within each student...maturity ...outlook...hopes for a future....I live in Florida....in a rural community...we have cattle and orange groves...and light manufacturing....the kids are exposed to science and tech in a fun way....this is a great program for kids....you meet a lot of great people

**ArefinB:** It would be nice to work with you once as game announcer Greg

**ArefinB:** oo... I just realized... Beth Sweet is in here.

**GregN:** I am sure the chance will come up

**ArefinB:** She is probably one of the girls that inspired me the most

**ArefinB:** running a team by herself as well as keeping up with college...

**ArefinB:** that is amazing

**BethSw:** well, I dunno about "by myself"

**GregN:** I agree that is truly amazing

**ArefinB:** Beth...

**BethSw:** Arefin...

**ArefinB:** why don't you share your story about FIRST =)

**BethSw:** see I know your name too

**ArefinB:** lol

**BethSw:** my FIRST story, ooooooh dear, this will be long

**GregN:** Beth I just realized I have never met you

**ArefinB:** she was at IRI Greg..

**BethSw:** Greg, that may be a good thing for you

**GregN:** haha

**ArefinB:** don't take her words for it

**ArefinB:** lol

**JennyCB:** Definitely not something I would recommend for anyone but the extremely organized. My college freshman admitted he probably won't be involved this year.

**RobynN:** but she has "met" me, online...I finally know someone you don't

**ArefinB:** see Jenny... Beth is a sophomore in college now

**GregN** mother please

**ArefinB:** she has successfully managed a team as a college freshman

**BethSw:** yes, in retrospect, I should not have started a team as a college freshman

**GregN:** that is the piece of homework I think dean should change

**JennyCB:** I would agree with you Greg.

**MarieMS:** Greg ??? Homework change?

**PatriciaCh:** To what?

**GregN:** while college mentors are great you can clearly see how FIRST has negatively impacted my GPA

**MarieMS:** Ah, I get it

**ArefinB:** lol

**PatriciaCh:** ah

**GregN:** Marie, Dean Kamen always gives "homework" that inspires the people involved in the organization to do more, no matter your level of involvement

**PatriciaCh:** Are there any teachers out there with questions.....

**LisaPer:** yeah definitely.. it's quite the strain

**ArefinB:** that's the reason I asked my 3 teams to only call me when they need some parts machined.

**JennyCB:** There are a bunch of college mentors starting here to help rookie teams and I have some mixed feelings.

**ArefinB:** or I know for a fact I wouldn't want to leave the shop

**LisaPer:** I've had to prioritize.. and ended up dropping everything but my 3 teams

**GregN:** one of the things he says is for people who were in the program in HS and going to college should start teams but it really puts a strain on doing well in school

**LisaPer:** and I sorta am not happy about dropping every extracurricular, but when it comes to priorities they've got to be made

**PatriciaCh:** yes it does

**MarieMS:** Jenny, - any way to pair some adult mentorship with those students attempts?

**RobynN:** that's true of the h.s. students as well, isn't it Greg?

**SaraRe:** I'm a prime example of that, and though I hate to admit it, I spent more time my freshman year of college being involved in FIRST than I did studying and my grades really suffered.

**GregN:** and one of the whole points of FIRST is to inspire the thinkers of tomorrow to succeed and the last time I checked failing out of school isn't succeeding

**GregN:** shush mom

**ArefinB:** lol

**ArefinB:** oh wow... I just realized the relationship

**BethSw:** ok, the FIRST story of me... It all began back in high school when I joined robotics my junior year because there was a cute boy. Long story short, I "was interested in the camera work" that he was a master at, ended up doing camera work and PR work writing for local newspapers. When I got to college, I had then truly fallen in love with journalism (which I had begun because of FIRST) but was going through FIRST withdrawal and so I started up my own team. I am now a broadcast journalism major at Michigan State University, inspired by FIRST.

