

2006 Chairman's Award Essay For the Heroes Of Tomorrow The HOT Team, #67

The teams have all gone home now; it's quiet in the Georgia Dome,
The Heroes Of Tomorrow have boarded the bus for their trip home.
No one on the HOT Team dared to imagine a dream so grand...
Winning both prestigious awards; FIRST PLACE throughout the land!

Both Championship and Chairman's awards! We've fulfilled our vision,
Engineering, designing, competing, and sharing with strategy and precision.
HOT Team's Dave Verbrugge won the Woodie Flowers Award in '02
The HOT Team - the only FIRST team to win all three awards - whoo hoo!

As we turned our bus back northward, our determination became more clear,
We are going to have to raise the bar in spreading FIRST's message this year.
We recognized the Chairman's Award as a great honor with responsibility,
To draw in the next generation of inventors and liberate their creativity.

The HOT Team was invited to Michigan's Capitol when we arrived home,
To spread the message of FIRST and our triumph at the Georgia Dome.
Senator Nancy Cassis has cheered for our team since nineteen ninety-eight,
Encouraging future engineers with so much government stuff on her plate.

Nancy recognized the HOT & Frog Force Teams of District Fifteen
Expounding on FIRST's importance to every young child and teen...
"I am a Senator of two FIRST World Champs, I am very proud to say,
That is a statement that no other U.S. Senator can make today..."

Senator Cassis has been an FLL Judge for six consecutive years straight,
Influencing young people to aim high and achieve their dreams in our state.
One year, FIRST honored the judges for dedicating their time and more,
She keeps her FLL trophy on her desk for all to see on the Senate floor!



Again as we looked at what we'd done to make plans for this new year,
"How could we help others learn of FIRST?" We must make our plan clear.
The answer was CASEY, our Shobot; it'll help spread the word,
To share with kids that science is fun - in case they haven't heard.

We thought long and hard on CASEY's name, the meaning is profound;
It stands for, "Community Awareness of Science and Education Year-round".
Since our trip to Georgia, CASEY was worn out from so much fun,
So we gave CASEY a complete makeover to help it to continue to run.

Now CASEY is bright and shiny, with brand new parts, it's ready to go
Sharing science and technology, so countless numbers may learn and grow.
We've taken CASEY to big cities; we've taken CASEY to several schools,
We've taken CASEY to small towns, and even to local swimming pools!

CASEY has been a Red Hatter, a Michigander, and a Georgia peach,
CASEY represents FIRST values and a plethora of things to teach.
CASEY appeals to all audiences; left and right brains, young and old,
Appearing in restaurants, nursing homes, and in climates; warm and cold.

Designing, building and competing with robots is not the only thing we do,
We work hard in our community, dedicated to becoming role models too.
Wearing orange on Commerce Road, we have walked many a time,
To pick up roadside trash as we've trudged through dirt and grime.

It's not just the roads that we work hard at keeping spotless and clean,
We also cleaned up the Huron River, paddling up and down the stream.
Emulating gracious professionalism in every undertaking and endeavor,
Raising high the values of FIRST, marching through our town together.



Lifting high FIRST's banner in our local parades of township spirit,
 Our team arrayed in red, beckons, "Come join us!" to all who will hear it.
 Striding with pride on the Fourth of July with the HOT Team Hummer and Bot
 At the Christmas parade, we held up the flame and danced to "Hot, Hot, Hot!"



No one wins the Championship by themselves; it was an alliance campaign,
 A cause for celebration with our froggy friends - a trip down memory lane.
 First we showed them the machine shop where the winning HOTBOT was built,
 Then we showed them all the old bots, even how they reel and tilt.

Yet another celebration, we had a barbeque at Kensington Park.
 We reminisced, played volleyball, and laughed together till it grew dark.
 After celebrating our shared victory, everyone went their separate ways,
 Waiting patiently until next year to see our friends at competition craze.

Many FIRST teams approached us asking, what we did to achieve victory,
 So we decided to host an Open House, to share the HOT Team story.
 We took our robot to Milford High School; they came from miles around
 We shared HOT Team championship strategies with teams from out of town.

