

***Dean's List Submission: Rameesha Qazi (Winner GTR 2012)***

As FIRST mentors, the most obvious trait we notice from student's part of this experience is accelerated learning and growth. The program gives every student a chance to step out of their comfort zone and gain confidence. On team 1241, Theory 6, Rameesha Qazi has demonstrated exactly this through only two seasons. She is not like many on the team, Rameesha has a passion for theatre, psychology, and the arts as well.

She is our team captain and each day of the year, Rameesha spends countless hours working ensuring our team is functioning at its best. She eats, sleeps and breathes robotics with all her commitments such as being director of the school play, and numerous clubs.

Rameesha does not stop at creating daily task lists, running team meetings and event organization. She leads the parent group by helping schedule food for the season as well as transportation. Working with sponsors, Rameesha ensures they are involved keeping them interested in school events, social gatherings and regional competitions. She is the lead contact for the various FRC and FLL teams that our team mentors for any information. The phrase, "Just ask Rameesha" is heard so often. Rather than being overwhelmed, she takes on all tasks as a challenge, noticing the big picture that it all leads to greater good for the community.

It is fascinating how she brings her expertise in presentation, highlighting our team in the public eye. She is able to establish new connections easily, spreading the word of FIRST and Theory6. Through presentations at school events, at the district level to board members, to even the municipal level with our mayor, Rameesha is spreading the knowledge and value of the robotics program. Finally, in the media, she was featured on Breakfast Television, spreading across Canada.

Her creativity went further when she established connections with the local library. Rameesha began volunteering since grade 9 clocking over 150 hours even before being on the robotics team and creating the new connection of robotics workshops. This initiative had a simple purpose; start young and inspire the children towards science and technology. She was able to work with the library for all the details including class rooms, equipment, bringing volunteers, marketing and most of all providing the welcoming feeling for every child. By the end of the first session, children were able to learn the basics of gears, motors, sensors, and programming sparking a huge interest. Thus, the workshops are set to continue throughout the entire year. Rameesha is the fresh face that connects children with engaged learning through public presentation while keeping the excitement going.

Rameesha's goals before this season were to learn the principles of design and machines in our shop. She attended all workshops held absorbing all the material. At first, she was intimidated by the machines, they were all new. Her first experience using the hand-drill to assemble the bridge excited her and she never held back. Just like everything else, she approached machines as a challenge. By the end of the build season, she was able to make several parts such as brackets for bumpers and mounting two towers on our robot!

Even though she is new to the team, her ability to motivate team members is uncanny. Rather than just allocating tasks, she takes time to explain exactly what is needed and also gives reasoning to why it is important. If she notices that the person may not be completely interested, she looks for other tasks and obtains direct feedback from the student. This level of approachability allows all members to be honest, while Rameesha keeps each student excited about being part of the team. Every member respects her ability.

Rameesha Qazi embodies the ideal characteristics of FIRST more than anyone on the team. Her passion and willingness to learn has allowed her to be exceptional leader. At the end of the day, Rameesha is the most hardworking and dedicated member, an ideal student.