

# Woodie Flowers Nomination Essay 2013

## Tim Barron - FRC Team 178 - The 2nd Law Enforcers

Team 178 has existed for 16 years; co-head coach Tim Barron has been a driving force for 15 of them. Mr. Barron's dedication to the Enforcers and FIRST's mission has had a profound impact on our team and the FIRST community.

Mr. Barron's skills and expertise as a computer science teacher are valuable, but his mentorship and leadership has been a greater influence on nearly every Enforcer in team history. His vast amount of knowledge is not used to directly create, but instead to facilitate. He believes in a "mentor-nurtured, student-driven" process, where students gain experience and confidence. "Not one line in our entire team's code has been written by Mr. Barron. Yet it has his influence in all directions, down to each and every bit" (Brandon C., sophomore Enforcer). He guides students by breaking down problems, allowing them to find the path to a solution. This philosophy has been embraced by all Team 178 mentors, making a better learning environment for all.

Mr. Barron fosters opportunities for students to gain more STEM education by encouraging students to pursue internships, summer programs, and scholarships to enhance their own learning and growth (i.e., TEDYouth, Nao Robots, NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing). He has also volunteered time to mentor students as young as 10 with an interest in programming. "Mr. Barron gave me the most educating opportunity I could ever think of, which was to work 1-on-1 with an experienced programmer. He gave me access to an advanced robot platform to practice my programming skills over the summer [as a 6th grader]" (Eric S., sophomore Enforcer).

Mr. Barron understands the importance of FIRST's FTC, FLL, and Jr. FLL programs, and has helped establish teams, particularly in the Farmington Valley. In 2007, Mr. Barron supported the foundation of an FTC team at Kingswood-Oxford. He mentored and found resources to help Farmington FLL coaches learn programming and grow their teams. In addition, his extensive discussions with a former asst. superintendent led to a partnership with Farmington EXCL to start Jr.FLL in our town. Over the past year he has encouraged us to expand our presence in Jr. FLL, which culminated in the hosting of our first Jr. FLL Expo in January.

Beyond our team, Mr. Barron's belief in Gracious Professionalism is prevalent in his work in the FIRST community. "Really, with everything, Mr. Barron offers his immediate help" (Lisa Nollman, Farmington Jr. FLL Coordinator). His commitment to help at FLL State Championship and other outreach opportunities, his work on the Jr. FLL Steering Committee, and his push to make all CT FIRST events more family friendly have made the Enforcers a leader in outreach in Connecticut.

Mr. Barron is the reason why Team 178 has such a big impact in Connecticut. For the students on the team, Mr. Barron's dedication is inspiring and creates instilling motivation. His magnitude and accelerating encouragement creates the force behind The Enforcers.