

RECRUIT. SUPPORT. EXPAND.



FIRST® Senior Mentors - MOVING FIRST FORWARD

United States

John Novak	Arkansas	jnovak@firstinspires.org
Armand Gahol	Tucson, AZ	agahol@firstinspires.org
Ty Fredriks	Central Coast, CA	tfredriks@firstinspires.org
Rob Greene	Sacramento, CA	rgreene@firstinspires.org
Eileen Kahn	Los Angeles, CA	ekahn@firstinspires.org
Rick Sisk	San Diego, CA	rsisk@firstinspires.org
Stacey Gray	Connecticut	sgray@firstinspires.org
Don Brobst	Washington, D.C.	dbrobst@firstinspires.org
Angie Fontanilla	Washington, D.C.	afontanilla@firstinspires.org
Andy Milluzzi	Florida	amilluzzi@firstinspires.org
Linda Pham	Georgia	lpham@firstinspires.org
Emmaly Burklund	Iowa	eburklund@firstinspires.org
Andy Marshall	Iowa	amarshall@firstinspires.org
Keith Hall	Indiana	khall@firstinspires.org
Rachel Miller	Indiana	rmiller@firstinspires.org
Jeff Slaton	Kentucky	jslaton@firstinspires.org
Daniel Eiland	Louisiana	deiland@firstinspires.org
Dana Aucoin	Maryland	daucoin@firstinspires.org
Dana Henry	Massachusetts	dhenry@firstinspires.org

Evan Hochstein	Minnesota	ehochstein@firstinspires.org
Laurie Shimizu	Minnesota	lschimidzu@firstinspires.org
Henry Graham	St. Louis, MO	hgraham@firstinspires.org
Jean Melech	Kansas City, MO	jmelech@firstinspires.org
Kevin McKone	Mississippi	kmckkone@firstinspires.org
Russel Evermann	Reno, NV	revermann@firstinspires.org
Brandon Sellers	Las Vegas, NV	bsellers@firstinspires.org
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Ron Borden	Finger Lakes region, NY	rborden@firstinspires.org
Rebecca Wasmer	Buffalo, NY	rwasmmer@firstinspires.org
Fiona Last-Powell	North Carolina	flastpowell@firstinspires.org
Ted Hood	Ohio	thood@firstinspires.org
Debbie Kerr	Oregon	dkerr@firstinspires.org
Sydney Buckner	Knoxville, TN	sbuckner@firstinspires.org
Veronica Baca	Rio Grande Valley, TX	vbaca@firstinspires.org
Mike Henry	San Antonio, TX	mhenry@firstinspires.org
Brenda Meyer	Houston, TX	bmeyer@firstinspires.org
George Tan	Lubbock, TX	gtan@firstinspires.org
Joe Varnell	Dallas, TX	jvarnell@firstinspires.org
Kevin 'KP' Pardus	Virginia	kpardus@firstinspires.org
Eric VanBuren	Greater Seattle, WA	evanburen@firstinspires.org

Canada

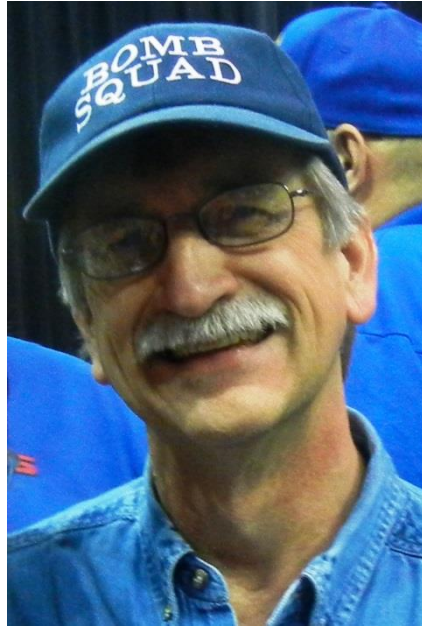
Craig Maynard	Calgary, AB	cmaynard@firstinspires.org
Russell Weir	Edmonton, AB	rweir@firstinspires.org
George Chisholm	Southern Ontario	gchisholm@firstinspires.org
Nancy Dewar-Stenning	North Bay, ON	nstenning@firstinspires.org
Paul Keenan	Greater Toronto, ON	pkeen@firstinspires.org
Sheri Lynn Koscielski	Windsor, ON	skoscielski@firstinspires.org
Lynn Rampertab	Southern Ontario	lrampertab@firstinspires.org
Serge Audet	Québec	saudet@robotiquefirstquebec.org

