

### ***Dean's List Submission: Harsh Shah (Winner GTRE 2013)***

As FIRST mentors, we realize that this program allows each student to experience many aspects of real life situations in technology, business, and the arts field. However, with the rigors of learning new and unfamiliar topics, students are challenged heavily when stepping out of their comfort zone. On team 1241, Theory6, Harsh Shah is one of the most well rounded students, willing to take on any challenge given to him, while working towards benefiting every member of the team and the community.

Harsh has been part of the team for three years, and many of us know him for his successes in academics. However, Harsh is not only involved in the controls side for the robot but mechanical as well. His attention to detail and ability to learn quickly made him one of the most reliable students on the team. If a task is needed to be finished, Harsh immediately attacks it with all his ability. His passion for technology takes over as he completes each task efficiently. However, if an unexpected task appears, Harsh goes even further as he manages his time with other tasks to reduce any delay. Putting in many late hours meant that Harsh had to be efficient with his studies as well. Even while waiting for code to download, Harsh would be reading his class notes or plan for when he can finish his homework. Going beyond expectations, he makes sure that his teammates can also complete their homework by taking over tasks and relieve pressure off their shoulders. Not only does he make sure that his peers are doing well academically, he strives to make sure that everyone has a task in his subgroup and that they are learning as the year is progressing.

What makes Harsh truly exceptional is his involvement within the community outreach initiatives such as teaching at the local library. His friendly approach towards showcasing robotics allowed him to teach young children about gears, motors, sensors, and even programming while sparking the interests and passion for engineering. Each lesson created, was broken down into its basic form, while using participation based activities simple enough for kids between ages of 5 and 12. Students were always excited for every lesson while being engaged in fun activities created by harsh to learn even the most complex concepts. His commitment towards spreading engineering and FIRST go even further as he presented the program to foreign delegates and major political figures within the area such as counsellor Ron Starr to show the value of this program.

Many team members who have had the chance to work with Harsh say that it doesn't matter what your ideas are, he will always listen and treat you as his equal. As team captain, he was able to provide roles for all members, making sure that they enjoy every moment of the experience. He is a fantastic leader. Even in high pressure situations, his calm demeanor and ability to think quickly allows Harsh to direct his team members and complete tasks that may seem impossible to achieve. This led his team to win several VEX Robotics Competitions and even place 5<sup>th</sup> within the division at VEX World Championships.

This year he was able to work with our Chairman's team, where he excelled in his ability to present and to effectively manage tasks. He has given presentations that have resulted in international relations for the team, such as the presentation to the Netherlands Delegation that has started movement for a team in 2013-2014.

Harsh embodies the ideal characteristics of a FIRST student. His passion and willingness to learn has allowed him to become an exceptional leader while encouraging the development of other team members as well. Without a doubt, Harsh is one of the most hardworking and dedicated members of the team within all subgroups, he is an ideal student.