

Chairman's Award Team

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2016 Team

180

Team Number

180

Team Name, Corporate/University Sponsors

Pratt & Whitney / Florida Power & Light / Education Foundation of Martin County / Billy LiCausi / UL / Waste Management & South Fork High School & Clark Advanced Learning Center & Martin County High School & Jensen Beach High School

Briefly describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on team participants with special emphasis on the 2015/2016 year and the preceding two to five years

SPAM students develop the hard skills of robot building and, through our GP mindset, SPAM develops the soft skills of leadership and mentoring. SPAM participation resulted in internships and job offers 10 students attended an enhanced CAD training class led by mentors 100% of our team who attends tournaments must pass our safety test 90% of our students volunteer at other FIRST events 2 students have been named FIRST Dean's List Finalists. 93% of our graduates pursue STEM majors

Describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on your community with special emphasis on the 2015/2016 year and the preceding two to five years

SPAM increased STEM awareness and secured funds to provide STEM programs. Demonstrated our robots at 50+ community events including science nights at elementary schools, middle schools, and libraries. At our county fair, 76,000 people pass by our displays which led to SPAM running the STEM center at the fair. Targeting underserved students, we are the key volunteers of Tech Know camp run by our local state college. Secured \$10k and \$20k grant for Boys & Girls Club to build a STEM program Team's innovative or creative method to spread the *FIRST* message SPAM actively develops programs and seeks opportunities to spread STEM awareness. Created CampInABox allowing other teams to emulate our flexible camp model. Influenced the development of two makerspace programs one for children K8 and another for teens and adults Authored a children's book about our 2012 FRC Championship season that is in our school libraries Participated in CANstruction where we built the FIRST logo and shared the value of STEM and FIRST

Describe examples of how your team members act as role models and inspire other *FIRST* team members to emulate

SPAM has a GP culture whose key purpose is to assist teams independent of receiving recognition. At competitions, assist with writing code, robot construction/repair; provide parts; connect teams with sponsors. Examples, o students repaired a broken scale at a regional; o assisted rookie team 5722 repair and program their robot; o provided 1523 with our practice field to prepare for tournaments Mentoring FLL teams is a core tenet Students, mentors and alumni volunteer at FIRST events

Describe the team's initiatives to help start or form other FRC teams

Through a continual presence of robot demonstrations we share STEM awareness throughout our community. Presented FIRST to other school districts and student clubs Presented our program to FPL at their request in order to recruit their employees to be mentors for additional programs. In 2016 we started FRC 6225 where we: o Worked through administrative paperwork; o Involved them in our Kickoff to help them analyze the game; o Connected them to sponsors; o Provided build space and mentors

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

SPAM runs summer camps and holds demonstrations to generate interest in FIRST programs. Worked with Education Foundation to secure funding for every elementary and middle school in our district and organize teachers as coaches Trained the teacher/coaches Provided student and adult mentors Started 24 FLL teams including 2 in a district that has no FIRST programs Secured grants and funding for organizations outside the school district for teams at 4H, Boys & Girls Club and YMCA

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

SPAM is the primary resource in our community for creating sustainable FIRST programs. Two Jr FLL teams successfully advanced to FLL Provided judges' feedback at our practice tournaments on how to improve their teams 21% of this year's team are former FLL members Provided training to tournament directors and judges and referees for FRC 3233's practice tournament Actively advise 4H, Boy Scouts, Civil Air Patrol, and schools outside our district who sought our input to start teams

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

SPAM considers mentoring FLL a key responsibility of being a team member. Students mentored 62% of our district's FLL teams; adults assisted the remaining teams. Hosted and ran 3 qualifying tournaments and 1 open practice tournament for FLL. Provided the 32 teams and more than 300 students with their own SPAM student as an ambassador. Ensured each participant had a positive tournament experience. Introduced them to SPAM's FRC program. Recruited and trained 102 volunteer

Describe your Corporate/University Sponsors

SPAM has 34 sponsors ranging from individuals to national corporations. Pratt & Whitney, a founding sponsor, FPL, UL, and Waste Management comprise 30% of our donations. Diverse groups of smaller sponsors of local businesses and families demonstrate community support. Local state college provides monetary and in-kind support. Generous in-kind support also received through technology, supplies and human resources.

Describe the strength of your partnership with your sponsors with special emphasis on the 2015/2016 year and the preceding two to five years

While SPAM sponsors applaud our success on the field, they understand their investment is in the sustainability of our team. We are proud of the reciprocal relationship. Seacoast Bank called on us to promote their annual food drive through TV coverage. Partnered with UL and Disney to present their Safety Smart® videos through our outreach program. Showcase our program to FPL employees to expand their involvement in FIRST programs; a scholarship was created as a result of our partnership.

