

I'd like to thank my mentors.

(originally posted at: <http://www.chiefdelphi.com/forums/showthread.php?p=519891#post519891>)

Before anyone says anything, I know FIRST retirees are not supposed to spend so much time on CD. I just happen to like y'all too much 😊 (There I go saying y'all again, I blame the west coast sibling)

I'm up late, again, nervousness fueling insomnia, as I'm preparing to depart for Clarkson University as an EE Major. In doing so I reflected on my time in FIRST and I realized I owe a considerable amount of gratitude to the mentors of my team, 358. Each one has given me something valuable to carry with me to school, and through life.

First up, Mark McLeod, thanks for getting me on the team in the first place, and for teaching me how to work through problems step by step. Your lessons in design, and compromise have made a huge difference. Not only did you teach me better ways to form my designs, but you helped me get organized and keep things in a presentable form. You taught me how to work through a problem with analysis and thought instead of guessing. Most importantly you let me make my mistakes, and taught me how to find the fix instead of giving it to me. I've employed those lessons in personal projects already and I have no doubt they'll guide me in school as well.

Next up, Scott Schuler, thanks for getting me off the computer and involved. You showed me that I don't need a degree in six different types of engineering to help with everything. Your constant optimism and support, and candid opinions pushed me. You motivated me to work harder and do better, even when I already met the predefined goals. You showed me that even when all your skills lie in another area, you can always pick up something new and find a way to work it out. You've also provided me with a sense of confidence, working alongside you and the other mentors I felt like I was doing real work, not just menial chores. I'm eternally grateful for the opportunity to work with you and the lessons you gave me, like Mark's, have helped me in my private projects and I am certain will also lend assistance to my scholarly pursuits.

Next in line, Ken Tiu, teacher at Hauppauge high school. My one regret is that I wasn't a student at Hauppauge and couldn't take your classes. Always light hearted, you kept me from having serious stress breakdowns without distracting me from my goals. You supported me when I was trying to decide what I should do for the next step in my life, and you made me feel like a member of the team like everyone else, despite being an obvious outsider. You helped me realize it's not about how we do, or where we place, or what color the medal I'm wearing is, but that we did our best, had a good time and got something out of it. That outlook will serve me well in the future. You also did a good job of supplying my energy needs with endless coffee on those long weekends 😊

Of course there's always Plouffe. What can you say about Plouffe? Besides the fact that I think I'm still spelling the name wrong.... He's Plouffe (I hope) and he has a Plouffe dance. Like Tiu you kept me sane, and you gave me good advice when I needed it. Never a burden, you were always offering up some cheerful advice, and you gave me a chance to prove myself that I still don't think I deserved. Oh and yes, we put the dance online, it's available here:

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=KsWIsJ0Mp0I>

Finally, there's Joe Citro, the electrical engineer. The one who was always ready to lend assistance, or build something for us. Need a spare gyro? No problem. Need wires? Buttons? Done. Always ready to help and always letting me pick your brain, you helped me all the time when I needed it. Even on personal projects you offered your expertise, and a nice array of heatsinks, which are working out quite nicely! You also gave me those rides to the regional which were very helpful since I couldn't

travel with the school. I gleaned a lot of useful knowledge from you over the season and I learned from your work style, swift, effective, neat, and always top notch quality. You helped me settle on my major at Clarkson and figure out what I want to do with my life. It was only after consulting with you and Mark I felt ready to take the next step and move on from FIRST.

All of you have been a great help to me, and I'll be sure to stop by and I want you all to know I appreciate it.

Thank you.

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[PID Control Theory Whitepaper](#) - An introduction to PID Programming in FIRST Robotics

A+ Certified Technician, 2003 Objectives, Core and OS

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