They asked questions, took notes, and left with smiles on their faces.
 Formulating plans to develop their bots and compete in next year's races.
 We answered Chairman's team questions with brain tattoos and cheer.
 Explaining what made the HOT Team move so efficiently in FIRST gear.

Yes, metal is for big league robotics, and plastic LEGOS for the small,
 FIRST LEGO League is where we begin to inspire the youngest minds of all!
 We mentored FIRST LEGO League teams weekly, showing the kids the ropes,
 Spending time with the young ones, casting vision, and raising their hopes.

Our goal is to build confidence for future endeavors in all they do,
 They can call on the HOT Team because we always see them through.
 In groups of twos, threes, and fours the student mentors abound,
 Throughout the fall season, FLLers could count on us to be around.

The FLL HOT SHOTS HAVOC event takes place in late November,
 The HOT Team is always there in charge, as you may remember.
 For eight straight years small kids have come with LEGO robots to compete,
 The HOT Team does everything to make the event victorious and complete.

Our team is once again committed on the weekend of December ten,
As we host the Official FLL Tournament-- to make it happen again.
Three hundred fifty teams entered the exciting competition this year,
Solving the problems in the oceans, so that we can live without fear.

Seventy-two teams advanced from the fourteen regionals in the state,
Going to the Official Tournament to compete and discover their fate.
Junior FLL is here again, giving even younger kids a creative thrill,
Designing and building a creature that might live in waters that are still.

But this year, the HOT Team was not in charge of the JFLL event,
But trained another local team to take over, help, and present.
The young ones this year were mentored by a team called, Truck Town Thunder
Who watched the little ones compete with fervor, marvel and wonder.

The HOT Team was eager to talk about FIRST, and did it in so many ways,
Attending numerous events all year long; gratifying and fulfilling our days.
At the Detroit Marriott Hotel, in the Renaissance Center downtown,
The HOT Team welcomed the FIRST Site Selection Committee to our town

The Novi Expo Center had been a welcome home to FLL for several years,
Then they moved to a new home down the road, but there was no need for tears.
Rock Financial Showplace is bigger and better than the old place could ever be,
A perfect place for FIRST Robotics teams to compete - you'll totally agree.

The grand opening was announced, dubbed the "Show of Shows,"
More than 75,000 people passed through before the doors would close.
Ten days later we were back again at the same place with robot in tow,
This time we displayed the game for visitors to the SME Expo and show.

Next we were at Ford Field with fifteen thousand high school kids or more,
The Youth Expo of Science (YES) had exhibits on the field and on the floor.
Right in the center, on the fifty yard line, FIRST robots were on display,
It was another key time for science and technology, an inspirational day.

Oakland County held a science day; the HOT Team met them there,
Over fifteen thousand students showed, some came with greenish hair.
This was CASEY's grand entrance, first debut, it's first attraction,
As we ran it around the field, kids gathered for personal interaction.

Helping other teams is something that the HOT Team aspires to do.
And this year we were asked for help by more teams than just a few.
We traveled to visit other teams, or they would come to Milford for a day,
Where we built lasting friendships, combining robotics, work and play.



In January, the 2006 International Auto show was kicking into high gear,
The HOT team had an exclusive invitation to attend the event of the year.
We woke up extra early, left our homes and drove down to Cobo Hall,
Honored to meet so many distinguished people, feeling ten feet tall.

First we met the Governor of Michigan, the finest governor in our land,
Jennifer Granholm greeted the HOT Team, extending us her open hand.
Pictures were taken, kind words exchanged as we talked about FIRST education.
Excited, the governor was on our team as she spoke of FIRST with inspiration.

Peter Van Stolk, CEO of Jones Soda, offered us a picture on his soda bottle,
Featuring FIRST to all of America - depicting the HOT Team as a role model.
Dean Kamen, founder of FIRST spoke of the impact of technology and science
Promoting engineering, education and creativity - a triple dynamic alliance.

The HOT Team is busy changing the world with every person we meet,
By helping others succeed, showing CASEY, or cleaning a local street,
But this is not the end, just a pause to catch our breath before we go again,
Inspiring others to understand that through science and technology we all will win!