**RobynN:** I was thinking of how students in h.s. have to learn to prioritize as well

**BethSw:** and that is my enormously long FIRST story

**MarieMS:** Greg - my daughter is experiencing the same thing in High School with the FLL and JFLL commitments she has

**LisaPer:** lol yeah.. FIRST really wants us to succeed.. even the scholarships they give, a lot of them are based on the fact that you must keep up a 3.0

**SaraRe:** It sounds hard, but I took a break from my team this summer and it really put things back into perspective for me. Sometimes, leaving FIRST temporarily actually makes being involved in FIRST easier

**JennyCB:** This is a special case because there is a new university joining the group and they are "hiring" (small stipend) some grad students, but all new to FIRST.

**LisaPer:** even though the majority of them aren't merit based, but leadership based

**LisaPer:** I think they're trying to tell us that leadership and merit come hand in hand

**SaraRe:** they do.

**JennyCB:** I am constantly looking for adult mentors.

**PatriciaCh:** I hate to admit this...prioritizing is not just a problem for college mentors...adult ones too

**BethSw:** Ok, so I see some teacher names out there that are rather unfamiliar, I'd like to know what's going through their minds right now, by the way, I'm Beth

**PatriciaCh:** I should be grading papers right now

**RobynN:** I think part of the challenge of FIRST is to learn balance among the important things in life

**LisaPer:** lol Ms. Chen

**PatriciaCh:** but this is more fun...

**BjB** . o O ( like Tapped In )

**GregN:** are there any teachers out there with questions for us about how to get involved or the program?

**NancyJK:** I have two classes of papers to grade yet.

**RobynN:** we haven't fielded too many teacher questions

**BethSw:** by the way, that's another thing about FIRST, we become a family, a very talkative one really, it's difficult to get us to be quiet sometimes so please feel free to chime in

**NancyJK:** How do other mentors adjust to the addition of a student with emotional handicaps?

**BethSw:** what type of emotional handicaps are you referring to? depression and the sort?

**RobynN:** Lisa, what's your FIRST story?

**PatriciaCh:** hi Nancy

**GregN:** that is a tough question, but one of my teams had a lot of students with IEP's

**JennyCB:** I know a mentor who has had a lot of experience with this. She was unable to be here tonight, but would be a great resource.

**NancyJK:** Anger management, ADHD, works by himself only

**LisaPer:** haha Mrs. Needel.. well.. I started 3 years ago because a friend of mine kept talking about it.. it was the first year the all-guys school allowed girls on the team

**GregN:** part of FIRST is trying to find what the individual can contribute to the team

**BethSw:** well, actually I think that one of the guys that is best known in FIRST is both ADHD and dyslexic

**ArefinB:** lol

**PatriciaCh:** we have projects that only require one person...we involved parents also in that situation

**LisaPer:** now I'm working with 3 teams

**BethSw:** Arefin, you'd probably be best to comment on how he works

**JennyCB:** Nancy, if you want to follow up, email me at [jbeatty@usfirst.org](mailto:jbeatty@usfirst.org) and I'll introduce you.

**LisaPer:** it's just fun to see how all of them learn

**JanetL:** There are so many different projects related to FIRST, I think you can find something to fit almost anyone

**LisaPer:** yeah.. parents are definitely key, though

**GregN:** what one student has as a weakness there is another student who has at a strength

**SaraRe:** Even if you give him a project that starts out his own, I guarantee he'll have to talk with other students by the time he's done.