2015-16 *FIRST* Senior Mentors – United States

John Novak

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Arkansas



John Novak has been an employee of Baxter Healthcare Inc. for 35 years as a manufacturing controls system engineer and project manager. John was a founding mentor of *FIRST*® Robotics Competition Team 16, The Baxter Bomb Squad in 1996 and has been a mentor on the team ever since. He was awarded the Woodie Flowers Finalist Award in 2005 and the prestigious Woodie Flowers Award in 2009. John's goals are to aid in creating strong, sustainable teams across the state of Arkansas to support their growth.

Armand Gahol

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Tucson, AZ

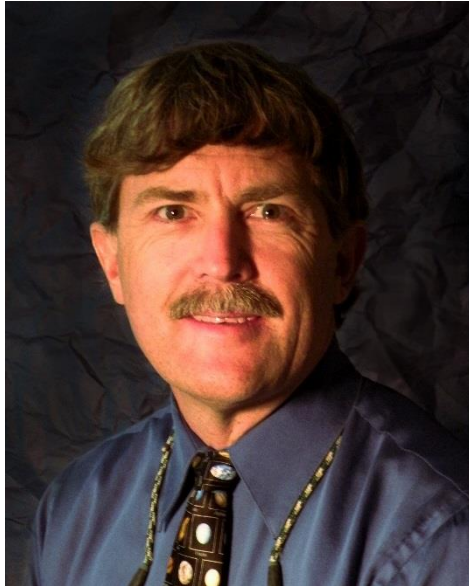


Armand Gahol is a *FIRST*® Robotics Competition alum from Team 359 "Hawaiian Kids". Armand has applied the experiences he gained from his high school team in Waialua, HI to help teams in Arizona. Armand's ultimate goal is to gain the community's support to help improve the STEM programs in the state of Arizona. In his professional life, Armand serves in the Air Force and has held the role of Supply Journeyman at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

Ty Fredriks

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California – Central Coast



Ty Fredriks is excited to educate tomorrow's leaders. Ty is a high school science teacher at Orcutt Academy High School on California's Central Coast. Ty teaches Earth Science, Conceptual Physics, and Introduction to Education. As a teacher, Ty works hard to inspire students to pursue STEM careers by running his school's *FIRST*® Robotics Competition team as well as two *FIRST* LEGO® League tournaments each year. He loves inspiring others to find a passion for science that they didn't know they had.

Rob Greene

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Sacramento, California



Rob Greene has 15+ years of technical experience. Rob currently teaches courses in automotive technology, manufacturing, and robotics at John F. Kennedy High School in Sacramento, CA. Rob has been involved with *FIRST*® in many different capacities as a Mentor, event Volunteer and *FIRST* LEGO® League tournament director. In 2014, he was awarded a *Woodie Flowers Finalist* Award.

Eileen Kahn

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California – Los Angeles



Eileen Kahn has a background in Public Relations, Marketing, and Education. Eileen teaches robotics entrepreneurship and related courses at Beverly Hills High School, where she also mentors *FIRST*® Robotics Competition Team 1515. She has mentored 12 *FIRST* teams including 3 international teams. Eileen has also served as a Google On-Air Education Presenter for robotics. She speaks five languages fluently and loves working with motivated students.

Rick Sisk

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California - San Diego



Rick found the magic of *FIRST*® when he helped his wife start a rookie *FIRST* Robotics Competition team in 2008. Since then, he has helped start and mentor several rookie teams and have held many key Volunteer roles in *FIRST* events in California and across the country. In his professional life, Rick helps design computer applications that run many small and medium-sized businesses around the world.

Stacey Gray

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Connecticut



Stacey Gray became involved with *FIRST*® as a non-technical mentor for *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 1071 "Team Max" from Wolcott, Connecticut. In her professional life, Stacey is a Social Media manager, consultant, and has extensive experience with Community Outreach and Public Relations.

Don Brobst

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Washington, D.C./Virginia



Don Brobst has over 30 years of experience in software and systems engineering and project management. He has been a Mentor for *FIRST*® Robotics Competition Team 1418 for several years. Don is a certified Project Management Professional and has done extensive work in process improvement.

