



2024 *FIRST*® Robotics Competition

# Dean's List Award Guide

*FIRST*® is a global robotics community that prepares young people for the future.



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## What is the Dean's List Award?

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In an effort to recognize the leadership and dedication of the most outstanding secondary school students from *FIRST*®, the Kamen family sponsors awards for selected 10th or 11th grade\* students known as the *FIRST*® Robotics Competition and the *FIRST*® Tech Challenge *FIRST* Dean's List Award.

There are four (4) levels of *FIRST* Dean's List Award students.

- ***FIRST* Dean's List Semi-finalists** – comprised of the two (2) students in their 10th or 11th school year\* nominated by each team.
- ***FIRST* Dean's List District Championship Semi-finalists** (*FIRST* Robotics Competition only) – The students selected at District events to be interviewed at the District Championship for Finalist consideration.
- ***FIRST* Dean's List Finalists** - The students selected for each Regional and District Region.
- ***FIRST* Dean's List Winners** - comprised of the ten (10) *FIRST* Robotics Competition and ten (10) *FIRST* Tech Challenge students selected from the applicable *FIRST* Dean's List Finalists.

The students who earn *FIRST* Dean's List status as a Semi-finalist, Finalist or Winner, are great examples of student leaders who have led their teams and communities to increased awareness for *FIRST* and its mission. It is the goal of *FIRST* that these individuals will continue, post-award, as great leaders, [student alumni](#), and advocates of *FIRST*.

In 2019, the [Woodie Flowers Memorial Grant](#) was established for Dean's List Award Winners pursuing STEAM fields of study.

**\*NOTE:** *For regions of the world that do not use grade levels such as this to identify years of schooling: This award is intended for students who are two (2) to three (3) years away from entering college or university. Students that would be attending college or university in the next academic year are not eligible. Mentors will be asked for the year of graduation during the nomination process.*

## Dean's List Award Criteria & Eligibility

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### Criteria

Criteria for selection of the *FIRST* Dean's List Award shall include, but not be limited to a student's:

- Demonstrated leadership and commitment to the [FIRST Core Values](#)
- Effectiveness at increasing awareness of *FIRST* in their school and community
- Demonstrates passion for a long-term commitment to *FIRST*
- The student's individual contributions to their team contribute to the overall success of the team
- Proven experience in areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)

- The student is a role model and can motivate and lead fellow team members

## Eligibility

After careful review of the criteria for the Dean's List Award, each team is invited to nominate up to two student members as Semi-finalists who are 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. It's important that teams nominate only those students they believe are truly deserving of this honor. Students who are in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade that mentor the team (and do not actively participate as members of the team) are not eligible.

A mentor, who is not related to either of the students chosen as the team's Dean's List Semi-finalists, shall complete and submit the application in the Team Registration System. Students previously selected as *FIRST* Dean's List Semi-finalists or Finalists in a prior year are eligible for nomination again this year provided they meet all of the criteria.

Students from both *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* Tech Challenge are eligible to be nominated for the Dean's List Award in their state/region's program. There is no rule that states a student cannot be nominated for both programs. However, the coach or mentor writing the nomination should focus the essay on the student's accomplishments in the program in which they are being nominated. If the student is nominated in each, the coach/mentor should adjust the content of each essay to the specific program.

*Please note: By making a submission, the Submitter irrevocably grants FIRST and FIRST designees the right to use any or all of the submission in any and all media for the purpose of describing the submission, describing the award, and/or otherwise promoting FIRST and FIRST programs.*

## Preparing a Nomination

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### What Information is Required for the Nomination?

Although a single mentor must submit the nomination, the entire team must verify the accuracy of the submission.

The mentor or coach, who is not related to either of the students chosen as the team's Dean's List Semi-finalists, should gather the required information for the gather the required information for the nominated student. The submission form will require:

- Nominee name
- Nominee year of graduation
  - This award is intended for students who are two (2) to three (3) years away from entering college or university. Students that would be attending college or university in the next academic year are not eligible.
- How many years the student has participated in *FIRST*?
- Event in which the Dean's List interview will take place (where the team will be competing)
  - *Note for District teams:* the event will default to your District Championship event. Your District's judges will notify you which of your team's events the interview will occur at.

