

Chairman's Award - Team 4125

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2018 - Team 4125

Team Number

4125

Team Name, Corporate/University Sponsors

Umatilla School District/21st Century Community Learning Center/State of Oregon/Umatilla Lion's Club/Chuckwagon Cafe/Cascade Natural Gas/Carlson's Umatilla Drug/Umatilla Police Department/Umatilla Fire Department/Autodesk&Umatilla 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

When our team first started seven years ago, we never would've thought our alumni would attend top universities, work in STEM fields and empower students to pursue any career they wanted. We are lucky to say that over the years we have played a key role in powering up STEM interest across our state, and even the nation. Thanks to *FIRST*, we have been able to improve the lives of students in our district by teaching them skills that can change their futures and the futures of others.

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

Team 4125, a team that started out small has become the foundation for our community and region. We have become the go-to group for business support. Over the years, we have helped with website production, social media consultation and advertising. All of our fundraising is done to positively impact the community. We run a never ending book sale, host youth activities and teach summer camps. We've helped our community develop a STEM enriched culture.

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

Year round we are working our way through the levels to expand the knowledge of STEM at presentations, conferences, curriculum planning expos, and even in our Sunday newspaper. Interning with industry experts helps us introduce them to the *FIRST* world. Our favorite outreach project is our "Faces of Engineering" campaign, where we encourage girls to pursue STEM fields. We've expanded around Oregon with our GoSTEM Ambassadors. We're proud to remember that we are representing the message of *FIRST*.

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

We know that *FIRST* has given us bonus skills, so we try to give every story a multiplayer experience so we can share our love of STEM with others. We know that standing behind every member is an entire town supporting our *FIRST* teams. To honor their dedication, we abide by a strict Code of Conduct. We require students to volunteer, to act with honor and to show people why *FIRST* matters. We mentor numerous *FIRST* teams and work to model the type of behavior that represents *FIRST*.

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

For many years we've hosted conferences and given presentations to encourage and start new FRC teams. Last year we helped start Pendleton's team: 6442. Pendleton's interest started when we invited one of their FTC members to travel with us in 2016. We were proud when Team 6442 won the Rookie All-Star Award at the Central Washington University competition taking them to Worlds in Houston, Texas. We continue to support them this year in the hopes that we will again level up together in the future.

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

Seven years ago, in the team's initial year, FIRST was unknown in our region. Throughout the years, we have started FIRST programs K-12 that have over 300 students logged in every year. While we have started many teams in our district, we have also started FLL, FTC, and an FRC team in local towns. Due to our presentations and other outreach efforts, there are now FIRST teams in twelve regional realms.

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

Our students mentor and run FLL Jr., FLL, and FTC teams in our district. Fifteen students are currently teaching at the STEM Academy of Umatilla. Along with mentoring teams in our district, we also volunteer at FLL and FTC competitions in our region. To help inspire younger students and kids from other schools, we invite them to join us at competition. These "interns" come to some meetings, go to competition, and make buttons. It is an honor to be powering up the FRC students of tomorrow.

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)

We mentor many FTC, FLL, and FLL Jr. teams in our district. In our past, we have mentored team 4980, and are happy to see them soaring on their own. We are currently mentoring team 6442. We have helped these teams with website development, finding sponsors and donors, or whatever else they may need. Every year for Kickoff, we invite local teams to watch the livestream and join classes taught by team leads that introduce them to how we run our team and to help them start a successful season.

Describe your Corporate/University Sponsors

Due to our town's size and location, we have a very limited amount of industry donors we can reach. Despite this, we have a very understanding and generous community who have supported us since the beginning. Where we lack in corporate opportunities, the community makes up with immense support. For the past four years, we've had a pathway program with WSU Tri Cities that allows students from Umatilla who graduate with an AAOT to be automatically admitted to WSU.

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

Team 4125 has immense support from the community. We honor our local sponsors by giving back hours of volunteer work, and recognizing them at kick-off and robo-reveal. Every year, we name our robot after a sponsor as another way to show our gratitude for their support. This year we asked our longtime supporters, the Masons, to name our robot. However, since they're a secret society and we are Confidential, the actual name of our robot is classified. We can tell you its code name is Flip.

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

FIRST is a program for students who want to be a part a community and work on something bigger than just robots. Being a part of this program gives students the opportunity to acquire scholarships, gain new life skills and obtain jobs in STEM fields. STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering, and math. Senior member, Anthony describes FIRST to be, "One of the most important programs there is. It inspires people to become engineers and the next generation of thinkers."