**PatriciaCh:** quite true

**JanetL:** I have some mentors who have a screw loose or two (and maybe some people would say that about me)

**SaraRe:** The thing about FIRST is a lot of tasks interact between a lot of different places.

**ArefinB:** He has a very unique way to solve a problem, he is very fast at it too. he is my best friend, Tytus.

**LisaPer:** I'm chairman's mentor on our team, and they're the ones to give me all the input.. they really are enthusiastic about their kids being involved on the team

**PatriciaCh:** lol....that will be all of us then

**ArefinB:** he is an awesome person to work with

**GregN:** I find that it is always good to let students find what they are good at and then figure out a way for them to apply it to the team

**LisaPer:** definitely

**BethSw:** how do his mentors get him to work with other students



**BethSw:** to participate actively

**LisaPer:** and if they're somewhat shy.. just give them something to do, let them try it

**PatriciaCh:** Yes..Tytus...he is wonderful

**PatriciaCh:** like you too Arefin....the chickadees

**GregN:** this is one of the reasons for breaking the team into subgroups

**GregN:** like strategy, mechanical, electrical, website, etc

**ArefinB:** hahaha

**GregN:** find the best thing for that person to do and I have found that the problems don't really become a factor

**SaraRe:** that's what our team does. we assign tasks to specific committees, sometimes individuals, and if they cross committees it is that persons responsibility to contact the committee head and find out the necessary information.

**SaraRe:** actually being on one committee allows you to focus on one thing, but you'll still find that there's complete team interaction regardless

**RobynN:** often students who can't make every meeting can still do something to help the team

**JanetL:** we had a student on a team I worked with last year that had some judgment problems and I or another adult made a point of keeping an eye on this person who did have a pretty good experience although we did have to intervene a couple of times

**GregN:** and just make sure that the mentors on the team are aware and figure out how to deal with things in advance before they happen,

**PatriciaCh:** We had a student that was emotionally handicapped.....he worked out fine...but his academics were poor..his mom pulled him off the team

**GregN:** that is sad Pat

**SaraRe:** That's hard sometimes

**LisaPer:** yeah

**SaraRe:** I know for me, my freshman year of college was completely destructive for my emotional health and FIRST was really the only thing that kept me alive.

**PatriciaCh:** yes....but he didn't pay attention to her threats...she made it happen

**PatriciaCh:** There are so many components to FIRST...that you can find something to do...

**GregN:** that is one thing that I always preach to my teams is that academics come first to FIRST

**PatriciaCh:** for non-sport people...it is a wonderful outlet

**RobynN:** too bad she couldn't have found another way

**GregN:** I just wish I could figure out how to make that work for myself :-/

**PatriciaCh:** yes Greg....academics ...or do not travel

**SaraRe:** even for sport people it's a good thing.

**PatriciaCh:** that was my speech to the rookies last night

**RobynN:** that's too bad

**SaraRe:** I mean, I balanced swimming and robotics my senior year of high school and I actually got some of the swim team girls to come to the competition.

**JanetL:** Well the actual build period is only 6 weeks--perhaps some help could be offered to students (or mentors) before or after this period to get them in good shape academically

**JanetL:** Anyone in the DC area need a Calculus tutor, I am the best (-;

**SaraRe:** There are a lot of teams that offer tutoring and things like that. I know I help out one of my team members with Calculus and another with Spanish.

**PatriciaCh:** Sara.....that is great...bring a few friends

**LizCampoSt:** since we are kind of on the subject, if I may interject a question that perhaps those unfamiliar with FIRST might have, many parents of the new members on our team are very curious/concerned about the build season, especially time management and transportation, does anyone out there have a good organized build season approach or plan?

**NancyJK:** At our school if academics are not passing then it is off all activities. That means working with students in the fall so they are eligible during the build season.

**JanetL:** That makes sense Nancy

**VirginiaAM:** How do you all get parents more involved, and what do you ask them to do?

**ArefinB:** Liz... we always had a set time for meeting.

**JennyCB:** I think most grades dip during the build period, but passing is another story.

**ArefinB:** so the parents would know what time we get done.

**RobynN:** Liz, there are many teams who have systems for that - Chief Delphi has white papers dealing with time management, don't they Arefin?

**ArefinB:** but we were never done on time... out of 30 maybe 5 would stay back and stay at the shop till 2, 3 in the morning.

