



MENTORING

BUILD A ROBOT IN SIX WEEKS,
INSPIRE A YOUTH FOR A LIFETIME

Boosting Engineering, Science & Technology™

Middle and High School Robotics Program

BEST Robotics, Inc. · 217 Ramsey Hall. · Auburn University, AL · 36849

A Chance to Make a Difference:

Imagine being 17 or 18 years old and contemplating education and career choices that will affect the rest of your life. Now imagine having an opportunity to spend six weeks working alongside adults from organizations such as TI, Boeing, Freescale, AMD, Applied Materials, Intel, Tokyo Electron and Dell - just to name a few. What a difference a mentor can make. Simply being there to talk to students about your work and your experiences. Hearing your advice about pursuing technology oriented studies and careers could help a student make an important life decision. It's a chance to be a positive role model.

What You Can Offer Students:

BEST mentors share their knowledge, talents, and maturity with our students - helping them chart a course through unfamiliar waters. Specifically, they help students in areas such as:

- Motivation
- Goal Setting
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Project Management
- Prioritization
- Applying Math & Science
- Sportsmanship
- Inspiration

A Case for the BEST Concept:

If you've seen the movie Apollo 13, you may recall a scene where Flight Control gathers a group of engineers in a room, brings in a pile of gadgets such as hoses, tape, boxes, etc., dumps it all on a table, and says, "You have three hours to make this square filter fit into this round filter hole with the materials in front of you . . . or we're going to lose three astronauts." It was a challenge to meet a clear objective with limited time and limited resources. This is the real-world kind of learning experience we try to provide students who participate in BEST.

Key Dates

Early Sep - Kickoff –receive kit of parts, discover the game, start the six week mentoring process.

Late Oct – Game Day – local head-to-head competition.

Nov - BEST Regionals –

(Texas BEST) University of Texas - Dallas

(Frontier Trails BEST) University of Ark – Ft. Smith

(South's BEST) Auburn University

•What if I'm not an engineer or a scientist?

Mentors can and have come from any field. It's more important to feel motivated to inspire a young student than to have a technical degree.

•How much time will be required?

How much time is dependent on how motivated you and your students will be to do your BEST. We have found that competitive teams met 3-4 times a week for several hours at a time. Ideally, six mentors per team reduces individual time requirements, as they can rotate times that they need to be present.

•Where does the mentoring take place?

Usually at the participating high school or at other facilities compatible with the team's requirements.

•Can I choose the high school that I mentor?

We ask that each mentor list their top three preferences from the list of competing schools. BEST will do everything it can to honor the top choice while balancing the need to assure an even distribution of mentors.

•Do I need any training or preparation before the kickoff?

No, but we suggest you find more mentors to help you - the more the better!

•How much can I help the students?

We leave that to the mentor's judgment but the spirit of BEST is to guide the students to discover their own solutions.

•What's a BEST Regional?

Top teams from BEST's local competitions will be invited to a Regional competition a few weeks later at one of 3 universities. This is a regional playoff where you'll meet other BEST teams from around the state and region.

•What makes this different from other activities I can volunteer for?

Instant feedback. In six intense weeks, students go from a blank look when they see the jumble of parts in the kit, to solid confidence knowing that they worked as a team, solved a major problem, and received the heartwarming endorsement of their adult mentors. The change is stunning and one you'll never forget.

Want to learn more?

Visit us on the web at <http://www.bestinc.org>