

Team Number: 358

Team Name: BAE Systems & Hauppauge High School / Hauppauge Robotic Eagles

Regional Selection: SBPLI Long Island Regional

Team Sponsors: BAE Systems

Executive Summary:

Impact on Team Members

FIRST is great for college. Alumni of FIRST Team 358 have been inspired to challenge themselves at prestigious schools, including MIT, WPI, and Cornell, studying a variety of STEM fields, such as engineering disciplines, computer science, physics, and even naval architecture. Students have stumbled upon our workshop and have left in disbelief of how cool the robotics team sound. No other high school activity enables students to develop the skills that they can learn from the pros on an FRC team.

Role Model Characteristics

FIRST Team 358 has grown to become more than a robotics team. After many long hours spent together both in and out of the workshop, team members have become a family. Many FIRST teams are successful in competition, yet few show such a close bond between members and recognize the importance of such a friendship. It's always important to remember that although it is a robotics COMPETITION, FIRST is also FUN!

Impact on Community

FIRST Team 358 is among many other pieces of a puzzle that make up the Hauppauge community, but of all pieces, the robotics team is the corner: a foundation, starting point, and source of inspiration for others. In our homecoming parade, for example, our FIRST team's robot was admired by residents along with sports teams and other school organizations. FIRST in conjunction with FIRST Team 358 has made it obvious to our community how cool, and increasingly important, technology really is.

Innovative Methods to Spread FIRST

Every year, it seems, we have more and more demonstrations and exhibits. Included this year is our homecoming parade, "Safe Halloween" event for the district's elementary students, community pancake breakfast at Applebee's restaurant, and demonstration at Sear's Hardware and Appliances. We also spent a day at Suffolk County Community College as part of the Manufacturing Symposium to demonstrate the purpose of FIRST in our community. We try to display a robot at every school event possible, too.

Strength of Partnership

FIRST Robotics provides for more opportunities than just engineering experiences. We've developed valuable business skills regarding finance and partnerships, involving our Board of Education, Parent Booster Club, and corporate sponsors. Without such assets to our team, Hauppauge would not have such an awesome FIRST robotics program. By taking part in a local Manufacturing Symposium, we had a unique opportunity to meet with many engineering professionals and show them what FIRST means to us.

Communication Methods

With the increasing use of social media and the internet as a means of communication, Team 358 has also increased their communication efforts. Not only is our website available for reminders, but we use weekly emails to distribute important information. Urgent messages and reminders are also tweeted via Twitter, which our team members are subscribed to via SMS. For our alumni and local community, we have a Facebook page where recent news and photos are posted for everyone else to keep in touch.

Main Essay:

Here at FIRST Team 358, we have been doing our homework well before it was even assigned. Whenever we have a moment to spare, spreading FIRST and initiating the next American cultural revolution is only the logical task to accomplish. Something more important than simply spreading the word is taking pride in doing so, all while learning to become better students, engineers, business partners, and most importantly: better people. As a flock of eagles, FIRST Team 358 meets the world head-on with a three-pronged attack. This includes our duties to ourselves, the world of FIRST, and our nurturing community. We hope that through our efforts, we can change the world, and show others how to spread their wings and fly.

Our team, more appropriately dubbed family, is a conglomeration of many talented and passionate individuals. Not everyone aspires to become an engineer - a common stereotype made of the "robotics kids" - which more than acceptable here. FIRST provides a unique challenge, which requires a particular balance between business strategy, appropriate public relations, engineering excellence, and character building. (Say, where else do we need balance this year?) For this reason, FIRST Team 358 has grown from a small cradle of technology fanatics to a structured company of forty high school students. Allowing smaller crews of students to tackle side projects, such as organizing fundraisers or public demonstrations, enables our flock of forty to work efficiently. Internally, our team is a well-oiled machine, for lack of a better robotics pun.

The second goal for FIRST Team 358 is to help FIRST grow internally by assisting our fellow teams and promoting Gracious Professionalism and Coopertition. As a veteran team with a strong foundation, great mentors, and community support, we've made an effort to help FIRST grow by lending a hand to local rookies. The great thing about FIRST is that it actually is fun to be the "new kid on the block." For the past few years, we've adopted rookies under our wing, including the Half Hollow Hills and Central Islip FRC teams by providing mentoring support, workshops, scouting support, and a workplace, as necessary. We've always done our best to make competition as fun as possible. Over the years, we've made quite a few friends, even some from overseas! By keeping robotics entertaining, our insane drive team definitely draws attention to the spirit of FIRST in their words and actions. Something we love about FIRST is the mutual feelings of helpfulness; it puts a smile on our faces to see other teams lend us a hand, because we often require assistance as well. One cannot begin to describe the spirit of FIRST without experiencing it "FIRST"-hand.

Perhaps the greatest impact of our team is the effort to provide inspiration to the local community. All year long, our team is out and about showing what we're all about. Starting in the summer, we participate in an SBPLI golfing fundraiser at Stone Ridge, a local golf course. Golfers try to defeat our Breakaway robot on the putting green for a chance to win prizes. It's an awesome event that's fun for everyone. As the school year begins, we become increasingly busy. The fall is the time for some major events, including our homecoming parade and annual Safe Halloween. The robotics team has been a crowd favorite, exhibiting an engineering marvel alongside sports teams and other clubs. Homecoming in Hauppauge brings the whole community together. It's absolutely the best time to spread the word about FIRST Robotics. Shortly after homecoming is Safe Halloween, where young kids play games and interact with robots to receive candy as an alternative to traditional trick-or-treating. For the first time this year, we attended a manufacturing symposium at Suffolk County Community College. This was an unbelievable opportunity to meet professionals and demonstrate the awesomeness of FIRST to potential sponsors and supporters. We're sure the community enjoys seeing us as much as we enjoy seeing them.

FIRST Team 358 is not just about robots, however. Each year, we participate in our traditional "non-engineering" activities. This year, we hosted an Oldies Concert in our high school auditorium for doo-wop groups to perform. This event attracts a huge population to Hauppauge, giving us an opportunity to discuss FIRST with an audience of over one-thousand at once, and manage some fundraising. Another favorite event of ours is the Blydenburgh Park trail cleanup. One autumn day, we visit Blydenburgh park armed with large garbage bags and clean the trails and waterways. Just because we build robots does not mean we don't love nature. These events are enjoyable, but an absolute favorite team activity every year is Holiday Caroling with our alumni. One

evening around the holidays, our team roams the streets of Hauppauge, visiting houses to sing carols for residents. We'll typically meet up for hot chocolate and munchkins later on, too. Ultimately, FIRST provides us, a group of diverse individuals, a chance to find a mutual interest and make new friends.

Hopefully we've provided some insight on who we are as a team. It really comes down to one word: family. Not only is 358 a family in itself, but FIRST is a family. There is no other place on earth that one could find such a diverse group of passionate, talented students and adults helping one another in the midst of competition. The spirit of FIRST is growing exponentially, and as a proud member of the FIRST family, FIRST Team 358 hopes to show the world how cool technology truly is. Starting with the individual, working our way up to our whole team, to other teams, to our community, and ultimately to the world, we hope to provide at least the slightest bit of inspiration, so that students everywhere can embrace the experiences of Gracious Professionalism and purpose of FIRST robotics.