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

SPAM has grown with FIRST. Started with FRC and now support a progression of FIRST programs. 100% of students in our county have access to FIRST programs. Considered a local resource for STEM activities. Recognized by FLL state judges for our impact. 2012 World Champions. Earned GP Awards the past 3 years. Students, parents, mentors and alumni volunteer at all levels of FIRST programs. Transformed into a sustainable program. Started an FRC team and began international outreach.

Briefly describe other matters of interest to the FIRST judges, if any

FIRST® is a series of STEM programs for students ages 5-18 that values cooperation and teamwork to solve STEM challenges in a game environment. Led by mentors, students develop self-confidence as well as leadership and practical skills that can be used for college and future careers. Guided by Gracious Professionalism, teams actively assist one another so that all teams have the ability to perform at their best. Students become passionate advocates of STEM and its value to their lives.

Team Captain/Student Representative that has double checked this submission.

Hailey Jones

Essay

In 2015, SPAM failed to make the trip to Championships for the first time in its 18 year history. By most standards, it should have been a disappointing season. But because of our culture of Gracious Professionalism (GP), we define success differently. Our success is defined by how our team builds a GP culture, how that culture impacts our team, and how our team, as a result of its culture, influences the FIRST community, our local community and our sponsors.

SPAM begins each season with rookie meetings where new members learn from our mentors and veterans the various aspects of FIRST and our team. The first topic we discuss is GP and how this essential principle applies to all facets of our team. Once build season begins, veterans participate in our "adopt a rookie" program to acclimate newer members as well as instill mentoring skills in experienced members.

Our team's core expectation is that everyone plays a vital role in problem solving. Our philosophy is to ensure that everyone, whether in our home pit or at tournaments, has an opportunity to perform to the best of their abilities. At competitions, our daily assignment is to thank volunteers and sponsors as a way to reinforce their value to us. SPAM proudly displays our sponsors on the back of our team shirts. We instill in our team that when wearing our shirts, we represent our sponsors while in the community. Therefore, we only allow team members to wear our blue team shirts.

SPAM has a history of mentoring young students on FLL teams. However, we found we did not have the manpower and resources to create the culture change of expanding FIRST programs and STEM awareness we desired. So we collaborated with team advocates and two years ago, we secured financial and promotional support of the Education Foundation of Martin County. As a result, every student in our district has access to a FIRST program. Students participate in FLL through the district's 12 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, four 4H teams, and a Boys and Girls Club. This year, SPAM helped secure \$10,000 from our sponsor, a \$20,000 grant to expand the FLL program at the Boys & Girls Club and anticipates a \$10,000 grant to start a program at

the YMCA. Of the 22 FLL teams in our district, SPAM students mentor 62% of those teams and SPAM adults assist the remaining teams. "SPAM has been an integral part of increasing awareness, participation and interest in robotics programs across Martin County. Their students mentor children from local Boys & Girls Clubs through a variety of robotics and science programs, providing experiences for these children that many would not otherwise have. They are gracious, kind and humble in their delivery, allowing these children to explore their own ideas and building an interest in STEM related fields. Without SPAM, these programs would not be possible. We are truly blessed to have such exceptional students available to excite and stimulate other children and grow STEM in our county." Tina McSoley, owner, All About Achieving Learning Centers.

When we students serve as FLL mentors, we emulate what we observe from our SPAM mentors. Our team mentors come from a variety of professional backgrounds and understand the team's mission not only is to build a robot, but also to foster professional workplace behaviors. Our mentors are the cornerstone of our GP culture. It was our mentors who made the team aware that UL increased their sponsorship to us. Thus, our mentors insisted that we have a safety program that fully embodies the UL safety standards. So we expanded our safety training to a multifaceted program encompassing proper use of machine shop tools, battery and chemical safety, proper lifting techniques, use of the buddy system, and more; we test each student on these matters.

Last year our team faced a shortage of students and mentors knowledgeable in robot design. SPAM committed the resources and our mentors developed a summer class where 10 students became proficient in CAD. Now these students are heavily involved in the 3D designs for our robot. SPAM provided a realworld skill and they pass their skills to a new group of students. Additionally, our mentors coach students in resume writing to prepare students for internships and scholarships. They encourage students to acquire many skills in their time on the team in order to foster a mindset of "learning to learn."

