

## Chairman's Award - Team 1741

[Print](#)[Close](#)**2018 - Team 1741****Team Number****1741****Team Name, Corporate/University Sponsors**

Crossroads Engineers/Rolls-Royce/Endress+Hauser/Center Grove Education Foundation/Red Alert Robotics Parent Organization&Center Grove High School

**Briefly describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on team participants with special emphasis on the 2017/2018 year and the preceding two to five years**

We are Red Alert. A simple phrase that many members hold onto. For some Red Alert is a 2nd home; for others it's a safe place to learn and grow their passion for STEAM. Participating on the team has taught students that they can achieve anything through hard work, dedication, and perseverance. They have learned how to speak in front of their peers and time management. 100% of students graduate after participating on the team, continuing on to college and the workforce, 83% staying within STEAM.

**Describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on your community with special emphasis on the 2017/2018 year and the preceding two to five years**

Red Alert has made a noticeable impact within the Center Grove Community. Three years ago there was a major shortage of space for our team to expand the impact of STEAM. Through the efforts of our students, mentors, parents, and alumni we secured a new, approximately 15,000 square foot, facility. The Innovation Center houses our 2 FLL Jr, 3 FTC teams, and Red Alert. This facility also houses a Makerspace for students K-12 to use for STEAM activities during regular school hours.

**Team's innovative or creative method to spread the *FIRST* message**

Our team spreads FIRST in unique ways. Through our Robot Rampage coffee and Red Alert Velvet popcorn we partner with local companies to raise awareness of FIRST. We create a float for our school's homecoming parade, and co-host the off season FRC CAGE Match event. At the JDRF One Walk and an Indy Eleven soccer game, we exposed new audiences to FIRST. We partnered with IndyCar driver Charlie Kimball who wore our team logo on his helmet at the 2015 Long Beach GP attended by over 181,000 people.

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

Our students volunteer and mentor all 4 programs with in the FIRST pipeline. From student ambassadors, presenting at Purdue FIRST forums, and creating graphics used in IndianaFIRST presentations, we serve as the volunteers that help to make FIRST possible. Several students mentor other robotics programs and teach STEAM to students in other school corporations. Our students are role models outside the FIRST community as well. They volunteer with local blood drives and animal shelters.

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

We helped start FRC team 3180, and maintain our relationship. To help start other teams, we send care packages filled with build season essentials such as an AndyMark gift card, tools, Kit Kats, and soda. Many of our alumni have helped start other FRC teams like 4272 and 5188. We co-host the offseason FRC event CAGE Match, which is a great opportunity for new teams to come and see a competition. At CAGE Match starting teams, such as Whiteland, shadow our team and have a stronger foundation.

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

In our school corporation we facilitate building the FIRST pipeline, by starting FLL teams at 3 schools, and providing help for the preexisting teams in our community through student mentors. We have also started 2 FLL Jr teams housed in our Innovation Center. Over the past 5 years we have grown our FTC program from 1 team to 3 by mentoring and sharing our workspace. We plan to continue pipeline growth by starting FLL and FLL Jr teams in all elementary schools with in Center Grove.

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

Utilizing our experience, we assist the 3 FTC, 8 FLL, and 2 FLL Jr teams in our pipeline. At many events students and mentors have helped teams with programming, chairman's, scouting data, and drive coach when a team lost theirs unexpectedly. Since 2012, we provided almost all the volunteers for the Central Library FLL Tournament. On top of hosting a week 0 FRC scrimmage, we have an open door policy year round that many teams utilize. We share our facility with teams from around the region.

**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)**

In Red Alert, we emphasize helping teams. Students on our team work with the 3 FTC, 8 FLL, and 2 FLL Jr. teams within our schools system to help grow the program and foster future leaders. 15% of our alumni are mentoring various FIRST programs and volunteer at events. In the past five years, multiple mentors from our team have stepped back from our team to assist other FIRST teams such as 3180 and 1529. We use these opportunities to exemplify Gracious Professionalism to other teams.

**Describe your Corporate/University Sponsors**

We have a mutually beneficial relationship with our sponsors. Endress+Hauser and Rolls Royce are long term sponsors along with the Center Grove Education Foundation. Crossroad Engineers and Indiana Realty Pros are both owned by a former student's parents, yet they continue to support us because FIRST made a difference in their lives. Recently we helped IndyWiring, move locations. We partner with Not Just Popcorn and Strange Brew Coffee to have Red Alert branded products sold at both locations.

