

Dream Team
1241 Chairman's Essay 2010-11

Dreams are built on ambition and the desire to achieve a greater reality. Team 1241 THEORY6 Robotics was founded on a dream to educate, nurture, and cultivate the youth of today to understand the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Our goal is to ensure that every student is able to experience the essence of *FIRST* to become the leaders of tomorrow. Our dreams empowers students and mentors to pursue their goals to new heights in *FIRST* and STEM through the momentum of our success starting with one team, one dream. Team 1241 is the dream team!

We are a catalyst for making dreams a reality. Team 1241 strives to empower females to help them achieve their dreams and have equal opportunity by stepping outside of their comfort zone. We find ways to instill core values in them because we truly believe in creating an inclusive environment. This philosophy is successful and has resulted in 50% of our leadership roles being held by female students for the past 3 years. We provide a gateway to experience STEM related opportunities to succeed in post-secondary education. Since 2013, we have competed at the Bloomfield Hills All Girls Competition in Michigan. This year, our team competed as an all-girls team at the Stemley Cup Competition in Hamilton, Ontario and made it to the semi-finals. To date, we have been able to see the different strengths the female students held on the technical aspect. Hisha has showcased how her skills were essential to the growth of herself as an individual and also in the success of the team by holding a key role on the drive team. Currently, the strengths of the females on the team have enabled them to take on many new opportunities which were once too intimidating to pursue. Team 1241 is making the dream of our female students come true by finding new ways to create an inclusive and equal environment.

Our dream continued into creating the birth of FRC Team 1285 within our school in 2013. This second team addressed the high demand at our school by receiving 100+ applications in order to be a part of the robotics program. We partner our senior students with the junior students to hold weekly workshops to provide their insight, experience, and knowledge on *FIRST* and the team. The dream team has expanded many initiatives that have benefited many of our students just like Jatan who has grown immensely. His *FIRST* experience started when Team 1241 branched out to our feeder schools and started an FLL team within his middle school. We enabled Jatan to not only participate in FLL and also mentored FLL when he reached high school. Since his rookie year, he shadowed the senior students and enabled him to gain a better understanding of FRC. Jatan held key roles on the team since his rookie year which includes the human player position on the World Championship drive team in 2013, the driver's position and design sub-team lead. With the opportunity and diversity of roles on our team, students like him are able to reach their full potential and eventually formulate new dreams. This displays our belief in making each student's experience their own.

Team 1241 aspires to create a world where students are able to be recognized and certified for skills and expertise they obtain through the *FIRST* program. We have created the Badge Program which allows individuals to celebrate their achievements and acquire tangible evidence of their growth and skills developed through the program. This program recognizes skills that are based on the Ministry of Education's curriculum standards and *FIRST*. Last year we partnered with *FIRST* Canada to allow for expansion on both a national and global level. At the FLL Ontario Provincial tournaments over 800 students earned badges. This year, the program grew to all the Ontario Regional and Provincial tournaments which impacted over 4000 students. Currently we are working with *FIRST* towards introducing badges for FRC where students would undergo testing. We are making the dream of *FIRST*, students and mentors come true by providing everyone with the opportunity to be recognized for the achievements they have gained through the program.

Our team believes that it is important that a child should be exposed to a STEM learning environment at an early age. We aspire to nurture and cultivate young minds to get excited about STEM and are providing children with a pathway to achieve great things. We initiated a Library Program in 2012 aimed at children aged 5-12 to teach them about the fundamental learning skills of STEM and robotics. Students from our team have changed the dynamics of the library by presenting, coaching and mentoring children. We have noticed that after starting our Jr. FLL and FLL teams in partnership with the library, the children have expressed their dreams to become scientists, astronauts, and even engineers as early as the age of 5. When we first initiated this program, we started off with enough interest to build 2 FLL teams and now, due to the growth of our program, we have built 15 FLL teams over the past 4 years. We have been able to see the impact on the lives we create. Ryan, who was once introduced to robotics through our library workshops, has now completed 2 years in Jr. FLL and 2 years on our community FLL team. We have seen Ryan evolve and change into a more independent and well-rounded individual. We truly believe each and every individual has the capacity of reaching their full potential and in motivating individuals to want to move on to bigger and better things. We are changing the community around us by building a *FIRST* culture where individuals are more technologically conscious of the world around them. By also introducing FLL and Jr. FLL to our feeder schools, we have been able to create an Evolutionary Cycle where our team is able to introduce a passion for *FIRST* in children even before they enter our program. From this, we have seen students grow, and develop even greater dreams and achieve great things by sparking a fire in them at a young age. As founders of this easily accessible to everyone program at local public libraries, we now work collaboratively with *FIRST* Canada and partner libraries. We support and mentor them to enable multiple communities to deliver and undergo the *FIRST* Robotics experience. We have a range from 1241 developed "How To" guides, to continuous workshops and webinars, this initiative has grown across 11 libraries in Ontario and shows no sign of slowing down with growing interest from 8 other libraries. We have shifted the culture by partnering with decision makers to see them seeking to grow *FIRST* into an internationally renowned program.

We believe in the power of diversity and the ability it has to create an impact on the world around us. The New to Country (NTC) program is an initiative to allow immigrants to gain a sense of community and belonging. We have produced multi-language handbooks to parents to better understand our role in helping them and their children. NTC families are given opportunities to be able to live out their dream in a new country and culture and where there are no boundaries or limits at what they can achieve. Students on our team that have immigrated from different parts of the world have been put on a guided path and achieved many successes. Our alumni mentor, Rajiv has been impacted through this program. Since joining Team 1241 in his grade 10 year, we have provided him with the right tools and guidance to thrive and has exhibited huge accomplishments. He started off as a quiet, reserved student but with the help from his peers and encouragement from the team, he began mentoring FLL and running our Library Workshops. He has already grown exponentially since going into a post-secondary field in engineering and from networking and being so involved in the *FIRST* world, he has been granted the opportunity to be a *FIRST* Canada Media Representative and has become an entrepreneur in the technology and media field. Rajiv is a prime example of how we believe in the power of diversity and how it is an integral part of anything one does because there could be so much talent and potential in any one individual but you must take the time to assess and bring out the best in everyone. For the future of this program, we are currently working on a partnership with the Welcome Centre of the Peel Region to integrate new immigrants in Peel.

Team 1241 is facilitating rookie and veteran teams by being one of the three super hubs across Ontario. The super hub assists all *FIRST* teams in all aspects of the program. In the past, Team 1241 has

provided similar assistance, “Geek Squad” during competition season at regionals since 2010. We provide our facility for teams to ship their robot to and from locations around the world. We have facilitated teams from North Bay, Mexico, and partnered with a team from Singapore to billet them in order to come to Canada to compete. For the past 4 years we have been participating in Quick Build where we provide our students and mentors to assist rookie teams in building their drive trains on Kick Off. We have a growing amount of mentors, students, and parents who continuously volunteer at many FRC and FLL competitions including Jr. FLL expos who work tirelessly to provide help in any shape or form.

Dreams are what shape and motivate an individual. They are the driving force that allows an individual to grow, have a vision, dream, or even a passion which motivates them to accomplish their goals. Setting objectives gives an individual a purpose, Team 1241’s dream is create a culture of STEM consciousness and instill the values of *FIRST* into every individual we meet. One dream can inspire other individual dreams. Over the course of accomplishing ones dream, difficulties and conflicts can occur; THEORY6 believes that if you are truly passionate about something, never give up. We strive to help others dreams come true while making the *FIRST* dream come true.