SPAM ran and hosted FLL tournaments for more than 12 years and trained key volunteers for other FLL tournaments. Last year we ran and hosted 3 qualifying tournaments and one practice tournament representing 37 teams with over 250 students. This year, in addition to an Open Practice tournament, SPAM ran and hosted 3 qualifying tournaments simultaneously with 32 teams representing more than 300 students. Using 102 volunteers, it is one of the largest FLL qualifying tournaments run by any FRC team. We assisted FRC Team 3233 with their FLL practice tournament by training the tournament directors, providing judges and referees. The FLL organizers recognized our efforts to build and strengthen FLL for the past two years at the Florida State FLL tournament as they presented SPAM an award for our outstanding support of FLL. "Each year, at least one of my FLL teams goes to a SPAM qualifying tournament because they are organized, run a fun tournament for my kids and give us the best feedback from their judges. We take all that feedback and prepare for the next level of tournaments. They help us "up" our game. Love those kids!" Gloria Gibson, Florida FLL affiliate partner.

As an experienced team, SPAM makes a conscious effort to be a resource for other FRC teams. We connected 3 teams with major sponsors. For the past two years we assisted FRC Team 1523 by hosting scrimmages as they did not have a practice field. We continued to hold scrimmages with them to help them prepare for championships even though our team was not attending. We discovered their need for additional funding and helped them secure it from one of our sponsors. At our year end banquet, FRC Team 1523 attended and presented SPAM with a plaque honoring us as a sponsor for their 2015 season.

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This year, SPAM started FRC Team 6225, the first FRC team in the St. Lucie County School District. We included them in our kickoff where we helped them analyze the game, inventory their Kit of Parts, and begin designing their robot. We provided build space, connected them with sponsors, and mentored them for the remainder of the season. Each year we run three summer camps including a STEM based LEGO camp where we raised over \$3400. At the 2015 Orlando Regional, teams asked us to explain how we use summer camps as a fundraising opportunity. As a result, we created CampInABox, a flexible summer camp curriculum including procedural timelines, lesson plans and administrative paperwork. This serves the dual purpose of providing an effective and sustainable way to fundraise and to spread STEM awareness beyond our immediate reach. We shared our prototype with FRC Team 1523 so they could assist in beta testing. SPAM team members even piloted CampInABox in India and the Philippines as an outreach effort to introduce and highlight STEM. This year at the Orlando Regional we will hold a conference on CampInABox where we will distribute kits to every team who attends.

Outreach, demonstrations and community service make SPAM visible in our community. At our county fair, as many as 76,000 people pass by our interactive displays. Over the last five years our presence expanded and this year we led the STEM activities at their Science Center. We participated in the Barnes & Noble MiniMaker Faire and walked with our robots in the Stuart Christmas Parade where we presented our team and FIRST to a new audience.

We are proud of the relationships we cultivated with our sponsors. We developed a personal relationship with a UL employee and introduced her to FIRST. In three short years she expanded the role that UL plays with FIRST, sponsors two teams, mentors another, became the lead safety judge recruiter for UL and is a FIRST Steering Committee Member. UL, in conjunction with Disney, developed a series of safety videos for younger students. Due to our close relationship, they encouraged us to present their videos at our summer camps and trained and certified SPAM members in the presentation of the curriculum. "I've had the opportunity, because of SPAM, to travel and meet UL and FIRST colleagues all over the United States. UL is happy to have SPAM as a partner in our goal to keep children safe through education." Elaine Wilder, Senior Project Specialist, Safety Smart LEAD Ambassador.

We are most excited about the effects of our GP culture on one of our newer major sponsors, FPL. "While our company has been awestruck by the technical prowess of the team members, it is their professional and soft skills that have made the greatest impact on our employees and executives. Since meeting the SPAM team, we have called on them to help teach an introduction to robotics at an FPL workshop for teachers, and invited them to visit our headquarters each year in June to participate in a robotics showcase for our employees. They come eager to engage and share with our employees the wonderful world of FIRST. Their excitement is contagious and, as a result, FPL now supports over 50 teams in our service area in Florida. It is with the SPAMers in mind that FPL took a giant leap this year in creating our first ever scholarship to students who are a part of a FIRST team,"Maureen Wilt, Education Program Manager, FPL.

Due to our GP culture, SPAM created a model for other teams to emulate. A successful and sustainable team can have farreaching impact on its community no matter where it is situated, spread awareness of STEM opportunities for young people, and inspire greater levels of respect for science and technology.