**PatriciaCh:** In order to travel.....we tell the kids they must have a C in every class...

**LisaPer:** our team's actually went up.. the mentors offer tutoring to the students

**SaraRe:** The way our team structures build season is the following. We meet in our school until the late bus and then afterwards we walk to our shop downtown and work until we have to go home. We have always had a point of saying that if you can't stay, that's okay. Generally, we try to set up a carpool or get parental permission to have college mentors drive the students home.

**ArefinB:** yes Liz... there are few white papers on team organizations.

**NancyJK:** Our meetings are at the same time all through the build season and parents are asked to transport and make sure their child is there.

**JennyCB:** On chief delphi, we put together a white paper "101 ways parents can help."

**LisaPer:** formal tutoring.. like they know they can go to one mentor for say, chem.. and another for Spanish

**SaraRe:** Our advisor has never kept us out later than 10 o'clock and we've had meetings where parents have provided meals and things like that.

**ArefinB:** invite your parents to the meetings...

**ArefinB:** you never know... they might get hooked.

**LizCampoSt:** oh, ok

**JanetL:** I think get the parents on the web site first, if they are web literate

**ArefinB:** I think we have two parents in here who got hooked

**SaraRe:** I graduated 3 years ago, and my dad is still mentoring the team. He works with our robot tech committee.

**ArefinB:** cool

**SaraRe:** My mom helps with funding, talking to companies, and she cooks meals for us :D

**JennyCB:** I think it is essential to try to get the parents involved. Just talked to a mentor today about how to work out a meal schedule.

**PatriciaCh:** we meet M-TH (6- 8 PM) and Sat. (9- 4 PM)...I told the kids if they show up for half the meeting times...they will be fine...they are broken up in sub groups...everyone carpools

**RobynN:** we are going to have a holiday get together and invite parents, so they can hear first hand what will be coming up

**LizCampoSt:** we hold parent's meetings, at night so the parents can come, but I don't think they are immune to the fact that we meet mainly during the evening versus right after school for an hour like other "clubs"

**JanetL:** make sure you bring a robot Robyn--in fact, decorate it!

**PatriciaCh:** Sara...send your mom down :}

**LizCampoSt:** that is, during the build season

**RobynN:** and a very helpful mentor from a team in Rochester gave us a video we are going to screen

**RobynN:** oh, Janet, I love the idea

**SaraRe:** we hold parent meetings too, 2-3 a marking period, and we have a mailing list and a newsletter to keep the parents updated and involved.

**JanetL:** The Baltimore SF Club has pictures on their web site of their yearly robot decoration...

**PatriciaCh:** we have team mom who keeps the parents updated

**JennyCB:** SF?

**ArefinB:** South Fork High School

**JanetL:** Science Fiction

**NancyJK:** WOW! You guys are all impressive; the way you handle parents, meetings, etc.

**JennyCB:** You're kidding? send me the link

**JanetL:** And Science Fiction Conventions might be another place to recruit mentors!

**SaraRe:** The biggest thing we find to draw the parents into the program is having the STUDENTS do PR. watching students at things like the curriculum fair makes parents realize just how much FIRST teaches.

**RobynN:** we need to find a way to involve parents...

**ArefinB:** come on Ms. Lee you know I am used to that whole SF thing

**ArefinB:** lol

**PatriciaCh:** I know and pasta

**ArefinB:** ya that too

**SaraRe:** We also display team videos and hand out pamphlets about our team.

**SaraRe:** I can provide copies of one of our videos and our pamphlet if anyone would like :D

**RobynN:** one thing that gets the parents interested is the scholarship money

**PatriciaCh:** yes please...

**LizCampoSt:** right, many parents are interested, a few parents of the newer members were just a little uneasy with having them at school during the night time - most girls live far, ranging from 15 minutes to 45 minutes away

**SaraRe:** Our parents have a handbook this year, too. I haven't read it, but my mom has it on file somewhere.

**RobynN:** Liz, maybe some of the parents can take turns being at school

**JennyCB:** Sometimes it is tough to get parents involved but it is so important. Lots of resources through NEMO (non-engineering mentor organization). Let me know if anyone needs info.