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

Since our first year in 2012, team 4125 has been student ran. This offers our students experience to help them obtain leadership and develop real world skills. Our students work throughout the entire season to improve the team and community as a whole. Confidence is gained as members continue to learn throughout their time in FIRST. Thanks to FIRST, our community has leveled up and students work towards brighter futures now more than ever.

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

Madison Finck

Essay

While Pac-Man and Super Mario Bros. are household names, another video game has been covertly played. Mr. Confidential: The Video Game, details the quest of a lone spy trying to make the world a better place through STEM inspiration as he takes on The Evil Lack Siblings: Lack of Funds, Lack of STEM Awareness, Lack of Diversity and Lack of Success.

The game starts with Mr. Confidential (Mr. C) as he begins his quest circa 2012 after stumbling across a carrier of the FIRST virus at a Senate hearing. Once he caught the bug, he revamped his entire life to spread FIRST far and wide. In his STEM fever, he saw the World of STEM like most young people in the 80s saw Atari- with amazement. Mr. C lived in the village of Umatilla and knew he could help his village reach new goals by spreading FIRST to all the land. He formed a team of students who wanted to be a part of something bigger than themselves and went to work.

Mr. C saw the 70% minority, 87% poverty students in the rural area and realized his FIRST virus may be a way to inoculate the town's scholars from future failure and stagnation. It didn't take long for this infection to spread. What started with nine FIRST infected students grew to a small posse. The FIRST virus morphed from an awareness to a quest for competition and Team 4125 was born. Much like the Magnavox Odyssey's release, Team 4125's early years intrigued the students who were ready to step up and take on the challenge, yet left some skeptical. Fortunately, unlike the Magnavox Odyssey's first year, Mr. C's clan caught a following. By the 2018 season, Mr. C's reach expanded to nearly 25% of Umatilla students and started spreading to communities throughout Eastern Oregon.

Nothing worth doing is easy, when Team 4125 experiences success, it's plagued by the villainous Lack of Funds. Fortunately, the town has shown their support by donating their hard earned gold. Those who have no gold to share find other ways to help. Tom Denchel Ford donated a truck to help Teams 4125 and 6442 deliver their pits to Houston. It's common for people to bring treats to fuel the team on their adventures. In the fall of 2017, the Oregon State Police donated a bomb defusal robot to the training ground, so Mr. C's party could always have a robot to keep their STEM aspirations in play.

The villagers saw Team 4125 as a beacon of hope as the dreaded Lack of Success had long ruled over the realm. 4125's success was soon the community's, and it gave them hope for the future. Though Mr. C didn't have coins to give back to his town, he had a clan of students willing to give time. The trainees gave back every way they could. When they aren't building robots the students are devoted to volunteering, helping local businesses with websites and social media, marching in parades, running events, catering local dinners, and working to infect other communities with the FIRST virus so they too can be protected from dismal futures. During the last four levels, they've given over 13,000 hours of service. Through their outreach efforts, the team caught the attention of the film company, Blue Chalk, who spent a year with the team to create a documentary. The journey follows how the team affected their village, and the trailer for it should be released soon. The clan has proved that no quest is too difficult if one engages the right partners and practices the art of gracious professionalism.

One of the keys to success in Mr. Confidential: The Video Game is ensuring that team members look just like anyone else. This is how they sneak up on The Evil Lacks and beat them at their own game. During the day, Mr. C's trainees play sports from football to volleyball. They also infiltrate clubs and can be found as anything from cheerleaders to vegetarian club members. Team 4125 members have an average weighted GPA of 3.8 and have earned over 763 college credits together. At all times, they demonstrate gracious professionalism and hone their STEM skills to keep the dreaded Lack of Success at bay. They spend hours designing websites, building and wiring robots, managing team funds, writing grants, and volunteering. Lack of Success tries its best to win the battle, but Team 4125's FIRST immunity is stronger than any obstacle The Evil Lacks can throw their way. 4125's seniors have a graduation and college enrollment rate of 100%. The team's alumni are currently studying at Dartmouth, Rochester Institute of Technology, Concordia, Whitman, Oregon Institute of Technology, Pacific University, and Eastern Oregon University. Many of his students have gone on to pursue STEM fields, work as IT professionals, engineers, and electricians.

