

2015 FIRST Robotics Competition - Greater Pittsburgh Regional

Setting students on a path that will forever change their world, and ours.

This weekend, nearly 1,400 students will gather at the Cal U Convocation Center for the 2015 *FIRST* Robotics Competition - Greater Pittsburgh Regional to play this year's game, RECYCLE RUSHSM, with 120 lb. robots they designed, built, and programmed in six weeks. For some of them, these were the most impressive things they have ever built. For many, it will be far from the last.

"Being on Girls of Steel, for me, has changed my career path and what I want to do in the future," says Lynn Urbina of Team 3504. Before I joined, I honestly had no idea what I wanted to do. I am now a senior, and going to college majoring in mechanical engineering."

FIRST teaches students to be gracious professionals. Just because teams line up on opposite sides of the field, that doesn't mean they aren't in this together. Students compete fiercely, but they exhibit respect and kindness in the process. This is done through Cooperition[®], the concept that teams can and should help each other even as they compete. *FIRST* encourages them to perform quality work, value others, and respect their community. This mentality, and the relationships, last after time spent on high school teams come to an end.

"Being on a *FIRST* team has given me a chance to see how real engineers work and inspired me to pursue a career in biomedical engineering," says Taylor Torrey of Team 1507. "It's also given me a new sense of family."

FIRST alumna go on to attend college and pursue careers that build the future. Some will manage organizations, instilling the values of cooperation in the face of competition. Some will invent technologies we cannot yet imagine.

"Being on a *FIRST* team has made me consider many different careers for my future, a lot more than I would have without experiencing *FIRST*," says Amber Belknap, FRC Team 2614. "For several years, I had been settled on being an art major because I thought that was all I was really good at, but *FIRST* has shown me that I can do more. I am now considering being a chem major, or even engineering, all thanks to being on MARS team 2614."

They will shape markets and communities, taking leadership roles that pull upon their time as a high-school student, bringing life to a mechanical creation that did not exist earlier in the year. *FIRST* is the kind of rare experience with benefits that last a lifetime.