- Nomination essays following the prompts outlined in the next section.
- Student Address (if the student is not registered in the Youth Registration System)
- **To be nominated and to receive an interview, students MUST have a signed *FIRST* Consent and Release form.** Students with a *FIRST* Dashboard account and a signed Consent and Release form in their profile can be selected in the drop-down list in the nomination portal. If the student does not have a signed form in their Dashboard account, or does not have a Dashboard account, mentors may check off a checkbox in the nomination acknowledging that they have a signed paper copy of the *FIRST* Consent and Release form before submitting. Paper forms may be acquired by reaching out to your [local leadership](#).

**NEW!** Dean's List Award submissions may be completed in a team's native language *only if* the team is interviewing at an event that speaks that language. If the submission is made for an event that does not speak the team's native language, it must be submitted in English. Additionally:

- If the student is selected as a Dean's List Award Finalist at a week 1-5 event, the lead mentor must submit a translated submission within 1 week following the event.
- If the student is selected as a Dean's List Award Finalist at a week 6 event, the lead mentor must submit a translated submission the Monday **immediately** following the event.
- Send translated submissions, with the event name in the subject line of the email, to [deanslist@firstinspires.org](mailto:deanslist@firstinspires.org).
- **If we do not receive a translated copy of the submission by the deadline, the student will no longer be eligible for selection as a Dean's List Award Winner at the *FIRST* Championship event.**

Teams are permitted to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist in the creation of award submissions, handouts, writing robot code, etc. *FIRST* views AI resources as tools available to students in the same way that CAD programs, Programming Languages, and 3D printers are tools available for their use. Teams using AI to assist with code or content generation must provide proper credit and attribution, and respect intellectual property rights and licenses. Proper Credit can look like this: Essay created by Team XXXX and ChatGPT.

## Essay Prompts

Mentors must write and submit essays following the five prompts below. Each essay is limited to 800 characters (punctuation and spaces included). Essays should be specific about the Semi-finalist's individual contributions to *FIRST* and to their team. Specific examples are helpful to the judges. Information about the Semi-finalist outside of *FIRST* may also be supportive of the nomination (as it relates to skills learned in *FIRST*) but is secondary to information about the student's participation in *FIRST*. Essays must be submitted in English.

1. Explain how the student embodies the philosophies of *Gracious Professionalism*® and *Coopertition*® through the *FIRST* Core Values: Discovery, Innovation, Impact, Inclusion, Teamwork and Fun. Please provide examples.
2. How has the student increased the awareness of *FIRST*? Describe the student's interests and/or plans to continue to engage with *FIRST* beyond high school. Please provide examples.

3. How does the student's individual contribution to the team benefit the team as a whole? Please provide examples.
4. Describe the students' experience in areas of STEM. This could include but is not limited to skills in engineering, software, CAD, fabrication, etc. Please provide examples.
5. Explain the student's leadership to their fellow team members. How do they motivate others? What is their leadership style? Please provide examples.

Additionally, there is a 500-character limit prompt for sharing additional information about the student:

6. Please share anything else you'd like us to know about the student, including academic performance, specialized skills, technical expertise, or additional extracurricular activities.

***Please note that nominations submitted without the essays will not be considered for an interview.***

## Best Practices for Writing a Nomination

When writing the essays, it is important to remember that these essays are a vital tool used to decide which students should advance to the next level. Only including a few short sentences in the essays can limit an otherwise great candidate from moving to the next level. Try to be as detailed as possible while remaining within the character limit. Additional tips to keep in mind when writing an essay are:

- The nomination essay should mainly focus on *FIRST*-related activities and accomplishments.
  - Mentioning other achievements outside of *FIRST* as they demonstrate leadership, entrepreneurship, etc. is okay but should not be the sole focus of the nomination.
- Include specific examples of what makes the nominee so exceptional and how they meet the award criteria. Don't just say it – prove it!
- Describe the difference your nominee's contributions have made and show why they are important. Include benefits from their efforts and what the impact was. Use measurable results whenever possible.
- What sets this student apart from others? Focus on why you selected this student, apart from all others on the team, to nominate.
- Consider: How this student is a model *FIRST* participant – for example, major position on the team, has created/furthered the team's initiatives in a meaningful way, and believes in the missions of *FIRST*.
- Avoid sweeping generalities and run-on sentences.
- Be concise. Make the narrative clear and easy to read.
- Topics in the submission should be able to be validated in an interview. If the submission talks about certain things the student should expect questions about those things during the interview.
- We recommend reviewing Appendix A: Dean's List Awards Helpful Terms in this document.
- Follow the prompts and keep the criteria for the award in mind. Remember things such as:
  - How is the student a leader?

