

Woodie Flowers Award Submission

It has been said that to make an impact on someone's life is to live a truly successful life; David Berggren has done this many times over and still humbly takes no credit. David has been involved in FIRST since 2005, when he worked with a group of students to begin Team 1538. Even with a baby girl at home, David still finds the time to devote over 1,500 hours to The Holy Cows each year. As a teacher at High Tech High, David has worked with the team to create a robotics elective class, club and senior project. David also worked with High Tech High to create intersession- a two week-long immersion course dedicated to robotics. Intersession has expanded since its inception to include many more science and math related courses, giving hundreds of students the opportunity to grow in STEM areas.

David consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that his students learn as much as they can and work to their full potential. He not only lends the team use of the engineering lab at High Tech High, but brings them to his family-owned machine shop. Both David and his father work with The Holy Cows, as well as other Team San Diego teams, to custom design and build parts, and teach us how to safely run the machines in the shop. David's own passion for engineering has been instilled in us all, inspired greatly by his selflessness and generosity.

David's generosity and caring can be seen in all that he does. On more than one occasion David has stayed up all night, not only to work with the team but to write letters of recommendation for students applying to college. Jessica Raptis recalled when he wrote her a letter of recommendation, not because she asked, but simply because it would better her chances for acceptance. Largely because of that letter she will be attending Cal Maritime in the fall. This is a prime example of David's giving nature and his love for his students and team members.

It is not only his time that David donates. David personally helps students who cannot afford to travel with the team to competitions. He only asks that they come intern at his machine shop and learn something new there. David encourages his family and friends to donate materials and money to the team, as well. Anyone who meets David feels compelled to give after seeing his own passion for FIRST and always visible conviction that the youth he teaches are the future. David's kindness extends far beyond The Holy Cows. He has always been very active in Team San Diego, a coalition of all San Diego FRC teams. Each year David chairs the San Diego Kick-Off event, sits on the Regional Planning Committee, and builds the practice playing field used by all San Diego teams. This year David became the Senior Mentor to San Diego, Orange and Imperial Counties. This year alone David has brought in over 30 new mentors and sponsors for teams across these areas.

To be able to teach students engineering concepts, real world applications and how to take ideas and bring them to reality is the only payment David asks for. He volunteers his time and equipment without thinking twice and only expects us to learn as much as we can. David has the ability to inspire within us a passion for engineering and, further, he gives us the tools to pursue whatever our goals may be. David has opened his classroom, his machine shop, his pocketbook and, most importantly, his heart to FIRST, The Holy Cows, and every other student he works with. David Berggren selflessly promotes FIRST, he gives so much, and is truly a gallant individual, keen only on teaching his students as much as possible.