Angie Fontanilla

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Washington, D.C.



Angie Fontanilla has been incredibly active in her area with supporting the growth of *FIRST*® LEGO League and Junior *FIRST* LEGO League. She specializes in providing numerous information sessions, workshops, and trainings for new Coaches/Mentors. She organizes the DC *FIRST* LEGO League Scramble to help support *FIRST* LEGO League teams preparing for the 2015 season.

Andy Milluzzi

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Florida



Andy Milluzzi has had a passion for engineering for as long as he can remember. Andy specializes in electrical, computer, and software engineering. He has been volunteering for *FIRST* for the past 7 years, filling roles from event staff, to judging, to coaching and mentoring teams. Andy has held engineering positions at Microsoft and National Instruments, and is a LEGO® MINDSTORMS Community Partner.

Linda Pham

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Georgia



Linda Pham was introduced to *FIRST*® when her daughter joined a *FIRST* LEGO® League team in September of 2010. In 2012, Linda helped the Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta to expand their STEM program by mentoring 12 new *FIRST* LEGO League teams. Before discovering *FIRST*, she homeschooled her children and was very involved in all of their activities.

Emmaly Burklund

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Iowa



Emmaly Burklund's journey with *FIRST*® started with her son, Jordan, when he wanted to be engaged with a *FIRST* team. Since then, she has hosted qualifying tournaments, workshops, and team-to-team mentoring sessions. Besides volunteering at events, Emmaly enjoys personally reaching out to coaches and teams with 1-on-1 coaching and support. Her personal mission is "creating opportunities for people to apply their passions."

Andy Marshall

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Iowa



Andy Marshall has been working with scientists and engineers of all ages for over 20 years. Andy has served as a Key Volunteer for several *FIRST*® events in Iowa and beyond. He has served as Judge Advisor for *FIRST* Tech Challenge in Iowa, a Judge at *FIRST* World Championship, and *FIRST* LEGO League Judge at regional and state tournaments in Iowa. His broad technical experience includes software, electrical, mechanical, system manufacturing, and building corporate sponsor relationships. Andy works to create opportunities for folks to learn through experience and has plenty of stories to share.

Keith Hall

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Indiana



Keith Hall has more than twenty years' experience in the mainframe computer industry. He was recruited into *FIRST*® in 2007 by a local *FIRST* Robotics Competition team after they discovered he was teaching an after school introduction to robotics class at a nearby high school. Keith is currently a member of the Midwest Regional *FIRST* Robotics Competition Planning Committee, and working towards a license to teach high school sciences.

Rachel Miller

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Indiana



Rachel Miller's journey with *FIRST*® started as a student participant in *FIRST* LEGO® League in 2005. Since then, she has stayed involved as a participant in *FIRST* Robotics Competition, a frequent event volunteer, and a Mentor for *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 5188, "Area 5188: Classified Robotics." Her experience with *FIRST* helped her discover her passion for STEM and led her to study Technology Engineering Education. Rachel has extensive non-technical experience, and offers assistance to teams in the areas of outreach, securing sponsorships, team organization, award submissions, and event organization.

Jeff Slaton

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Kentucky



Jeff Slaton has been an Engineering and Technology teacher at Calloway County High School in Murray, Kentucky since 1992. In 2010, Jeff got involved with *FIRST*® by forming *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 3843 The Roboracers and has been involved ever since. Jeff has planned and organized several regional engineering and technology competitions, and served as a national event coordinator for the National Technology Student Association.

Daniel Eiland

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Louisiana



Daniel Eiland has been involved in leading young adults for many years. Daniel is a high school History and Engineering teacher. He is the Coach of the first *FIRST*® Robotics Competition team in the Baton Rouge area, Team 3337 Panthrobotics. Before teaching, he researched various teaching methods to design and optimize technology-rich classrooms. In addition to mentoring *FIRST* Robotics Competition, he coordinates the Red Stick Rumble, Louisiana's annual Off-Season *FIRST* Robotics Event.