**PatriciaCh:** Liz..how many mentors are around

**LizCampoSt:** we have on average 5-7

**LizCampoSt:** I think they are afraid that the time they need to be there will interfere with their school work - an understandable concern

**PatriciaCh:** If the mentors are around....it should not be a security problem....I wait with the kids until everyone is picked up.

**SaraRe:** The newest and greatest asset to our team communication, including parents and mentors is our team website forum.

**RobynN:** get the parents to attend competitions this year, or at least watch them on NASA Select or the webcasts....what I have learned is that once someone sees it, they understand that much more

**PatriciaCh:** we limit how long the kids can stay during school night..no more than 2 hours

**PatriciaCh:** some bring their homework and get help

**SaraRe:** I know during exams (which falls in the middle of build season) our advisor doesn't allow our students to stay past 4:30

**LisaPer:** we didn't have meetings during exams

**RobynN:** a team should have at least one night a week off, anyway

**RobynN:** just to keep fresh

**LisaPer:** it took a lot of time management but we were still able to have that whole week off, surprisingly

**SaraRe:** we haven't been that organized yet XD

**NancyJK:** Our team will only be able to meet with engineer mentors this year for about 3 hours, 3 days each week.

**PatriciaCh:** we do not meet during exam week...like next week is one...all meetings are canceled

**LisaPer:** ahhh lucky.. ours is during build

**LizCampoSt:** Yes, that was one of our issues, many students arrived right after school (3:00) and then left at 4:00; however, our mentors do not arrive until later than that - around 4:30, so sometimes we would run into issue there

**NancyJK:** Our meetings during exam week are not mandatory.

**PatriciaCh:** 2nd semester midterms is during built...we still shut down

**LizCampoSt:** we have finals the first week of build season, but then we are lucky, the second week of build season is our term break and we have no classes the entire week!

**PatriciaCh:** unless you are a senior and have exemptions to exams...that is what the kids strive for...senior exemptions

**NancyJK:** Has this chat been beneficial to anyone/everyone? Should we plan another one?

**RobynN:** we had meetings from 3 till 7, from school end at 2:15 till 3, students are supposed to work on homework

**LisaPer:** I think we should

**PatriciaCh:** in this room and RCU chat as well??

**PatriciaCh:** We can do both

**LisaPer:** sounds great

**SaraRe:** I think so :D

**RobynN:** should we try to schedule a weekly or biweekly chat, and try to keep in touch well, here we can talk with educators who may hear about this talk