- How has the student helped increase the awareness of *FIRST*?
- Describe the student's interest and passion that demonstrates their long-term commitment to *FIRST*.
- Describe their experience in areas of STEM.
- What are the student's *individual* contributions to the Team, whether it is building, programming, team captain, etc.?

If you feel as though you need guidance when writing an essay, consider reaching out to other mentors on your team or on another team. Our community is a great resource – utilize it!

## Nomination Instructions

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### Who Submits the Nominations?

The lead mentor 1, lead mentor 2, or the Dean's List Award Submitter can submit the Dean's List Award nominations.

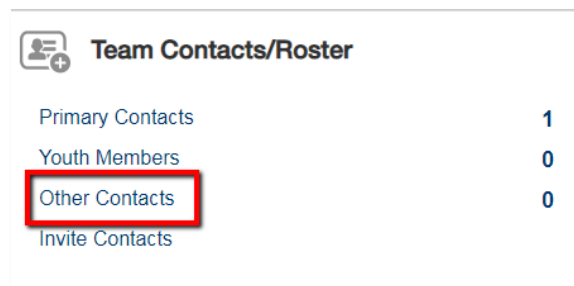
#### Lead Mentor 1 and 2

The lead mentors 1 and 2 can make the nomination through the [FIRST Dashboard](#). If another Mentor would like to nominate a student for the Dean's List Award, they can send the nomination essay and required information to the team's lead mentor 1 or 2 to be officially submitted through the team dashboard or be added as a Dean's List Award Submitter (covered in the next section). All nominations **must** be entered through the system, any nominations sent straight to *FIRST* will not be considered.

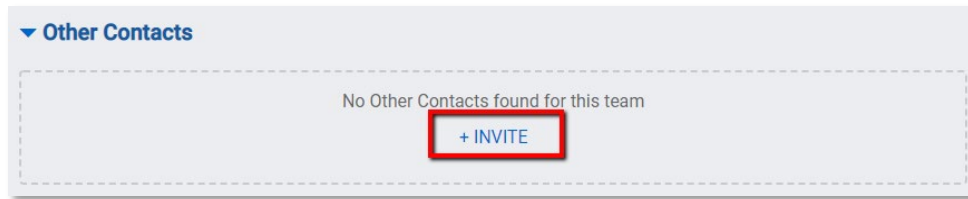
#### Dean's List Award Submitter

The lead mentor 1 or 2 has the option to add the role "Dean's List Award Submitter" to the team to complete the nomination. This can be done when the Mentor would like to submit the nomination or if both the lead mentor 1 and 2 are a parent of the nominee. Follow these steps to add this role to the team from the team's dashboard:

1. Login to the team dashboard: <http://my.firstinspires.org/Dashboard/>
2. Click "Other Contacts" from the team dashboard. Click "Invite".







3. Select “Dean’s List Award Submitter” and enter the full name and email address of the person who will be submitting the nomination.

4. Click on “Send Invitation”.

## Submitting the Nomination

The lead mentor 1 or 2, or Dean’s List Award Submitter, must login to their [dashboard](#) and follow the steps below to submit a nomination:

1. Select “Certificates & Awards” under “Team Options”. Then, select “FRC Dean’s List Awards Submission”.
  - a. The team must not have any outstanding tasks and must have paid for registration to submit for the Dean’s List Award.



DASHBOARD

MY TEAMS

PARENT/GUARDIAN

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

CREATE NEW TEAM(S)

Teams List

Dean's List Test Team

Team Options

Outstanding Tasks (3)

Team Information

Parts & Products

Certificates & Awards

#201701535

FIRST®

Team Finances

Balance Due	\$275
Credit Balance	\$0
Payments to FIRST	\$0
Funds & Grants	\$0

Finance Options

Individual Team

Team Contacts/Roster

Primary Contacts	1
Youth Members	0
Other Contacts	0
Invite Contacts	

Review Outstanding Tasks

Contact Options

All tasks MUST be completed before nominating a student.