Dana Aucoin

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Maryland

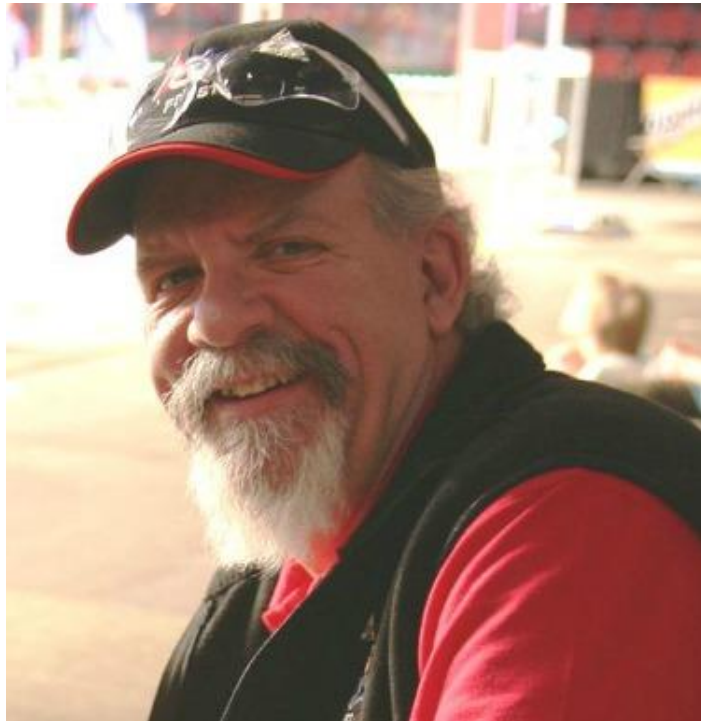


Dana Aucoin was introduced to *FIRST*® when her youngest son became interested in the LEGO® RCX robot. She currently uses her background in teaching to develop and run robotics camps that employ *FIRST* alumni as counselors. She continues to mentor *FIRST* LEGO League and Junior *FIRST* LEGO League teams at Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and many public and private schools in Washington, D.C., Annapolis, MD, and Baltimore, MD.

Dana Henry

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Massachusetts



Dana Henry has worked for the United Technologies business unit, Hamilton Sundstrand/Space Systems for 30 years, building various life support systems for NASA and the US Navy. Since 2002, Dana has been instrumental in expanding *FIRST*® to all schools in all grade levels in Agawam, MA. Dana has organized numerous *FIRST* LEGO® League tournaments and provides training and support to *FIRST* teams all over New England. His focus areas are rookie team formulation, veteran team sustainability, and how to shape local politics for the support of *FIRST*.

Evan Hochstein

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Minnesota



Evan Hochstein joined *FIRST*® in 2008 as a founding student on *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 2470 from Bloomington, Minnesota. Currently pursuing a career in engineering, Evan has mentored five *FIRST* teams in Bloomington and loves the culture and community *FIRST* creates. Evan has broad knowledge in technical and non-technical aspects of most *FIRST* programs, and he actively shares his knowledge through many venues including the GO *FIRST* Summer Robotics Summit, a *FIRST* Championship Conference, and has assisted in leading Mentor Roundtables.

Laurie Shimizu

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Minnesota



Laurie Shimizu got involved with *FIRST*® when her oldest child was in 8th grade by helping The Green Machine *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 1816 during the team's 2005-06 rookie season. Laurie is a 25 year-journalism veteran with extensive work experience as a writer and editor, and she guides *FIRST* teams with their web, social media and other non-technical needs. In 2008, she took on the added responsibilities of Volunteer Coordinator for what was then the Minnesota Regional competition. She now coordinates volunteers for many *FIRST* competition events at the local, state, and World Championship level.

Henry Graham

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Missouri



Henry Graham began his involvement with *FIRST*® in 2003. Since that time he has mentored four different *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams. Henry retired from McDonnell Douglas and The Boeing Company where he worked as a design engineer and program analyst. Henry is involved as a mentor with an inner-city youth group, where the focus is on teaching personal responsibility and education as the foundation for a successful future.

Jean Melech

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Kansas/Missouri



Jean “Mama Jaws” Melech’s initial exposure to *FIRST*® was in 2009 when her son joined *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 1710. She was hooked when she saw first-hand the difference *FIRST* makes in students’ lives. In 2012, Jean took on the role of *FIRST* LEGO® League Volunteer Coordinator for her local qualifying tournament. Jean’s diverse professional experience includes sales, marketing, data science, and project engineering.

