

FRC team 1422
The Neon Knights
WFFA 2013
Dr. Devin Blizzard

Dr. Devin Blizzard has been our mentor since the beginning. He is always there to support, guide, and demonstrate grace, humility, tact, integrity, and a better image of what our team can be.

Although he has been involved in starting many FLL/FRC teams in the Silicon Valley, including FRC team 254, the Cheesy Poofs, and founded 99% of the FLL/FRC teams in the Central Valley, you wouldn't know it by talking to him; Blizzard's humble, pensive demeanor is not boastful, nor condescending. He is always receptive to any questions we may ask. He stands as a strong example of the type of individuals our team members hope to someday become.

Blizzard always pushes us to pursue different community sponsors and conduct presentations about our program. He firmly believes in spreading the message of FIRST through increasing public awareness of the FLL/FRC programs, and performing charitable acts within the community. He is always there to help us with our presentations and give us constructive criticism on our robot designs and team projects. He is much more than a mentor to us. I like to think he is our voice of reason. Blizzard always knows exactly what to say and when to say it. In times of frustration or difficulty, I can often hear his voice in my head saying in his cool, calming voice, "Think about what you guys are doing. You're doing and celebrating the right things and changing culture by default. How cool is that?" and then I realize, if this program is having that tremendous of an impact on society, whatever problems I am facing are small in comparison to the big picture. I don't know what gives him this clarity and focus, perhaps it is the years in FIRST as a Senior Mentor or the genuine nature of his personality, but I hope someday our team can demonstrate even 1% of the drive Blizzard has.

Blizzard's most notable impact on our team is bringing in many of our sponsors and mentors. He is the main reason we have a team at all. Without his tireless efforts recruiting sponsorship funds, mentors, and even student members, it is dubious that our team would be where it is today, and his help does not end there. Furthermore, he is always there to greet us and supervise us at CART when we have team meetings, whether they are at 7 in the morning on a Saturday, or last until 11 at night on a Sunday. He never lets us see him impatient; no difficulty can break through that smile of his.

Apart from helping to grow and mentoring our team, Blizzard is still an active mentor for the remaining Fresno/Clovis area FRC/FLL Teams, all of which he is either directly or indirectly responsible for starting. Additionally, he is on the Madera FRC Regional Planning Committee, and alone raises approximately 60k in funding to support the event.

This will be Blizzard's 15th year continuing to inspire students within FIRST much like myself. I cannot think of a single mentor who has contributed more to the FIRST community as a whole. The number of students that his involvement in the FIRST community has positively impacted is in the thousands. We hope you find him as inspiring as we do.