**PatriciaCh:** ok...if you are not a member...of this chat....and want an invite ..let me know

**NancyJK:** With everyone being so busy, biweekly or maybe once a month is what I would suggest.

**PatriciaCh:** I will set you up....this includes students...

**JennyCB:** happy to participate. see you all later

**NancyJK:** Bye, Jenny

**RobynN:** talk to you later, Jenny

**VirginiaAM:** Cool!

**PatriciaCh:** good night

**RobynN:** and of course, any of us are available by email

**PatriciaCh:** what have we decided? So I can send reminders

**VirginiaAM:** Good Night!

**ArefinB:** I think we have decided on biweekly chat

**SaraRe:** I think biweekly

**RobynN:** maybe this could be a new CD chat site as well

**VirginiaAM:** Biweekly is good.

**PatriciaCh:** the new chat....is fine....what particular days????? Tues and Thurs???

**ArefinB:** Tuesday sounds cool

**PatriciaCh:** Tues Wed and Thurs

**RobynN:** either works for me, although we have theater on some Tuesdays so I would miss those nights

**SaraRe:** Tuesday is better for me, I have robotics meetings Wed & Thursday

**LisaPer:** same here

**LisaPer:** must be off now, ta ta everyone!

**NancyJK:** I am off to get some correcting done. Good luck with exams and have a great holiday/end of the week.

**KateMSt:** thank you all, it's been a great, informative night

**BjB:** a reminder that you can use the threaded discussion boards to communicate also

**ArefinB:** I am off to study for finals

**RobynN:** bye Lisa

**PatriciaCh:** okay....I will make sure that I do not get Tuesday nite duty.....Wed is bad for me ..I have a quilting



**LizCampoSt:** I have to go; thanks for the advice about the build season - it was nice chatting!

**ArefinB:** Talk to you guys soon.

**LisaPer** left the room (signed off).

**SaraRe:** If anyone wants more information about my team or anything else about FIRST that you think I might know, feel free to email me

**ArefinB:** It was a good chat

**SaraRe:** It was :D

**BjB** . o O ( then you can contribute to the discussions even if you're unable to log in )

**ArefinB:** bye Robyn

**PatriciaCh:** okay....thanks Bj...I will send that out to everyone

**PatriciaCh:** good night..see you next Tuesday

**BjB** waves goodnight.

**RobynN:** it has been fun, hope some educators got inspired

**BjB:** Let me know if you want any of your chats on the Tapped In calendar

**RobynN:** that would be good, BJ

**VirginiaAM:** Thank you all. It was very interesting!

**PatriciaCh:** for all you teachers...I hope that we answer some of your questions

**RobynN:** Please let us know if you have more questions we can answer

**BjB:** you'll meet here in the group room?

**PatriciaCh:** yes

**PatriciaCh:** please post next Tuesday's meeting

**BjB:** you might want to make sure everyone is a member of the group, Patricia

**BjB** . o O ( so they can use the discussion board )

**PatriciaCh:** I was trying to check....I was sending invites to those who were not.

**BjB** nods

**ArthurM:** Thanks all, it has been interesting... food for thought. Some good websites to explore, too.

**RobynN:** have fun at the Lego League competition Arthur

**SaraRe:** did anyone give you a team website, Arthur?

**PatriciaCh:** again..email us if you want help or info

**SaraRe:** so you can see what it's like on the "inside?"

**ArthurM:** Yes, the FLL website seems to have links to the team sites.

**PatriciaCh:** he has 108....my team is [www.spamrobotics.com](http://www.spamrobotics.com)

**PatriciaCh:** my team is 180

**SaraRe:** Great :D I'm going to give you an additional link too, my team's forums which have been a GREAT asset to our FIRST program: <http://forums.mercury1089.com>

**PatriciaCh:** Arefin gave the site to his team which is 108

**BjB** . o O ( you should add a folder to links )

**BjB:** and put in the team urls

**PatriciaCh:** ok

**SaraRe:** that's a good idea :D

**RobynN:** a good idea

**BjB:** feature the folder

**BjB** . o O ( but not the links )

**PatriciaCh:** this is all new for me....learning how to do all for this

**SaraRe:** maybe include things like RCU & CD

**SaraRe:** & the ECDU (east coast drivers union)

**PatriciaCh:** on the welcome page...I have the newsletter and links

**PatriciaCh:** check it out....I have to check to the ECDU

**SaraRe:** there's a branch of the CD forums for them, but they also have a website (though I'm not sure if it's current) <http://www.freewebs.com/ecdu>

**PatriciaCh:** also a couple of articles about FIRST is on the welcome page too

**SaraRe:** it was started by teams 25, 56, 303 and 222

**PatriciaCh:** okay...I will add them

**GregN:** Sara where do you go to school?

**SaraRe:** currently I'm attending my local community college, but I'm hoping to return to Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ next fall

**PatriciaCh:** I hope this was informative....but as you can read.....we can talk a lot when we get together

**BjB** waves goodnight and heads for bed

**JeffC:** I'm hoping you have more meetings here Pat.

**PatriciaCh:** we decided to meet again next Tuesday [2005/12/13 - bjb]