Kevin McKone

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Mississippi



Kevin McKone has been teaching University Physics for the last 15 years at Copeiah-Lincoln Community College (Co-Lin) in Wesson, MS. Kevin has coached *FIRST*® LEGO® League, mentored *FIRST* Tech Challenge and has been the lead robot inspector for *FIRST* Tech Challenge in the state of Mississippi for the last two years.

Russel Everman

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Reno, NV



Russel Evermann has been involved with *FIRST*® for over 7 years, supporting *FIRST* LEGO® League, *FIRST* Tech Challenge and *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams and events. Russel is a self-employed computer technician specializing in home office computers, peripherals, and networks. Russel is a self-described “gadgeteer” and loves seeing how things work. His service with *FIRST* helps him share his love of technology with others.

Brandon Sellers

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Las Vegas, NV



Brandon Sellers began volunteering with Nevada *FIRST*® in 2015. A full-time researcher and archivist, Brandon recently discovered *FIRST* and volunteers his time to help struggling teams get more financial support. Brandon is looking forward to getting more involved with outreach activities, raising awareness in the community, building partnerships, and recruiting more teams in the Las Vegas area.

Lou Okrent

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New Jersey (MAR)



Lou Okrent is proud to have been a member of the “original Geek Squad” – his high school Audio/Visual Squad, which began his career in engineering, design, and manufacturing. In 2002, his son asked if his school robotics team could borrow some tools. Lou went along to the school to help out, and *FIRST*[®] Robotics Competition Team 11 MORT has been part of his family's life ever since.

Ron Borden

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New York – Finger Lakes



Ron Borden has been involved in *FIRST*® since 2002, and he was a charter member of the Finger Lakes Regional Planning Committee. He works at Bausch + Lomb as the *FIRST* Program Director, and he also works with B+L's Global Process Engineering Group where he develops new products and processes. Ron mentors 5 *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams for B+L and helps with one of their *FIRST* LEGO® League teams. He has been a Senior Mentor since 2009.

Rebecca Wasmer

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Buffalo, NY



Rebecca Wasmer's *FIRST*® journey started her junior year of high school when she joined *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 340, Greater Rochester Robotics. Rebecca has experience with team marketing, computer engineering, curriculum design, and technology education. One of her latest projects has been developing lessons to be used in all grade levels that utilize robots as a way to teach and reinforce science, math, and English topics in a school district in greater Buffalo. Rebecca has mentored *FIRST* LEGO® League, *FIRST* Tech Challenge, and *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams in her area.

Fiona Last-Powell

flastpowell@firstinspires.org

North Carolina

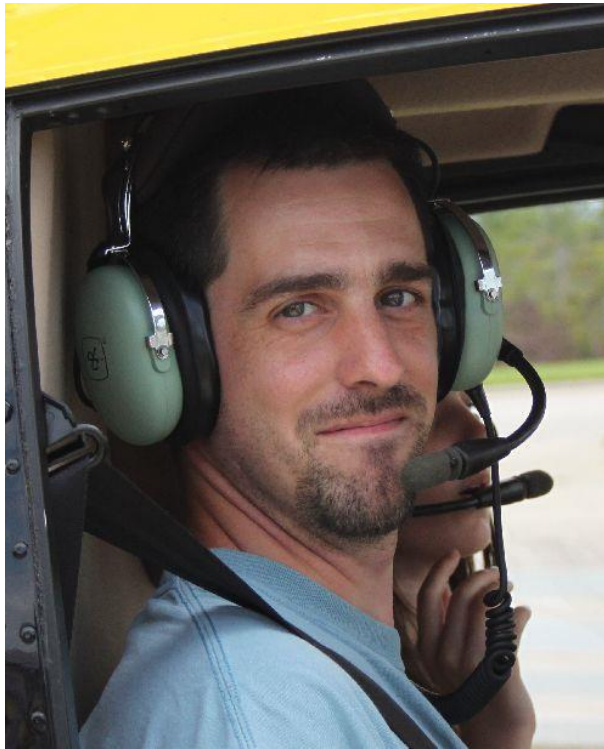


Fiona Last-Powell has extensive work experience as an educator for all ages from toddlers to adults. Her professional experience has included leadership for homeschooling organizations, educational consulting for individuals and groups, technical support, and curriculum design. She has served in multiple capacities on several local and regional organizing committees and boards. Fiona became involved as a rookie coach in 2010 with *FIRST* LEGO® League. Fiona's involvement with *FIRST* quickly spread. Fiona began volunteering for *FIRST* Tech Challenge and *FIRST* Robotics Competition and mentoring and coaching for Jr *FIRST* LEGO® League.

