



REGIONAL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Overview

The *FIRST* Ambassador Program helps educate and engage “VIP” guests attending *FIRST* Robotics Competition events, to ensure their continued motivation, and increase their passion and action in assisting *FIRST*.

The Ambassador Program has a dual role as a forum for valued *FIRST* contributors and as a means to recruit new support. In one capacity, the Ambassador program is a way to provide recurring “VIP” guests (i.e. individuals who have served as judges for several years, long-time sponsors, previous presenters, etc.) with an option for an alternative or new, significant role. In another capacity, the Ambassador Program is a means to educate invited new VIP guests about *FIRST*, allow them to interact with teams and directly participate in *FIRST*, and solicit their support. The overarching goals of the Ambassador Program are to engage new VIPs at the right level and to generate high-level involvement among people that can help *FIRST*.

The *FIRST* Ambassador Program functions as a complement to the Regional Planning Committees. Although some individuals on the Regional Planning Committee may qualify as Ambassadors, the Ambassador Program should be viewed as distinct and separate from the Planning Committee, since those committee members have a larger, ongoing, more central role, and should be identified as Committee members rather than Ambassadors.

Ambassador Role:

The role of a *FIRST* Ambassador is to let team participants know their work is important, valued and making a difference. As such, those tapped to be Ambassadors must be willing to interact with teams and mentors as well as other invited guests.

Requirements

The Ambassador Program will be OPTIONAL for regional events and the desire and ability to execute this program will be left to the discretion of the Regional Directors and Planning Committees.

Only individuals who have the potential to become significant supporters of *FIRST*, or those who are already significant supporters, are eligible for participation. Significant support includes financial and in-kind contributions as well as the ability to help *FIRST* make meaningful contacts and connections. Ambassadors will be representing *FIRST* to teams, mentors and invited guests; they should have a firm background and knowledge about *FIRST* programs.

The number of Ambassadors will be left to the discretion of each Planning Committee, with the maximum number not to exceed 8 to 10, or one for every six to eight teams. The success of the program is to be judged not on the number of Ambassadors participating, but rather on the long-term contribution to *FIRST* by participants.

Individuals will be invited to become an Ambassador in advance of the FRC event, with eligibility to be determined by the Regional Director working with the Planning Committee. Any invitations or literature sent to VIPs regarding the Ambassador program should stress the opportunity to meet other VIPs and teams, as well as the opportunity to help *FIRST* better achieve its mission.

The Ambassador Program typically consists of two “information” sessions and team led tours of the Pit. VIP guests will be invited to participate in one of the sessions (Friday or Saturday) at which *FIRST* will be introduced, the role of individuals in the growth of *FIRST* will be highlighted, and guests will have the opportunity to meet each other. Following the one hour “introduction”



session, guests so desiring will be deemed *FIRST* Ambassadors and given the opportunity to meet with pre-determined and assigned teams in the Pit to congratulate them on their success and to learn more about why *FIRST* works. After Ambassadors have the opportunity to meet with teams, there will be a short “de-brief” and sharing of experiences and an invitation to further support *FIRST*, through sponsorship, team support, etc.

All *FIRST* Ambassadors will be given red shirts with the *FIRST* Ambassador logo to wear as identifying insignia. They will also receive a folder of *FIRST* literature that includes a list of questions to ask during the tour of the Pit. The folder will also contain a checklist of options to help *FIRST*, to be handed back at the close of the session.

Team representatives will be chosen and invited to lead groups of at least two Ambassadors through tours of the Pit where the Ambassadors will meet and talk to a number of other pre-selected teams. There will be various options in case a given team is competing at the time. Regional Directors and/or Planning Committees should select teams known to be articulate and have good stories for the Ambassadors to hear.

Other requirements include: sign-in sheet to capture all contact information for follow up purposes; signage to direct guests to Ambassador area; private or semi-private meeting space (near or in VIP area).

Responsibilities

Initially, the Regional Director will oversee the Ambassador Program at the applicable events. The Regional Director, assisted by an Ambassador Coordinator will be charged with facilitating and leading the Ambassador sessions. Individuals selected as an Ambassador Coordinator must have a thorough understanding of and commitment to *FIRST* and must be able to lead a meeting of VIPs. Ambassador Coordinators will be required to participate in a training session conducted by *FIRST* Ambassador Co-Chairs via teleconference in February.

Regional Directors, in conjunction with their I Executive Advisory Board or VIP Planning Committee will determine the appropriate guests to invite to the Ambassador sessions.

FIRST Ambassadors should be easily identified by teams and other volunteers, FIRST recommends a red polo shirt with the FIRST logo and the word Ambassador embroidered on the left chest. Acquiring and paying for these shirts is the responsibility of the local planning committee. If the committee wishes to utilize FIRST's vendor, please contact FIRST Procurement for assistance.

Ambassador names, addresses and contact data should be added to the Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS), preferably before the event, but no later than 4 weeks post event. Follow-up communications from Regional Ambassador Coordinators, FRC Planning Committees, or Regional Directors to Ambassadors will strengthen their commitment and involvement with *FIRST*. Some suggestions include:

- Immediate thank-you via email or regular mail
- Invitation to Championship event (must be vetted through Development at *FIRST* headquarters due to space limitations)
- Networking opportunities for Ambassadors and Regional Planning Committee
- Ambassador-related news (business, special interest)
- *FIRST*-related special interest stories, especially those appearing in national or regional
- Notices about e-newsletters on the *FIRST* website