**Describe the strength of your partnership with your sponsors with special emphasis on the 2017/2018 year and the preceding two to five years**

Our sponsors have been with us for years due the the emphasis we place on their value and the alliances we foster. We extend thank yous with cards, plaques, and invitations to competitions, our shop, and end of season banquet. To show our appreciation, we assisted Indy Wiring in moving facilities and volunteered at Chip Ganassi Racing, Servpro, Ingredion, and Endress+Hauser community outreach events. We encourage our FTC teams to seek out sponsors which develops these beneficial alliances early.

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

FIRST is a world-wide community with the goal to expose students to STEAM, science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. Through annual challenges, the program prepares teams of students, K-12 for future careers by building long-lasting and beneficial real world skills; however, FIRST is more than just robots. It teaches students the importance of teamwork, respect and embracing who they are. By expanding through the spirit of FIRST, our team hopes to touch every part of the globe.

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

We maintain a relationship with Chip Ganassi Racing. One of their engineers, Kate Gundlach, came to talk to our female students about women in engineering. Charlie Kimball has attended our FTC competition and supported our FTC and FRC teams. For 5 years Red Alert students have been able to earn varsity letters. Our school saw this as a vital step to change the culture and make FIRST as important as sports. We made safety a priority, writing and illustrating a children's book about shop safety.

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

Madison Schnurpel

## Essay

### We Are Red Alert

Thirteen years ago, a small community of parents from Greenwood, Indiana were introduced to a little known program called FIRST. This sparked a revolution that would grow to impact hundreds of students, thousands of community members, and more. Since the inception of FIRST Team 1741, Red Alert Robotics has grown to more than any founding members could have dreamed. Our mission has evolved throughout the years. We accept every challenge. We change the culture. We shape the future. We are Red Alert.

### We are FIRST

FIRST is more than robots: it's about changing the culture to where STEAM is celebrated and young leaders are developed. This is the vision of FIRST. At Red Alert we promote that vision in everything we do; from mentoring FIRST pipeline teams to hosting FLL Jr., FLL, and FTC tournaments. In the last 5 years, we have hosted 12 qualifying tournaments and expos, as well as 6 off-season scrimmages. In 2013 Central Library in Indianapolis decided to run an FLL tournament. They asked for our help with planning and running the event. For 4 years we filled almost every volunteer position and ran a robot demo. This expanded FLL in central Indiana, making FIRST available to a more urban demographic. This year we were recognized with an award from Indiana FTC for our efforts in promoting FIRST and hosting exemplary events. These are the ways we support the leaders of tomorrow.

To support IndianaFIRST, we provide robot demos at events all over Indiana, including Conner Prairie, Indy PopCon, and the Children's Museum of Indianapolis. At each of these events we talk to many people who have never been impacted by FIRST. Contact information is shared to maintain these relationships.

Over the past 5 years, we have provided multiple student and mentor presenters at Purdue FIRST Forums. This is an annual event where FTC and FRC teams have the opportunity to attend sessions about various topics. Not only do we share our knowledge, but also learn from others. We have had mentors host presentations at the FIRST Championship, impacting hundreds of teams we would not normally reach. These both provide us the ability to make connections with other teams outside of usual competition interactions. We are every tournament we host. We are FIRST pipeline.

### We are Sustainable

Early in the history of the team we established a 501c3 parent organization to support and maintain our financial stability. This has given us direct control over our future, without relying on 3rd party administrators. Historically we have had a healthy student to mentor ratio due to our ability to retain and provide a rewarding experience for our mentors. Currently, 78% of our mentors do not have a student on the team.

Over the years, we have worked to develop our relationship with our school; from our humble start in a single closet, to having our own building, the Innovation Center. Our new home allows us to not only have stability for our team, but also provides the foundation to constantly support our FIRST pipeline and other teams.

Our values stretch beyond numbers and statistics; we are for inspiring future generations to become involved in STEAM. We create lasting relationships with our school, our peers, and our community by showing that we can be relied upon year after year. We have partnered with the White River Public Library for 13 years to host robot demos. Other public libraries in our county and the Central Library in Indianapolis have welcomed us to strengthen STEAM in their community. We will sustain these partnerships for many years to come with regular communication and high quality events. These events allow us to impact an audience that would otherwise be difficult to reach, particularly young children who have never heard of FIRST. In order to appeal to these children, we created and published a children's book, Ryan the Raccoon and the Terrific Treehouse, to promote safety. Our outreach programs are designed to inspire an inquisitive nature in children. We are the people we inspire. We are here to stay.