Ted Hood

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Ohio



Ted Hood was introduced to *FIRST*® when he attended a *FIRST* LEGO® League summer camp with his daughter. Since then, he has been a Coach, Mentor and Volunteer for all levels of *FIRST*. A former Air Force Avionics Technician, Ted uses his background in electronics and education to help every team he mentors. Ted's strengths in these areas help him relate to both the kids and *FIRST*.

Debbie Kerr

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Oregon



Debbie Kerr has been involved with *FIRST*® since 2007 when her oldest son joined *FIRST* LEGO® League and Debbie became a parent volunteer. Debbie is currently a Robotics Instructor for the Oregon City School District and has helped organize rookie *FIRST* teams at all levels.

Sydney Buckner

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Tennessee



Sydney Buckner is a neuroscience undergraduate student at the University of Tennessee Knoxville. Sydney is a *FIRST*® Robotics Competition alum and has mentored multiple Junior *FIRST* LEGO® League and *FIRST* LEGO League teams in her area. Sydney is excited to stay involved as a *FIRST* Senior Mentor and improve, grow, and sustain *FIRST* in the state of Tennessee.

Veronica Baca

vbaca@firstinspires.org

Rio Grande Valley, TX



Veronica Baca has worked in the Education field for 13 years. Veronica has coached *FIRST* LEGO® League and *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams and hosts the Harlingen FLL Qualifier Competition in the Rio Grande Valley. Veronica is looking forward to her new role as *FIRST* Senior Mentor and the opportunity to support veteran and rookie teams and their Coaches.

Mike Henry

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San Antonio, TX



Mike Henry has 25 years of experience as an educator. In his classroom, he focused on space education including a classroom space flight simulator and a mission control simulator for his students to conduct their own "space flights." This made him a natural fit to serve as a faculty advisor for the school robotics team. Mike retired from teaching in 2008 and continues to mentor *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 457. He provides technical and non-technical support to *FIRST* teams throughout the Alamo region.

Brenda Meyer

bmeyer@firstinspires.org

Houston, TX



Brenda Meyer has 30 years of experience teaching math, programming, and coordinating technology. Brenda uses her technical experience to help students make decisions, solve problems, and think critically. In 2012, she and a colleague started a robotics club that matured into a *FIRST* team. She believes that computer-based learning provides stimulation and motivation to enthusiastic, talented, and creative students and teachers of all learning styles.

George Tan

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Lubbock, TX



George Tan has been involved in *FIRST*® since 2006 as a founding student on *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 1817. As he has gone on to a career in electrical engineering and Army service, George has remained an active advocate for *FIRST* and STEM in rural West Texas. George has been working to build many *FIRST* LEGO® League, *FIRST* Tech Challenge, and *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams in the Lubbock area, and he specializes in remotely supporting rural teams.

Joe Varnell

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Dallas, TX



Joe “Super Nerd” Varnell has been involved in *FIRST* since 2009 when he went to the first *FIRST* Dallas Regional as a Mentor for a local *FIRST* Robotics Competition team. Joe’s background includes software, systems, and electrical engineering. Soon after his discovery of *FIRST*, Joe became involved in helping out rookie teams, conducting workshops, and serving as a Key Volunteer for both *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* LEGO® League.

Kevin 'KP' Pardus

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Virginia



Kevin 'KP' Pardus became involved with *FIRST* when his youngest daughter, as a high school junior, joined her high school's *FIRST* Robotics Competition team during its second season. His involvement soon expanded into *FIRST* Tech Challenge and *FIRST* LEGO® League, and he is now an active supporter of *FIRST* in many different roles. In his professional life, Kevin has extensive technical experience in defense-related engineering and other environments.

Eric VanBuren

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Washington



Eric VanBuren began getting involved with *FIRST* when his son joined a *FIRST* Robotics Competition team. It wasn't long until he became hooked on *FIRST* and switched his focus from the design and fabrication of the robot to being the lead mentor focusing on strengthening the team's outreach, marketing, media, and web performance.

