

RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERS

Overview

Recognition is key to establishing a long-lasting and fulfilling experience for volunteers, as well as ensuring the sustainability and viability of *FIRST* Robotics Competition Regional events. It is essential volunteers receive a personalized and meaningful acknowledgement of their efforts. The Volunteer Coordinator, Regional Planning Committee and *FIRST* headquarters collaborate to recognize the following groups of volunteers:

- Event regional committees
- Event day volunteers
- Event day Judges
- Team Coaches and Mentors

The *FIRST* Robotics Competition Volunteer Recognition System chart on the following page details various recognition method, the groups or person responsible for the recognition process and a suggested time frame. The Regional Planning Committee may choose additional options to recognize volunteers as desired.

FIRST Volunteer Service Pins

All *FIRST* volunteers including team mentors, Planning Committee Members, and event volunteers are eligible to receive a *FIRST* Volunteer Service Pin.

- *FIRST* provides pins to regional events at no cost
- Pins are awarded at the 1, 3, 5, 10, and 15 year service milestones
- Pins are distributed at the Wednesday evening Volunteer Dinner Meeting or day-of-event

FIRST Mentor/Coach Certificate and Pin

All *FIRST* Team Mentors and Coaches are eligible to receive a *FIRST* Mentor/Coach Certificate and pin each year.

- *FIRST* provides certificates and pins at no cost
- *Mentors can register under their team's account in TIMS to receive a pin and certificate*

FIRST Online Store

The *FIRST* Online Store offers a wide selection of *FIRST* merchandise for purchase by Regional Planning Committees and teams to recognize all categories of volunteers and sponsors.

- Clothing, awards, and specialty items with the *FIRST* logo are just a sampling of merchandise available
- Merchandise can be customized
- The Online Store can be accessed via the *FIRST* website or at <http://www.logoloc.com/first/>.

FIRST Robotics Competition Volunteer Recognition System

Audience	Recognition Method	Description	Responsibility	Time Frame
Regional Planning Committee	Letter generated by FIRST	Signed by FIRST President and/or Board Member thanking them for their outstanding support	FIRST	April/May
	Outstanding Volunteer Award	Determined by Committee honoring the individual making the most significant contribution to the program. Description of Award Criteria below. Recipient receives a trophy at the Regional Event. <i>FIRST</i> Web-site recognition	Regional Planning Committee /FIRST	Decided Nov/Dec Awarded At Event
Event Volunteers	Thank You Letter	Personal letter authored by Planning Committee Volunteer Coordinator and Chairperson. FIRST template provided, or may develop custom event letter.	Regional Planning Committee	March/April
<i>Event Volunteers</i>	<i>Window Cling Postcard</i>	<i>A postcard with a FIRST Volunteer static cling window decal attached.</i>	FIRST	<i>April/May</i>
Event Volunteers	Event day recognition	Volunteers should be recognized throughout the event via public address system announcements, signage, and personal acknowledgement by Regional Planning Committee members, etc. <i>Volunteers are provided a complimentary FIRST T-shirt, Name Badge and a Volunteer Service Pin for 1st, 3rd, 5th, 10th and 15th year of service</i>	Regional Planning Committee FIRST	At Event
Event Key Volunteers	Letter of thanks	Personal letter of thanks signed by the FIRST President	FIRST	May
Event Judges	Judge Shirt supplied by FIRST .	High quality shirt to be given to each judge at the dinner or upon arrival at the event.	FIRST	At Event
	FIRST thank you gift	Annually designed and changing token gift given in recognition of their efforts	FIRST	At Event
	Thank-you letter	Signed by the Regional Planning Committee Chairperson	Regional Planning Committee	May
	Regional Programs created by FIRST	Name, associated company, and brief bio outlined in Regional Program.	FIRST	At Event
	Event day recognition	Recognized in front of entire audience at opening & awards ceremonies.	FIRST	At Event
Team & Coaches	Team medallions	Annual medallions produced by FIRST . Gold, Silver, & Bronze given to teams at event. Gold & Silver are earned for specific awards, bronze are distributed to any team, at its first event each season. Gold and silver winners do not receive bronze medallions. Coaches are eligible to receive a FIRST Volunteer Service Pin and a <i>Mentor/Coach Certificate and Pin</i>	FIRST	At Event <i>Register on line thru TIMS</i>
	Program books	Five Program Books supplied per team. A Thank You to Volunteers is included in the program book.	FIRST	At Event
Team Mentors	Letter of Thanks to Team Coaches	Letter by team leader to team coaches/mentors thanking for outstanding support for season.	TEAM Initiative	May
	Team thank you	Teams identify relevant ways to thank volunteers e.g. recognition dinner	TEAM Initiative	May



Regional Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award Criteria

The Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award is presented to one individual at each regional event who consistently excels in his or her efforts with proven results in the following areas:

Impact to his/her state, town, or region, by incorporating *FIRST* programs and actively supporting *FIRST*'s mission to design accessible, innovative programs that build self-confidence, knowledge and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology and engineering.

Leadership stature established through example and involvement with the *FIRST* organization; a personal and professional resource, advocate and mentor to his/her peers, affiliates, participants, volunteers, communities and *FIRST* supporters.

Personal Commitment consistently displayed through selfless contributions of personal funds, time and energy. Motivation source is one of benefiting others as opposed to personal or professional gain.

Community involvement has resulted in positive community relations for the *FIRST* organization and its affiliates as well as an established long-term commitment to the *FIRST* mission through partnership development representing schools, universities, corporations, other non-profit groups, civic organizations, educators, professionals, parents, volunteers, civic leaders and community members.

Historical Contributions support the *FIRST* mission through length of service, commitment to program incentives, participants and supporters over an extended period of time.

Deadline for Submission of Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Name

Each Regional Committee is responsible for choosing one individual to receive this award for that event. This award is engraved with the recipient's name. Take care to ensure that the submitted name is spelled correctly. Supply the name to *FIRST* by no later than the date indicated in the FRC Planning Calendar (Section 17).



Sample Volunteer Recognition Letter

Note: *The letter should be personally addressed to each volunteer. It is important that all event volunteers register in the Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) as it has the capability to facilitate letter generation.*

Date

Volunteer Name
Volunteer Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Volunteer name,

The overwhelming success of the *[enter year]* FIRST Robotics Competition *[your event name]* Regional is but a reflection of the ever-increasing dedication and enthusiasm of our volunteers.

We could not allow the *[enter year]* season to come to an end without recognizing your outstanding efforts. Volunteers, Sponsors and Team Mentors are changing the lives of youth across the country, shaping the future through participation in the FIRST Robotics Competition program.

The *[enter year]* FIRST Robotics Competition (*your event name*) Regional was at its best by all accounts and volunteers are the real key to our success. The guests, the teams and most of all, we, the Regional Committee, appreciate your gift of time, energy, and enthusiastic support.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt “Thank You!” We look forward to working with you again next year.

Best Wishes,

Just as the letter is personally addressed, it should be personally signed by one of the members of the Regional Planning Committee.