Me, a story of FIRST® Robotics

Here you are sitting on a hard bleacher. Your back hurts, it is blaring loud, and all you can hear is screaming. We’re up. It’s the Finals. It’s the most intense FIRST® Robotics match I have ever seen! We are winning by a landslide. BOOM! The match is over and the score is on the board, 185 to 58. WE WON!!! Throughout all of this, I never even stopped to consider the magnitude of this accomplishment.

I have been a member of FIRST® Robotics Team 3323 ever since my freshman year and I plan to continue my involvement by mentoring (If Possible) after I graduate. Each year in FIRST®, we are given an almost impossible task with a 6 week timeframe, and are told to build a robot that can interact with other robots in the most efficient way possible to beat other teams while maintaining a strong relationship with them. We each put in about 130 hours planning and building the robot each year; that’s about 20 hours a week on average. We put all of our blood sweat and tears (literally) into building this robot. It is an incredible feeling to get a reward along with valuable experience out of it.

Not only have I been working on the robot but I have been working on sustaining our team. As a team we are a large dysfunctional family. We have communication issues and numerous conflicting personalities. I have manages to smooth out these conflicts and have learned valuable communication and teamwork skills from it. My first position on the team was spirit captain (ha-ha) this was a made up position of little importance that attended to things like keeping track of posters. However, with the help of our Team’s advisors, I have developed it into a real job that holds our team together by resolving conflicts and communication issues, as well as showing the public how awesome FIRST® Robotics and our team really are.

My job was not only keeping everyone pumped up at events but to head all of the marketing for our team! I designed our t-shirts, designed a 3 foot by five foot banner, set up our work area (called the Pit) during events to showcase our robot, our logo, and our amazing sponsors to market our team to others during events. In FIRST®, having a good robot doesn’t guarantee success, like anything you need to market it!

This year I was elected to the position of Team Captain. I have naturally taken to our teams fledgling Business Team, I work closely with them and help out with anything from proofreading grant applications to branding our robot with witty slogans and memorable graphics. In my 4 years with the team, I have seen it grow and prosper. I kicked butt getting our team more sponsors as well as maintaining strong relationships with our old sponsors. I even have coordinated the sale of FIRST® e-watt saver LED light bulbs, which is a major source of funding. The head advisor of our team even nominated me for an exclusive award for FIRST® members, because he feels that I am a major contributor to our team.

Even after about three (going on four) years in FIRST® robotics gaining experience with around 130 hours working per year, I hadn’t even stopped to consider the magnitude of our accomplishments. I have seen more and more potential in myself every day as well as seeing our team grow and become increasingly successful, If I can do this in high school, what can’t I do if I am determined later in life? FIRST® Robotics has shown me what I can truly achieve and is central to who I am. It has made me who I am today and given me valuable skills with business, leadership, and teamwork.

Architecture, What's up with that?

Architecture is my passion. From a young age sculpting landscapes in my sandbox to last summer going to the Summer at RPI career discovery program, I have enjoyed the design and reality of building. I am, and have been mesmerized by both traditional architecture and modern architecture . I love the way a building can affect your emotions, from a tradition downtown to a sleek and cold modernist building.

I have a deep appreciation for architecture of the old tradition, and believe that we should look back to fundamental principles, take the abstract form of them, and apply them to contemporary architecture. I love seeing a historic downtown, as you can frequently see the old functions of the buildings and how they have been modified for a current function. an exemplar of this is the Mass MoCA Museum, former Mills converted into really awesome exhibition spaces. all buildings create an artificial habitat for humans to live in and work in and sets the mood for an area, conveying emotions. Just like with music, architecture is not just to look(sound in music’s case) pretty, it makes us feel something. Architecture it is an applied art Art

last sumer was my first encounter with contemporary architecture. We went to the Clark museum with the “Summer @ Rensselaer” Career discovery program and seeing the new expansion on the Clark Museum. It was incredible and truly was an experience! the low profile of the entrance, the courtyards, the function of it all, the reflection pools; It was awe inspiring! everything was so crisp and clear from the masterplan of it all to the detail of the recessed baseboard. it is fitting as i am looking at a work of art that happens to be holding hundreds of works of art.

I loved my time at RPI with the career discovery program and what I learned from it. Although I have had the blessing of being a well traveled person, I Am a smalltown boy The architecture, and the idea of high density living of cities honestly both mesmerise and repel me. The Career discovery program took me to NYC for the second time in my life; Professor Dayem showed the pavilion at the PS1 Museum, and some really cool architecture with brilliant concepts behind them. It has broadened my horizons and really exponentially increased my interest in architecture and my thirst to be a part of it.

from a young age I have wanted to be an architect, even before i really knew what it meant. then i found out that my Great great grandfather was an very influential architect in a small town in upstate NY. he marked his buildings with a fleur de lis. this discovery brought me to do around and look more closely at architecture, and started me on the path that i am on today. this event combined with the attention of detail that I Developed early in life, I believe were what originally got me excited about architecture. things have changed since then, jobs have gotten scarcer, but even against the wishes of a few of my teachers wanting me to go into engineering or robotics, I still want to go into architecture. I truly am passionate about it and enjoy it. I play Minecraft in my free time making design buildings for fun, whether they could be real or not. I want to do what I love, and architecture is what I love.