### We are Impactful

We make a lasting impact on all who interact with our team. We send care packages to rookie teams and teams who need our continued support. We assist in other ways such as hosting an FRC week 0 scrimmage at our Innovation Center. During this event, we are able to help teams through mechanical, software, and Chairman's assistance, as well as providing a field for them to practice. Our facility is always open to any FIRST team that needs a space to practice or assistance with a project. We have laid the groundwork to host an FRC Competition and worked with our school to design the new Student Activity Center to accommodate our needs.

We co-host the offseason FRC event, CAGE Match, with FRC team 1529, providing an opportunity for all teams to compete and learn. Through this event we started FRC team 3180, and continue to support them today. When their shop caught fire last year, we hosted them in our building for a few weeks.

At Red Alert, we embrace the culture of success. Often, students will come to meetings to seek tutoring. With this support system we have achieved a 100% high school graduation rate. Graduation, though, is not the end of involvement; in fact, 83% of our alumni go into STEAM fields, 5 have joined the armed forces, and 53% continue in FIRST. We make a lasting impact. We are our alumni.

### We are our Community

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Volunteering at community events has been key to our team maintaining close relationships with our neighbors. We strengthen this bond by volunteering and raising money for important civic groups. Our students volunteer at the humane society by cleaning cages, organizing supplies, and assisting at the barn. Each year, students, parents, and mentors gather to make blankets for Project Linus, an organization that distributes them to children who have suffered trauma. In the last 2 years, Red Alert has taken part in Center Grove's "Rock the Block" run and fair. This event not only served as a great fundraiser for our team, but also as a unique way to support our community. People from our community seek us out to help with all STEAM needs. Our local fire department contacted us to fix their animatronic dog. We saw it in action at their local Strawberry Festival, where they presented us with a community award.

Through our relationship with IndyCar driver Charlie Kimball, we partnered with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation to host a kids area at their One Walk event. We are resourceful. We are supportive.

### We are our Sponsors

We recognize the value of our sponsors and use innovative ways, such as our golf tournament, to interact with and attract new businesses. We have partnered with a local coffee shop, Strange Brew, to sell a brand of coffee, Robot Rampage, inspired by our team. We also worked with Not Just Popcorn and developed our own popcorn brand, Red Alert Velvet. Both of these popular flavors are handed out to volunteers and teams at events.

We showcase our robots and share the message of FIRST at our sponsors' community events. We have attended events at Endress+Hauser, Ingredion, and Cummins as well as hosting a sponsor night where our supporters are invited to our facility. We recognize our sponsors each season with their name on our t-shirts, banner, and robot and give them shoutouts on social media. Many of our sponsors have been with us for years because of the emphasis we put on appreciation. We are our partnerships. We are innovative.

### We are More

Red Alert is more than a team; we are a family. We strive to be teachers, leaders, and innovators. We worked with the Girl Scouts of Central Indiana to start a program, Girls Engineering Awesome Robots Successfully (GEARS), to develop girls' interest in STEAM by earning a robotics badge using Ev3 robots. The girls are shown that they are capable of success in a field which is predominantly male. We also teach children the fundamentals of STEAM at 2 other summer camps. Campers are given the tools and opportunities to use problem solving and critical thinking skills.

A major supporter of ours is IndyCar driver Charlie Kimball. He attended our FTC tournament and supports our team through social media. In 2015, he wore our logo on his helmet at the Long Beach GP, which was attended by over 181,000 people. In 2017 we met a student with muscular dystrophy who couldn't participate in band. We designed and built a stand which allowed him to play the trumpet. Without this he would not have been able to play a role in something he is so passionate about. Our high school theater department sought our help to construct a collapsing table for one of their shows. They expressed their gratitude in their program, and continue to contact us for similar projects. We are GEARS. We are more than robots.

### We are Red Alert

Our team is full of individual stories. While we can not tell them all, this inspiring story showcases what Red Alert is about: Taylor, Cory, and Jacob met in 1st grade when they entered a Red Alert hosted LEGO building contest at their school. From that moment on they knew that robotics was what they wanted to do when they grew up. The following year their moms started a LEGO club which became the school's first FLL team. By middle school they were the nucleus of their FLL team and enjoyed success at the state level inspiring other teams to form in the district. Soon they joined the FTC teams and helped grow the new program, competing for 2 years. This season, they are now seniors and have realized their ambition as Team Captains as well as receiving multiple college offers and substantial scholarships. They are a part of the first generation to pass through the Red Alert FIRST Pipeline. For 12 years, they have lived and breathed the ideals of FIRST through Red Alert and have been rewarded with a lifetime of memories and experiences they will never forget. We are their stories. We are Red Alert.