

Describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on team participants within the last 3 years. Think about percentages of those graduating high school, attending college, in STEM careers, leadership skills, and serving as mentors/sponsors in *FIRST* programs.

In Quasics, we proudly encourage community involvement and participate in advancing STEM education. A majority of our alumni (75% or more) are currently enrolled in higher education and are working towards earning STEM related degrees, or certifications. 86% of alumni stated that *FIRST* was a helpful experience for them including the percentage of women rising to nearly 100%. We now have four team alumni who returned to Quasics to use their STEM degrees to help coach and inspire our team.

Describe your community along with its unique opportunities and circumstances. Think about your geographic region, diversity of town/school, language barriers, socioeconomic barriers, and cultural expectations.

Gateway serves a large and diverse community, and we reflect these ideas with our outreach. We participate in many events held by our library and park and recreation department such as: Library Fun Fest, Monroeville Park trick-or-treating, and Community Day. As we are a Title 1 school district, we work to make sure that everyone in our school has access to STEM, regardless of their backgrounds; We introduce students to *FIRST* at our homecoming carnival, career fairs, and STEM nights.

Describe the team's methods, with emphasis on the past 3 years, for spreading the *FIRST* mission in ways that are effective, scalable, sustainable, and creative.

Brick Fest Live has helped us to spread FLL. We have also expanded our FLL program to 7th grade, and most of those students join FRC. We also donated a LEGO EV3 kit to a young girl in our community that was interested in robotics. In the past 3 years, we have recruited 3 Girl Scouts that we demonstrated to prior. We attend a consistent 30-40 outreach events a year, and many of our members remember seeing Quasics in the community before joining. For quantitative data, we use a clicker.

Describe your team's goals and the progress you have made towards them to fulfill *FIRST's* Vision.

As a low resource team, Quasics' goal is showing our local youth that STEM can be fun and a real career path. We set goals for ourselves at the start of each year regarding how many people we want to expose to FIRST and how many community events we aim to host for that year. Our goal for this year was to host 40 community events and see 6,000 people. We hosted 36 events and saw 5,717 people. To ensure upscaling in our efforts, we raise our goals by 10% each year.

What impact has your team seen from your efforts described in the above question? How does your team measure impact?

Our team's main tool for measuring impact is a clicker. We take the data collected and morph it into spreadsheets to calculate our total numbers. We find it more rewarding, though, to see the people behind the numbers. We've had several Girl Scouts from workshops come back as students. Additionally, 10 of the kids from our FLL teams have gone on to join FRC in the past 3 years. Also, most of our coaches are alumni from our team, many of whom have stuck to STEM and become professional engineers.

Please provide specific examples of how your team and team members act as role models for the *FIRST* community with emphasis on the past 3 years. How do you share these best practices with other teams?

6 team members have mentored our FLL students. Several of our students presented along with Team 117 for a mutual sponsor, Google. Our Leadership Team presented along with Team 5740 at the Three Rivers Educational Technology Conference. We organized members from three FRC teams to walk in the Pittsburgh Pride Parade. We also share an OpenAlliance thread. These have become annual events. Quasics even had the opportunity to introduce girls to FLL at Google Pittsburgh through an event run by FIRST.

Describe your team's initiatives to Assist, Mentor, and/or Start other *FIRST* teams with emphasis on activities within the past 3 years.

After the pandemic, we implemented two FLL teams to help rebuild and recruit for our FRC team. Having recently completed our 5th season of FLL, we have impacted 35 students by teaching them important STEM knowledge, problem solving skills, and giving them their first experience with the *FIRST* program. With the completion of the 2024-2025 FLL season, our total has risen to six members of our FRC team who have mentored our two FLL teams.

What other initiatives have you created, grown, sustained, or participated in (*FIRST* or otherwise) to help inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators? What outcomes have you seen from your efforts in the past 3 years?

Our efforts include volunteering at Camp Invention, Public Library events, and participating in STEM Nights at our elementary schools. We have also partnered with Girl Scouts of Western PA to help girls in our area earn their STEM badges. These have resulted in 874 STEM badges being awarded to Girl Scouts as well as positive feedback from students and families. Many of our alumni are studying STEM in college, showing the impact of our initiatives in inspiring the next generation of STEM leaders.

Describe the partnerships and relationships that you've created with other organizations (teams, sponsors, educational institutions, government, philanthropic entities, etc.) and what you have accomplished together, with emphasis on the past 3 years.

For the past six years we have been a Girl Scouts Western PA (GSWPA) Program Partner. With the help of GSWPA, we have provided Girl Scouts across the region with no-cost access and a familiar, low pressure environment to explore their interests in STEM. In the past 6 years, we have awarded 874 STEM badges through this initiative. We also partner with our Parks and Rec department for annual events including Monroeville Clean Up Day, Trail of Treats, and Light Up the Night.

Describe your team's efforts in the past 3 years to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within your team, *FIRST*, and your communities.

We are proud of the representation of minorities on our team—especially to have run two all-girls FLL teams in the last five seasons. Our primary Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion endeavor was to have our coaching staff and students both complete the EDI training in each of the past four years. Our team also has a Handbook that includes guidelines for positive interactions and conflict resolution between team members.

Explain how you ensure your team and the initiatives you have created will be sustainable.

Our Student Leadership team makes opportunities for students to be involved in decisions and pass their knowledge down to newer members. We also ensure our initiatives run effectively in the future by keeping in contact with community groups such as Girl Scouts, Barnes and Noble, and the schools in our district. We also contact previous sponsors to see if they're interested in partnering with us again. Also, we have FRC students mentoring our FLL teams and five of our coaches are *FIRST* alumni!
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Highlight one area in which your team needs to improve and describe the steps actively being taken to make those improvements.

As our Chamber of Commerce represents over 700 businesses, we feel that we could do a better job of recruiting sponsors by being more proactive. Last year, we ran two funding nights to get the entire team involved in team finances. We have gained 6 new sponsors just last season as a result of these nights. In 2023, we invited sponsors to a “robot reveal” event before our tournament where they had the opportunity to view the product of our hard work and their generous support.

Briefly describe other matters of interest to the *FIRST* Judges, including items that may not fit into the above topics. The judges are interested in learning about aspects of your team that may be unique, particularly noteworthy or had a large impact.

On Quasics, we have an opportunity to earn varsity letters by demonstrating a commitment to community service. We also have the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention come to the workshop to talk about mental health. Along with that, we have a pet supply drive for the Monroeville Animal Shelter. Last year, we ran a bracelet table at GPR in the hopes of creating an environment where people can engage with others and foster connections outside of competition. We plan to do this again in 2025.

(OPTIONAL) Please use this space to ask 1 question to your *FIRST* Impact Award Judges which will be answered after each event with feedback from the judges. To help teams who may be unsure of what question to put in the optional feedback question, we have compiled a few options that teams may choose from:

Is there something more that we can do to improve our presentation?

Is there anything missing from our submitted materials?

Which outreach activity do you feel we execute most effectively?

Note: Questions asking what is required to win the award or inappropriate questions will not be answered.

Other than Girl Scouts, what's an effective way to ensure the involvement of more minority groups in STEM?