

David Bodmer - This Is How I Work



This week we have our first mentor from the Mid-Atlantic Region (MAR) District. David Bodmer is the lead mentor for FRC#11 MORT and their Beta team FRC#193. David shares with us a great story about arranging transportation to a regional the day of the event, his reason for why he loves what he does, and several great quotes.

[Responses from July 29, 2013]

Name: David Bodmer

CD Username: [Mr. B](#)

Current Gig/Job: Lead Mentor/Project Manager for [FRC 11](#) & [FRC 193](#) and Robotics Engineering Teacher at the Mt. Olive High School

Alma Mater/Degree: BS Technological Studies, 1993 – College of New Jersey

Current Team(s): FRC 11 & FRC 193

Former Team(s): [FRC 56](#)

Location: Mt. Olive High School, 18 Corey Road, Flanders, NJ 07836

Hobbies: Spending time with family, music (listening and playing), Indycar Racing, Civil War History, travel, log homes, and spending time at the shore!



What inspired you to do what you do?

For me it all started with my high school drafting teacher Mr. Johnson. I loved my wood shop and drafting classes and would spend all of my extra time in those classes. Any chance to design and build something, I was there! It was awesome. He was a major influence for me and gave me the guidance needed to pursue a career in education. Where I am today is above my wildest expectations from when I started teaching in 1993. To be a part of the FRC 11 & FRC 193 families is amazing! My job allows me to work a talented group of people as we design, build, and compete with a robot built in our shops, what else could you ask for? It's AWESOME! I love what I do and being able to get students excited about Engineering and STEM Education with the hope of making a difference in their futures makes all the long days and meetings worth it!

What is your day job, and how'd you get there?

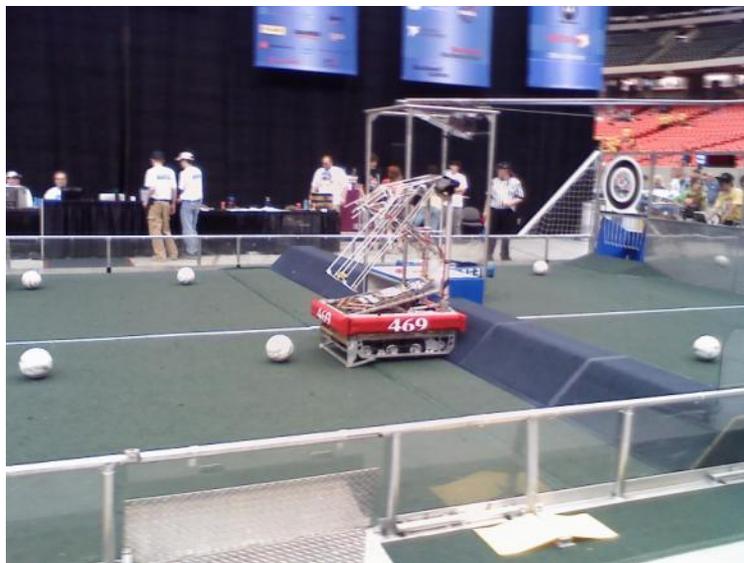
I teach the Robotics Engineering courses at the Mt. Olive High School and am Lead Mentor/Project Manager for FRC 11 & FRC 193 based out of the Mt. Olive High School. My entire professional teaching career has spanned from being a Middle School Tech Ed teacher all the way to my current position which is solely focused on Robotics Engineering and our FIRST program. The road to my current job was not a straight path and had its twists and turns, but I used all of those turns in the road as an opportunity to learn about myself and my profession. I can say that where I am currently is the best environment for myself, my students, my mentors, and parents! We have something special developing here and it's something that I am very proud to be a part of!

What is your favorite story to tell about robotics?

2011 – Our team was scheduled to attend the Palmetto Regional and travel via Amtrak to North Charleston, SC for the event. The morning we were set to leave for SC, we had a snow storm in New Jersey and our district busing was suspended due to the poor weather. We ended up missing our 6:30 AM train! I sent everyone home and then was making calls with my wife in our home office trying to get a charter bus that would take us to the SC! To make a long story short, we had the bus arranged by 11:00 AM that morning and we were on our way to SC! We made a bus change in Fayetteville, NC at about 11:00 PM (which we didn't have lined up until we got through Washington, DC!), transferred our luggage and gear from one bus to the other, and then back on the road! We arrived in SC at 2:30 AM and the over to the venue by 7:30 AM. Needless to say we were exhausted, but in true MORT fashion we put our best effort forward and had a great regional winning the Chairman's Award and event Semi-Finalist!

What's your favorite robot that you didn't help build?

[FRC 469 - 2010](#)



What apps/software/tools can't you live without? (Work/Robotics/Home)

Google Mail!!!!!!!

[Remind101](#)

Facebook

Twitter

Cell phone & iPad

What's your workspace setup like? (Work/Robotics/Home)

My space at school and home are similar - they are both a mess! I have papers, folders, and binders stacked all over the place! In true mad scientist style, it looks like a mess to the outside world, but to me I know where everything is and for me it works! Sorry to all of you who keep neat work spaces, not my style! The most organized piece for me is my backpack which I use daily and for team travel! That bag is my lifeline for all that is FIRST and MORT!

What do you listen to while you work?

Sugarland or anything country

XM Radio – The Highway, The Pulse

Classic Rock – Beatles, Genesis, Police, The Who, my list here could go on and on!

Occasionally some heavy metal (Metallica, Queensryche to name a few)

What's your schedule like during build season?

Monday-Friday - 6:30 – 9:30 PM

Saturday - 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Sunday - 12 noon – 6:00 PM

What everyday thing are you better at than anyone else?

Tough one to answer, but what comes to mind for me is my ability to listen. It's very easy to always want to get in your point of view or ideas, but to me the more critical piece is the ability to listen to others. Taking the time to listen to others shows that I value their ideas and leads to a higher level of communication and trust with all involved in our program.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

Another tough one! Over my years of teaching I've had many that offered advice to help me as a person and a professional. The one that comes to mind is more recently when one of our team mentors, Terry Thomas pulled me aside while at FIRST Championships and we got into a discussion about why are we doing this (FIRST)...his point was that we are here to nurture and develop human beings. While we all want to achieve levels of success on and off the field of play, the bigger and more important goal is that we are here to provide our students, mentors, and parents with the opportunity to develop and grow into human beings that will have a positive impact on our society and world. By taking the time to understand that in one form or another we all add value to our world. This is a critical concept/idea and one that I can obtain through the FIRST program.

What is your favorite guilty pleasure?

Dark chocolate...the darker the better!

Fill in the blank. I'd love to see _____ answer these same questions.

FRC 359's Glenn Lee!

Anything else you want people to know about you?

I enjoy reading books by successful coaches and business people and would recommend to anyone looking to become a stronger leader for their program to check out the following people and read up on them, they are amazing people and have so much to offer all of us!

John Wooden

Mike Krzyzewski

Lou Holtz

John C. Maxwell

Abraham Lincoln

Tony Robbins

Brian Tracy

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Ordinary people with commitment can make an extraordinary impact on their world."

- John C. Maxwell

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."

- Albert Einstein