Team Registration fee MUST be paid before nominating a student.

Team Options

Outstanding Tasks (2)

Team Information

FRC Dean's List Awards Submission

FIRST Robotics Competition Season Calendar

Certificates & Awards

- On the next screen, the Region field is automatically populated based on the team's location. The team must next choose the Regional event (or in the case of District teams, select the District) where they will be competing from the drop-down menu, as this is where the nominee will be interviewed.

< Back to Dashboard

**First Nominee**

Second Nominee (optional)

If you would like to submit a second nomination, please select Second Nominee (optional) from the Left Menu.

You may nominate up to 2 nominees from your team for Dean's List Awards.

If a parent/relative is the mentor of a youth team nominee selected to be nominated, the nomination must be submitted by a non-related mentor on the team.

If the student you wish to nominate is registered with *FIRST* but does not have a signed consent and release form on file, the student will not show in the dropdown list. You must manually fill in the information and a signed paper Consent and Release form **MUST** be brought to each event where the student participates in *FIRST* activities. We strongly encourage to have every youth register in the *FIRST* dashboard and have a parent complete the youth's consent and release form. <https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/youth-registration-system>

For help writing your submission please select the link below:  
<https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/frc/submitted-awards>

Region: Texas

Event to be Judged at: FIRST in Texas District Championship

- After selecting the event where the nominee will be competing, you must choose the student from the Youth dropdown list. Students will only appear in the dropdown list if they have an account and a signed *FIRST* Consent & Release form.

Youth

Please Select or Type

- Student in List:** If the student is in the list, select the student's name. The mentor nominating the student must then fill out any remaining fields and write the nomination essays.
  - Student Not in List:** If the student is not listed in the dropdown, select "Not in list". You will then need to manually add the nominee's first and last name, email address, year of graduation from secondary school, and address into the system and then write the nomination essays.
- Once you have chosen the student and filled out the required information, enter the student's nomination essays. There are five separate essay boxes with 800-character limits (the limit includes spaces and punctuation) for each box. Each box includes a prompt question that aligns with the Dean's List Award criteria. Mentors should follow each prompt and provide examples. Fill out the additional comments prompt (500-character limit) as well.
  - Once you have completed the nomination, check the acknowledgement boxes, and click "Save Changes". **ALL** fields on the nomination screen **must** be filled out to save changes. **Be sure to select SAVE CHANGES** before you proceed to entering in your second nominee *or* leaving the page if only submitting one nomination. If you do not select SAVE CHANGES, information entered into the form will not be saved when you leave.

☐ I acknowledge that i am not a parent/relative of the semi-finalist.  
☐ I acknowledge that the youth team members of the team have verified the accuracy of this submission.  
☐ By clicking this box, you acknowledge that you have collected a Consent and Release form signed by the student's parent or legal guardian. A signed Consent and Release form is required to nominate the above student. For those students who do not have a signed Consent and Release form in the *FIRST* Dashboard, a signed paper Consent and Release form **MUST** be brought to each event where the student participates in *FIRST* activities. The student will not be interviewed at an event without a form.

**SAVE CHANGES**

Nominee submissions will automatically be submitted at 3:00 PM ET on February 10, 2022. You can make changes until 3:00 PM ET on February 10, 2022. At that time, all submissions will be auto submitted.

This checkbox will only appear when a student "not in list" is selected.

- If you would like to make a second submission, navigate back to the top of the page. Select "Second Nominee" and repeat steps 1-5 for the second nominee.

**DEAN'S LIST AWARDS**

< Back to Dashboard

You may nominate up to 2 nominees from your team for Dean's List Awards.

**First Nominee**

**Second Nominee (optional)**

If a parent/relative is the mentor of a youth team nominee selected to be nominated, the nomination must be submitted by a non-related mentor on the team.

Region: New Hampshire

Event types associated with the region: Please Select

**IMPORTANT:** The second student nomination must be for the same event chosen for the first student nomination. If you choose to submit only one student to an event, you will not be able to go back and add another student to a later event once the deadline has passed.

