

Through his character, patience, dedication, and communication, our mentor and friend, Scott Rippetoe, nurtures and challenges students to develop themselves as mature individuals and the leaders of tomorrow.

Rip has mentored FIRST Team 1477 for over five years. During that time he has molded the team from a loose, ill-defined organization into the powerhouse of engineering and learning it is today, and he personally impacts every student who crosses his path.

Rip emphasizes the need for students to work and learn, and inspires us to live up to FIRST ideals. Outside our team, he actively promotes math, science, engineering and communication: training students to compete in a national physics competition; leading a team of students to break the record for the world's largest playable electric guitar; personally visiting area high schools to recruit students into the FRC program; organizing, leading, *and* volunteering at the annual Texas Torque-hosted FLL Qualifier; tirelessly coaching BEST Robotics and Destination Imagination teams and guiding them to national and world competitions...It sounds grueling, but he loves every minute. As fellow mentor James Tonthat said, "Scott is one of the most dedicated and passionate mentors you'll ever meet. The phrase 'in and out of the classroom' is unfair to say of him; 'in and way beyond the classroom is a much better description.'"

As one team member said, "every new student Rip meets, he meets with a smile on his face - he's a close friend to every one of us." Not content to only help us build on our minds and futures, he works patiently to make the robotics lab a home and the team a family. He encourages us to help each other and become friends, constantly making jokes and puns. He's patient, understanding, and said "If I could just stop and coach robotics for a living, I would have my heart's desire."

According to a colleague, Rip is "passionate about everything, and passes that passion on to

everyone around him,” whether student, adult, or young child; as for communication, Rip believes in regular emails and meetings and clear, unambiguous terminology. Despite his exceptional leadership, he works constantly to improve his communication skills and the skills of those around him.

As a mentor, Rip is an incredible inspiration to all of us. As a friend, he’s a pillar of strength to lean on. As a part of our team, Rip is like the surgical tubing on our 2011 robot’s arm: he stretches and bends himself farther than any human would ever believe possible, and he seems to put in far more than twenty-four hours each day. The life isn’t easy, but like the tubing he’s elastic and he rolls with the punches – and as any physicist would tell you, he does so with incredible efficiency and resilience, and never loses energy as a result of his collisions. He’s our teacher and our mentor, but he’s more than that - he’s our friend, and the most dedicated man we’ve ever met. He’s my hero.

“I believe students can do anything.” - Rip