

FIRST Team 342: The Burning Magnetos Chairman's Award

The FIRST program has impacted the team members of The Burning Magnetos through the learning of building, programming, socialization, cooperation, trust, team work, organization, and gracious professionalism. Through FIRST, team 342 creates a community of hardworking, passionate people that will inspire younger generations to take part in the STEM initiative. FIRST students learn the skills they need for future STEM opportunities and careers. We are creating a brighter future for the community and for the students of FIRST.

Throughout the community, we have extended a helping hand while expanding the FIRST program. In the past five years, we have created six FIRST LEGO League Jr. teams, mentored various FLL teams, volunteered at local competitions, talked to local council, and members to promote our robotics team throughout the community around us.

The Burning Magnetos has taken our robot to the summer camp at the library at Joint Base Charleston; while there our students showed participants what FIRST and robotics are about. Various members of team 342 volunteer at FIRST Competitions such as various VEX, FLL State, and Regional. The team participated in a fundraiser to lend a helping hand to Camp Happy Days, a summer camp for childhood cancer patients. Our team captain and a few team members met with the Dorchester county council about how FIRST has impacted their daily lives, and those in the community.

As a team, we continue to spread the FIRST message by inspiring youth to become leaders and innovators through our methods. One method is to spread it through helping our community through donations, conversing, and overall interaction with those outside of the FIRST program. Another method we use for outreach into the community is through spreading the FIRST message to children, especially in our FIRST LEGO League Jr. teams. Team 342 also talks to local companies about us and FIRST so we can engage potential sponsors to be inspired to get involved with FIRST.

Within our team, we are always trying to be constant role models to ourselves and each other, inside and outside of robotics. A important part of a FIRST is to be role models to all students. Being role models means that every member of our team shows respect, extends a helping hand to those in need, influences others to do their best, and acts in a way that people want to follow. Each team member is a role model every day, whether we are at robotics or in our regular lives.

At Eagle Nest Elementary School, a group of our student team members mentor six FLL Junior teams. Every Thursday, this group of mentors help these young children and encourage them to use their creativity by participating in the FIRST program. We

set an example to these children and give them a way to let their creative juices flow through FIRST and STEM.

Team 342 has many reasons why we have started or formed other FIRST Robotics Competition teams. First, we want to create a better future for everyone that it will affect. We aspire to spread the message of FIRST to everyone possible through the creation of these teams. Leading them down a path that can change both these children and our team members by giving them an excellent new experience. It shows them an opportunity that wasn't available to them before. The future is in our hands.

By forming these teams we help spread the message of FIRST to as many people as possible. Our members, along with all of those in FIRST, want to put forth opportunities for everyone. Everyone can learn so much through FIRST teams, no matter what part of the FIRST team they are on. Everyone benefits from this experience, as it allows students to branch out into something they've never experienced before, and maybe learn something that they may want to do with their own lives.

Throughout the past few years, Team 342 has assisted other FIRST teams. The more we help out local teams, the more we become inspired to continue to spread the message. Just like our initiative for creating new teams, it is beneficial to all involved. FIRST has given all of us new life experiences and taught us new skills that we may not have learned. These teams are giving everyone a chance to learn important life skills we will need to pursue STEM related fields.

Sponsors are one example of who we are as a team. Our sponsors are an important part of our FIRST program because they help us to reach our goals. The sponsors of our robotics team are family friendly companies. They are part of our FIRST program because they are helping to spread the message and so they support the message as well. Keeping our sponsors family friendly shows that we wish to put a good message out there for those that see the FIRST message through them and our robotics team.

Since the creation of our team, the Robert BOSCH corporation has been one of our primary sponsors. Besides financial support, they have provided us with excellent mentors, and overall an outstanding experience. These individuals have provided knowledge and training to our members. Without them, we would not have been where we are today.

From the beginning of our robotics team, we have impacted many people in different ways. We have done things, such as fundraisers, volunteer work, creating different FIRST teams, and much more. As a robotics team, we have spread the FIRST message while showing the community what we do as part of FIRST, and we will continue to do so. We have impacted the youth that join robotics by giving them

different experiences and new life skills. Every day, we are striving to exceed all expectations.

The best way to explain FIRST is a program that provides youth to become inspired to do greater things in life. FIRST creates leaders, innovators, communicators, well-rounded people and more. It is our way to teach the youth of our generation certain skills that will help them succeed in life. FIRST leads everyone into a greater future by giving us exceptional students.