

Corey Lehman  
Woodie Flowers Finalist Award Essay (2015)

Robert Collier once said, "Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out." Corey Lehman embodies this through his commitment towards our team and FIRST.

Lehman's passion and enthusiasm for FIRST and STEM have revolutionized robotics at Rick Hansen Secondary School. He fostered a second team in our school that has exposed students to more opportunities than ever before. His impact over the last 3 years alone has led him to become the heart and soul of 2 FRC teams. His approach to robotics ensures that every student has a positive experience within the program.

Lehman's enthusiasm for STEM makes students want to learn. He is able to effectively communicate with large groups of people through his unique blend of hands-on and visual explanations, making it easy for his students to understand complicated engineering concepts. He demonstrated this ability in over 40 robotics workshops that he held at our school. He values every individual's contribution and he goes the extra step to create an inclusive environment for everyone. He enables students to become leaders who empower others so our team works more efficiently. He makes us all an essential part of the system that creates Team 1241.

The amount of time, resources, and effort that Lehman puts into FIRST is unparalleled. He manages to contribute countless hours to the FIRST community even with his other commitments. Lehman pushes for the growth of robotics by extending his outreach to rookie teams which was further expanded with the creation of the FIRST Hub. He plays a vital role in the organization of numerous robotics tournaments and in providing resources to FLL teams that allows them to compete. He is always just a phone call away, ready to help.

Lehman goes beyond teaching in the classroom by encouraging students to think outside of the box and to become active members of society. Not everyone is comfortable with giving every idea a chance and testing it out because of the possibility of failure but Lehman spins these as an opportunity to grow and learn. An example was in the 2014 build season when our winch wasn't releasing at the speed we wanted to. One student suggested that we pop the entire CIM motor assembly out. Some of us thought it was a joke but Lehman saw an opportunity. It was so effective when finished that it lasted the entire season with minimal errors. Lehman encourages creativity in design and pushes for excellence in engineering, all while enabling students the liberty of pushing boundaries.

Corey Lehman is easily the most influential and passionate individual on our team. He is the type of person to always give ideas a try, even if they seem unorthodox. It's this impulsiveness that allows him to have a meaningful impact on every individual. Lehman is not just defined by the big things he does but the fact that he does so many little things for everyone that makes him the greatest mentor we could have ever asked for.