2015-16 *FIRST* Senior Mentors – Canada

Craig Maynard

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Calgary, Alberta



Craig has had a long career as an educator since 1982 at SAIT Polytechnic in Calgary, Alberta. Craig spearheaded *FIRST*® LEGO® League's entry into Alberta; mentored several *FIRST* LEGO League and *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams, and helped bring the Western Canada Regional *FIRST* Robotics Competition event to Alberta. He continues to teach at SAIT Polytechnic as the lead instructor of Robotics and Automation in the Mechanical Engineering Technology program. Craig continues to innovate and enhance learning using cutting edge pedagogical techniques.

Russell Weir

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Edmonton, Alberta



Russell Weir has served as the business director for an independent school where he has taught programming and robotics to students for many years. As *FIRST*® Robotics Competition began growing in Alberta, he started mentoring a local team. This grew to include coaching *FIRST* LEGO® League teams, as well as working with teachers to promote Junior *FIRST* LEGO League in the classroom. Russell brings his entrepreneurial spirit to students on teams and in classrooms.

George Chisholm

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Southern Ontario



George Chisholm is a retired high school technology teacher with over thirty years of experience with the Halton District School Board in Ontario. George is a founding mentor of *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 1334, The Red Devils and was named a Woodie Flowers Finalist at the Waterloo Regional in 2011. In his role with 1334, he has helped start and mentor several *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams across Canada.

Nancy Dewar-Stenning

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North Bay, Ontario

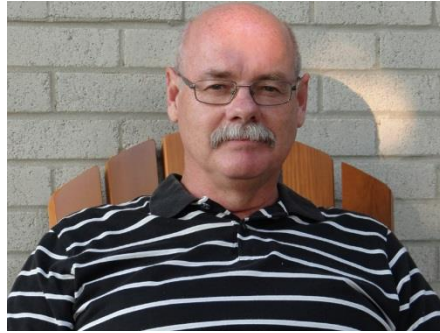


Nancy Dewar-Stenning is retired from teaching at the Near North District School Board and Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario. Sixteen years ago, her son and his three friends at the school where she taught were inspired to start a robotics team, which in three years' time became *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 1305. In her experience mentoring *FIRST* teams, Nancy discovered a niche supporting team outreach activities, along with business and presentation skills. She particularly enjoys encouraging students to embrace challenge and grow beyond their expectations.

Paul Keenan

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Greater Toronto, Ontario



Paul Keenan was a teacher for thirty-one years in the Toronto area. Paul started out as an elementary French teacher and for the last twenty-five years was a high school Computer Science teacher. Paul's last three years as a teacher included starting a *FIRST* Robotics Competition team at St. Robert Catholic High School in Thornhill, Ontario. Even before Paul became a teacher, he was involved in community coaching of hockey, football, basketball, and softball.

Sheri Lynn Koscielski

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Windsor, Ontario



For the past twelve years, Sheri Lynn Koscielski has been passionate about growing *FIRST* programs at all levels in the Windsor, Essex, and Kent area of southwestern Ontario. She has been Volunteer Coordinator for the FIRST LEGO® League Competition and *FIRST* Robotics Competition Windsor Essex Great Lakes Regional tournament. Sheri has a long history of volunteering, and she is committed to helping our youth grow into confident young adults by providing great experiences.

Lynn Rampertab

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Southern Ontario



Lynn Rampertab was introduced to *FIRST* in 2008 by her children and has been a non-technical mentor for *FIRST* Robotics Competition Team 3161 since 2010. She has served as the *FIRST* LEGO League Tournament Director for Halton Regional Qualifiers and The Toronto District School Board. Lynn has served as a key planning committee member for the two *FIRST* LEGO® League Provincial Championships since 2010 and most recently, the *FIRST* LEGO® League International Open in 2014.

Serge Audet

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Québec



Serge Audet is the Director of Development for the Sherbrooke School Board Student Foundation in Sherbrooke, Québec. The Foundation aims to support students to advance their studies, and that is how he was introduced to *FIRST*. Audet has since become involved with *FIRST*, using his professional experience and network to support teams in Québec. In the past, Audet was Vice President of the Federation of Chamber of Commerce of Québec, which now allows him to approach different schools of the region with knowledge and enthusiasm.