

## Autumn Giles

What has 2 legs, bedazzled safety glasses & is a walking ball of energy? The answer would be none other than Autumn Giles of the HOT Team. Being the center of happiness & joy on the team, she holds most of the creativity in her hands, & is talented in several areas. Therefore, it's these skills that make Autumn a strong, hard-working leader.

Autumn discovered robotics in 5<sup>th</sup> grade when she attended the FRC World CMP in Atlanta where it was love at FIRST sight. She's been enthusiastic about robotics ever since. "She always looks on the positive side of things, & that's one thing that keeps everyone else's spirits so high," says student Greg. When things are tough, she brings everyone on the team together & works with diligence to achieve the task at hand. Autumn always has a smile on her face, even if she has no particular reason to be happy. It's clear that she loves being a part of FRC, & loves including others, especially new members, into the FIRST experience. It isn't just her constant happiness that makes others want to do well, for her drive & passion are contagious as well. She works endlessly to do her part & fix any problem that the team has, & when others see her working so hard, they realize that they should be putting forth just as much effort. However, Autumn is no elitist. She gets along with everyone on the HOT Team, & never excludes anyone from anything. Her exuberant personality draws only positive attention to her, & she uses that as her motivation to work so well. Autumn radiates optimism, & it's one of the key factors that keeps the HOT team such a model team for all of FIRST.

One thing that makes Autumn so unique is how she has helped out 3 different parts of the HOT team every year she has participated in FRC: animation her 1<sup>st</sup> year,

Chairman's her 2<sup>nd</sup> year, & electrical her 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Not only has she been exposed to different subgroups within the team but during the 2009 offseason she took the initiative & was chosen to drive the robot as the 1<sup>st</sup> female driver on the team since we started in 1997. She has excelled in taking advantage of all aspects FIRST has to offer FRC teams.

During her 1<sup>st</sup> year she utilized her creative gift to help make an animation, & she drew an impressive storyboard to express her idea for it. In a matter of days she learned Autodesk & even started teaching what she knew to the other new members of the team. Although only a sophomore, she was confident enough to state her opinion & idea for the Chairman's display which ended up being used & effectively collaborated with others to make changes to it.

Getting involved in the electrical group for the 1st time was a challenge, but she learned the basics quickly & asked questions when she didn't understand. She took the responsibility & leadership role of making sure the electrical components were wired correctly & organized them so they would be accessible & easy to change if needed. Mentor Lee Arms states, "She's very eager to diagnose problems when stuff goes wrong." Her interest & curiosity to learn more & solve problems is endless. But her involvement in robotics & FIRST doesn't stop during the build season.

Autumn has gotten involved in the community by spreading the ideas of FIRST. She has volunteered at FLL, walked in parades, helped at a triathlon hosted by HOT, interacted with kids at a local festival where the team had a booth, & visited the YMCA to teach the preschoolers about the "cool" factor of robots. Suzanne recalls "She designed the button we distributed to the children in the community to promote awareness of our

team but submitted the design to a contest & won an award. She then donated her prize back to the team, not a typical teenage move.”

Although only a junior, Autumn, with her bedazzled safety glasses & infectious energy shows great promise in becoming even more of a team leader as a senior. FIRST has had a big impact on Autumn, & Autumn continues to spread the word & leave her own impact on FIRST.