



FIRST® Senior Mentor Program:

FIRST Senior Mentors (FSMs) are a group of highly skilled and talented, technical and non-technical individuals, who focus on recruiting, supporting and expanding all four *FIRST* programs. *FIRST* Senior Mentors identify and recruit volunteers to be mentors, coaches, and event volunteers while supporting existing teams, mentors, and coaches.

How do you become a FIRST Senior Mentor?

FIRST Senior Mentors are recruited through a cross-program nomination process that occurs locally at the recommendation of their Regional Directors and Partners because of their previous relationships with *FIRST* Programs and their general understanding of the culture of *FIRST*. Most FSMs have an existing relationship with *FIRST* as Team Mentors, Coaches, or event volunteers. Once recommended and approved by the RD and Partners in their area FSMs are then approved through an interview process with *FIRST* HQ. After being approved as a FSM by your RD, Partners, and HQ then a FSM must complete their contract and forms. A FSM serves one contract year from July to June. Contracts may be renewed yearly.

What does a FIRST Senior Mentor do?

A *FIRST* Senior Mentors supports all four *FIRST* programs in a part-time capacity (10-15 hours per week/ 40 hours a month) through communication and collaboration with their Regional Director, Program Partners, Regional/Planning/Operational Committees, and other key individuals in their region. A *FIRST* Senior Mentor works within a 100 mile radius of their residence to support teams, mentors, and coaches. A *FIRST* Senior Mentor determines how they will recruit, support, and expand *FIRST* programs by developing an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) with their Regional Director and Partners. The ISP is a strategic 12 month planning document that identifies the key goals and objectives a FSM focuses on specific to each of the four *FIRST* programs.

Monthly a FSM reports on the progress in their area and on the completion of their ISP goals utilizing a monthly report. Completion of the monthly report is required to receive the monthly stipend payment. FSM are also responsible for tracking their monthly expenses (ensuring expenses remain within the total allotted amount) and submitting the expense report to *FIRST* HQ Accounts Payable to receive reimbursement.

FSM are also responsible for participation in FSM conference calls a few times a month and moderating *Ask an Expert* calls for other *FIRST* programs. Primarily, FSM work in the field to recruit (teams, mentors, coaches, students, partnerships, etc), support (teams, mentors, coaches, events, etc), and expand (teams, partnerships, awareness of *FIRST* programs, etc), these efforts are structured based on the goals outlined in the ISP.

FIRST® Senior Mentor functions: Recruit-Support-Expand

- Build relationships with volunteer recruitment resources such as companies, professional associations, educational institutions, and other nonprofit organizations for support of *FIRST* Programs;
- Recruit, support and recognize volunteers to serve as *FIRST* Team Mentors, Coaches, or as Event Volunteers;
- Support Teams, Mentors, and Coaches within their geographic area;

- Link, where possible, new volunteers into the existing network of *FIRST* teams, and to assist in coordinating training and support for new Teams, Mentors and Coaches;
- Facilitate and/or conduct presentations and/or skills-building workshops for potential and current mentors, coaches, event volunteers, and teams;

FIRST[®] Senior Mentors DO NOT provide the following functions:

The function of an FSM is to work towards the support and empowerment of others in their region, and as such FSMs are restricted from engaging in certain support or leadership roles. FSMs are a specialized resource and should always focus on working toward the goals outlined within their ISP. In addition, eliminating the FSM from serving in dual roles makes it clear what the role of the FSM is compared to an RD or partner.

A FSM does NOT:

- Serve in dual roles such as a partner or a RD as well as being the FSM;
- Serve in key roles on committees or planning groups;
- Participate in certain fundraising activities such as:
 - Raising funds to contribute to his or her own volunteer service payment;
 - Raising funds to cover operating expenses of individual *FIRST* teams or events;
 - Raising funds for an organization's operating expenses or endowment.
 - Writing grant applications for funding

A FSM can engage in certain approved fundraising activities including:

- Acquiring in-kind, supplies, equipment, resources for training and recognition
- Providing presentation focused on volunteer recruitment or opportunities to contribute funds to support *FIRST* activities
- Supporting fundraising and grant writing (if the FSM maintains a supporting role and does not lead or perform the writing or fundraising effort themselves)

FIRST[®] Senior Mentors work with:

The FSM works with and reports to the RD and Partners in the field as well as the Senior Mentor Program Coordinator at HQ. Questions about the *FIRST[®]* Senior Mentors should be directed to Ashley Liles, Senior Mentor/AmeriCorps *VISTA* Programs Manager for *FIRST[®]* at 603-666-3906 x 471 or aliles@usfirst.org.