**Reminder!** At the bottom of the page check the boxes and **be sure to select SAVE CHANGES**. If you do not select SAVE CHANGES, information entered into the form will not be saved when you leave.

☐ I acknowledge that i am not a parent/relative of the semi-finalist.

☐ I acknowledge that the youth team members of the team have verified the accuracy of this submission.

☐ By clicking this box, you acknowledge that you have collected a Consent and Release form signed by the student's parent or legal guardian. A signed Consent and Release form is required to nominate the above student. For those students who do not have a signed Consent and Release form in the *FIRST* Dashboard, a signed paper Consent and Release form **MUST** be brought to each event where the student participates in *FIRST* activities. The student will not be interviewed at an event without a form.

**SAVE CHANGES**

Nominee submissions will automatically be submitted at 3:00 PM ET on February 10, 2022. You can make changes until 3:00 PM ET on February 10, 2022. At that time, all submissions will be auto submitted.

## Preparing for the Interview

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### What to Expect

After the submission deadline, every Semi-finalist will receive an email from *FIRST* which provides the Semi-finalist the essay nomination written by the mentor. Semi-finalists should make sure to read the essay to help prepare for the interview. Be prepared to discuss topics written in your nomination essays and anything else that you might want to mention that is relevant. It is also helpful to prepare a list of topics you want to discuss during the interview.

Interviews are 6-10 minutes long. Interviews are conducted in English (with the exception of teams interviewing at events in Brazil, China, Chinese Taipei, Israel, Mexico, Quebec, and Turkey). Students needing a translator or sign language interpreter may include an additional person to act as that translator/interpreter. The translator/interpreter does not need to be a team member. For these students, the duration of the interview is increased by up to 5 minutes.

The interview is where the judges can meet you and potentially learn some new information about you. There is no need to dress up for your interview, but we do recommend that you prepare for it as if it were a job interview. Come up with some talking points so you can remember things that you want to tell the judges in response to questions, do mock interviews, and come into the interview planning to be confident and engaging. Remember that this is a conversational interview, there are no presentations or informational handouts involved.

During the interview, please remember that it is about **YOU**, your contributions, leadership, etc. in relation to the criteria of the award. For example, if you are discussing accomplishments of your team as a whole, make sure to specify how your individual efforts were vital in the success of those accomplishments. Do not be afraid to share your personal successes!

Only the nominated student is allowed to offer information or answer questions from the judges. In instances where a mentor is present, the adult team mentor may observe and later provide feedback to the student, but the mentor is not allowed to provide any assistance during the interview.

Recording video, audio or taking pictures (including screenshots) are prohibited during the interview. In addition to *FIRST* prohibiting recording, there may be other legal restrictions governing recording.

Although judges are not prescribed a list of required questions to ask, they are given a list of suggestions. Examples of questions you might expect:

- Describe your roles and responsibilities on your team.
- What is your specialty role on the team? Describe your contribution.
- Describe one example of how you were a leader.
- Describe how you plan to continue to be active in *FIRST* beyond high school.
- Describe a time you had to motivate fellow teammates. How did you do it? What were the results?
- Can you provide me examples of your *FIRST* activities in your school and/or community?
- What is your specialty role on the team? (Mechanical, electrical, design, etc.). Describe your contribution.
- What are your plans for post-high school?
- Is there anything not included in your essay, or that we haven't discussed, that you would like to share?

We also recommend reviewing the Dean's List Award Helpful Terms in Appendix A in preparation for your interview.

## When is My Interview?

Semi-finalists will be interviewed at one (1) event where their team is competing. Signed *FIRST* Consent & Release forms MUST be completed in the Dashboard or a signed paper form must be brought to the event in which the student is to be interviewed at and submitted with the Team Roster to Pit Admin. If the student does not have a signed form at the event (whether shown on the Team Roster as being signed in Dashboard or a paper form), the student will be ineligible to receive an interview and continue on for selection as a Dean's List Award Finalist.

### **Regional Events:**

Students will be randomly assigned to a time slot for an interview. The schedule will be posted at Pit Admin, who will then make an announcement for students to see which slot they are assigned to. Some students may request to change their time slot. In order to do so, the student must find another student that is willing to switch with them. Both students will then come to Pit Admin who can approve the change and Pit Admin must alert the Judge Advisor.