Throughout the quest, Alumni have become the N64 to the team's GameCube. They pass on STEM knowledge, reminding students of the brightness of their futures, and serve as models of success in their daily lives. The importance of teaching those who will soon follow on the quest is core to Team 4125. The desire to spread FIRST led to 4125's involvement in grant writing and developing curriculum for the STEM Academy of Umatilla (SAU). Team 4125 members commit themselves to the SAU daily. Together they teach various classes K-12 including the entire spectrum of FIRST programs from FLL Jr. to FRC. While FIRST is the backbone of the SAU, STEM classes expand beyond robotics to ensure students build their STEM strength so they are able to grow without The Evil Lack of STEM Awareness ever crossing their path. From taking students to the Portland Story Arc, where they got real world work experience with cinematography professionals, to overnight trips in the wilderness to experience biology at the ground level, Mr. C ensures that students have STEM opportunities to help them dream big and grow smart. The National League of Cities named the SAU one of the top three After School Programs in the U.S. Team 4125 enjoyed seeing the program grow from the original grant concept, serving just over 300 students its first year, to well over 700 today. Mr. C has driven The Evil Lack of STEM from the town and will not stop spreading the wonders of STEM until the Lack Siblings are defeated.

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Creating isolated teams leads to short life spans in Mr. Confidential: The Video Game. Instead, Mr. C shows that careful planning and commitment is required to keep Lack of STEM Awareness on the run. In total, Team 4125 mentors 5 FLL Jr. teams, 10 FLL teams, 8 FTC teams, and 1 FRC team. To maintain this growth, clan members earn leadership roles to train the newest recruits. This succession plan was created to ensure his team would continue to grow and spread FIRST far and wide. As the fedora is passed on through the levels, characters may change, but the FIRST spirit in Team 4125 has unlimited lives.

By level 2013, Mr. C's team members began to notice they were using their help bubbles less. Instead, they were answering help bubbles from other teams. They knew it was time to chase The Evil Lack of STEM Awareness from other communities and began to spread FIRST at the state and national level. Mr. C's team was the first in the nation to complete Dean Kamen's homework and get Senator Merkley to co-sponsor SB2890. Team 4125 organized a visit from U.S. Senator Wyden to show the progress of FIRST programs in the village. Wyden asked the team to assist him in beating Lack of Success throughout the state and nation by helping to raise the graduation rate in Oregon. On the 2017 level, Umatilla High School's graduates out-performed the state average in every student category. On top of that, the class of 2018 is projected to have a record percentage of graduates (82%). This success is credited in part to Mr. C and his spreading of FIRST to help inoculate students against Lack of Success and instead help students dream big and build skills. In past levels, members of Mr. C's team have traveled to Washington D.C. to work with education policy advisors, met with legislators to promote after-school funding, and testified to the State Ways and Means committee to encourage larger school budgets and support for STEM.

Just as Sega joined Nintendo, Team 4125 teamed up with Team 4980 to take the world by storm. The teams started a campaign called: "Faces of Engineering." The goal of Faces of Engineering is to remind students that no matter who they are, they can be an engineer. The teams found that in engineering fields less than 20% of employees were women (National Girls Collaborative). Together, they wanted to inspire change in this statistic. The expansion is intended to show people how important it is to have diversity in engineering and to power up students everywhere. Alongside Team 4980, the clans were able to get closer to defeating Lack of Diversity and change the future faces of engineering.

Mr. C's most recent missions have weakened Lack of Success and Lack of Funds. The first mission was assisting FIRST in creating a survey that will be sent to Chairman's winners from the past two levels. This survey will help FIRST find ways to help start other teams, and find funding for rookies. The second was to create a video detailing how to make GRADitude videos after they were recruited by the OSBA (Oregon School Boards Association). Team 4125's film group made a how-to for anyone wanting to thank their teachers for helping them stay on track to graduate. GRADitude is an important part of gracious professionalism, and the team was honored to have been asked to do this.

Mr. Confidential: The Video Game is our reality. As we work with our town, we will continue to spread the word of STEM, FIRST, and gracious professionalism until it has reached all corners of the world, and we will not stop until everyone everywhere knows of its importance. As FIRST has grown in our region, we are confident that we are making a difference. When we see our students excited about STEM, we are confident that what we are doing matters. We are confident when we are together, we are Confidential.