

Some concepts that students are required to learn during the build season can be very difficult to grasp, especially if science and math aren't exactly the student's strongest subject. However, there isn't a lot of time to learn these concepts when teams have a month before they have to ship their robot. That means that students need to learn concepts quickly in order to accomplish more. Lori Gleason, a mentor for 11 years, is the one that makes this happen.

She devotes much of her time to making sure the students fully understand how to do things right, even if it means going out of her way to help. She shows the students what to do and not to do with the machines in the shop area and how to change the machine's settings. She also explains what exactly each machine does and how the piece the student is making will fit into the robot. Ashley Haren remembers how Lori taught her how to work the mill and how to make the machine do what she needed it to. "Lori was extremely helpful and patient," Ashley recalls "she didn't give up on me when I didn't understand things and she taught me the mathematical procedure for a different machine." Because Lori helped her with the machine, Ashley was able to teach many of the other team members how to operate it. Everyone on the team feels comfortable asking her for help. Lori doesn't just tell them the answer though; she helps them work through the problem, teaching them how to do it correctly.

Sometimes, however, students mess up. No one likes doing something the wrong way and the embarrassment that goes along with it. But it isn't as bad with Lori. She doesn't roll her eyes at you or get upset at your mistakes. She politely corrects you and then helps you to get it right. She uses the power of positive praise to instill in the members of the HOT team a sense of accomplishment and worth. She encourages everyone on the team to not be afraid to speak their mind and let their voice be heard.

Teamwork is also important to Lori. She is aware that it takes a team, not an individual, to build a robot and she wants every member to know that as well. She has the students work in small groups so that people are encouraged to communicate with each other. Kurtis McElroy says that he really likes how Lori has the student's set up because it "helps everyone talk to each other and makes us more comfortable sharing our ideas and act like a team." He also says that Lori taught all of the members that communication is the key to success and that no one knows what you are thinking unless you tell them. Because of this, team members learn the vital skill of communication, which they will use for the rest of their lives. Lori makes sure the individual team member knows that their contribution is essential to the group's success.

Countless times Lori has gone above and beyond her mentoring duties to help HOT Team students succeed. One marvelous example of this is that she tutors team members in math and science so that they meet their grade requirements, which allows them to remain on the team.

Students are very aware of Lori's obvious passion for the HOT Team. In the student's eyes she is the most influential mentor on the team. Students and mentors alike agree that without her expertise and dedication, Team 67 would not be the successful Hall of Fame team it is today.

WWJ Version



Lori Gleason

Milford High School, Physics, 11 years with FIRST

What we've heard about Lori Gleason:

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Ms. Gleason has been a physics and chemistry teacher for over 11 years at Milford High School in the Huron Valley School District. Her desire and hard work to help student succeed is as strong today as it was when she first started. She does what is needed to assist struggling students. Whether she is tutoring one on one or working in small groups after school, Ms. Gleason is there for the students. However, her support does not stop in the classroom. There are many other arenas where you will find Ms. Gleason. For example, it is not strange to see her at various sporting events rooting on the team. When students need volunteers or help with special projects, they can count on Ms. Gleason to lend a hand. The relationship she has with her students is positive and meaningful. With all she does for the students, her greatest passion is as adviser and mentor of the districts robotic team.

The Heroes of Tomorrow or the HOT Team is a culmination of the Huron Valley School Districts high schools along with the support of General Motors Proving Ground volunteers. Together, they make up one of the best teams, not only here in Michigan, but perhaps the world, in the area of robotic competition. This team found success immediately when they established themselves many years ago, and the success has not stopped. This does not happen by accident. Like all successful teams, there needs to be the person who leads by direction and example, for the HOT Team that person is Lori Gleason. Her devotion and commitment to this program's success is immeasurable. She works countless hours with team members and the results are amazing. Students are very aware of Lori's obvious passion for the HOT Team. In the student's eyes she is the most

influential mentor on the team. Students and mentors alike agree that without her expertise and dedication, Team 67 would not be the successful Hall of Fame team it is today.

Heroes of Tomorrow or HOT team is made up of students from Milford and Lakeland High school's, International Academy West and volunteers from General Motor's Proving Ground. The success of this team has been remarkable and consistent for the past eleven years. From their first award in 1996 to the latest in 2009, the HOT team has led the field of high school robotics. Over these 11 years, there has been one constant, a person to guide them, push them and lead them to be the best team possible. That person is teacher and adviser, Lori Gleason.

If you would like more information on this team, visit their web site at http://www2.huronvalley.k12.mi.us/schools/mhs/activity/hot_team/index1.html