### **District Events:**

If competing in a District, the mentor that submitted the nomination will receive an email containing which event the team is attending that the interview will take place. Upon arriving at the designated event, students should check in at Pit Administration to see when their interview is scheduled for.

Districts will conduct a second set of interviews at the District Championship if the student is selected as a District Championship Semi-finalist. The student should check in at Pit Administration at the District Championship to see when their second interview is scheduled for.

## **How Are Students Notified if They Advance to the Next Level?**

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### **Regional Teams**

Judges will select two (2) students at each Regional event as *FIRST* Dean's List Award Finalists. Regional Finalists are announced at the Regional Event that they interviewed at. After the event, [deanslist@firstinspires.org](mailto:deanslist@firstinspires.org) will reach out to Finalists with information on next steps.

### **District Teams**

The District Semi-finalists moving on to the next level are announced as the Dean's List District Championship Semi-finalists at the District event that the student interviewed at. A second round of interviews will be conducted at the District's Championship Event, where Finalists will be selected and announced. After the District Championship, [deanslist@firstinspires.org](mailto:deanslist@firstinspires.org) will reach out to Finalists with information on next steps.

**NOTE:** There are no further interviews after the student is selected as a Finalist. The Championship Dean's List Award Judge Committee will review the essays and any available interview feedback for each Finalist to determine who the ten winners are. Finalists need not be present at the *FIRST* Championship in order to be considered.

## Appendix A: Dean's List Award: Helpful Terms

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These terms are intended to assist mentors in writing the nomination essays and for students to use during the interview. The use of these terms is not a requirement of submitting a nomination.

- **Dean's List Semi-finalists** – Comprised of the two (2) students in their 10th or 11th school year\* nominated by each team.
- **Dean's List District Championship Semi-finalists** – District Semi-finalists that are selected to move on to the second round of interviews at the District Championship.
- **Dean's List Finalists** – The students selected at each *FIRST* Tech Challenge Regional Championship or *FIRST* Robotics Competition Regional and District Region.
- **Dean's List Winners** - Comprised of the ten (10) *FIRST* Robotics Competition and ten (10) *FIRST* Tech Challenge students selected from the applicable *FIRST* Dean's List Finalists.
- Leadership titles:
  - **Captain** - a top-level position of responsibility over the team.
    - Teams with a flat leadership structure may have captains that cover specific areas, while making larger decisions as a group with no defined leader.
    - Teams with a structured leadership would have one or more captains with multiple Leads working under them to lead smaller team areas.
  - **Lead** - A leadership position over a specific area of responsibility and should include a "team area" below.
  - Either of the above can be preceded by "co-" to indicate they shared that responsibility with one or more individuals.
- Team Areas
  - **Marketing** - responsible for items like team branding, newsletters, website, etc.
  - **Awards** - responsible for working on award submissions or pit presenting preparation.
  - **Finance** - responsible for fundraising, grant writing, and sponsor relationships.
  - **Outreach** - responsible for organizing and leading demonstrations and events not tied to competitions.
  - **Drive Team/Scouting/Strategy** - responsible for guiding the team's strategy, representing the team at competitions, and collecting data on the performance of other teams.
  - **Mechanical** - responsible for the mechanical design and build of the robot.
    - CAD can be included as a separate lead position or included alongside mechanical.
  - **Electrical** - responsible for the electrical design and build of the robot, including any sensors or custom circuits.
  - **Programming** - responsible for programming the robot.
  - Any team area that falls outside of the areas listed above should be detailed to provide the judges with appropriate context.
- Action-specific words:
  - **Mentored** – the student advises or trains, either in person or via phone/email/video conference, another team or team member, helping with technical or non-technical *FIRST* program specific issues.
  - **Lead** - the student leads an event if they are responsible for planning and execution. Can be preceded with "co-" to indicate a shared responsibility.



- **Planned** - worked on the planning of the event but did not lead the execution.
- **Executed** - responsible for the execution of the event - onsite leader throughout the event.
- **Conceived** - Indicates the student introduced the initial concept.
- **Helped/Assisted** - Indicates the student had significant impact or participation, without being a leader in that situation.