From K-12 Engineering Outreach to Community Engagement – A Roadmap

Tanja Karp  
*Electrical and Computer Engineering*  
*Texas Tech University*

Toby Klameth  
*J.T. Hutchinson Middle School*  
*Lubbock ISD*

Richard Gale  
*Electrical and Computer Engineering*  
*Texas Tech University*

Greg Burnham  
*Estacado High School*  
*Lubbock ISD*

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Overview

- Introduction
- K-12 Robotics Programs offered by TTU
- Get Excited About Robotics – LEGO Robotics
  - TTU Perspective
  - Hutchinson Middle School Perspective
- BEST/FIRST Robotics
  - TTU Perspective
  - Estacado High School Perspective
- Conclusions
Trends in Engineering Enrollment

Houston, we have a problem…..Houston? Hello?

TETC-TYT Grant, Spring 2006:
Integrated Outreach, Mentoring, and Placement of Texas Youth in Engineering Careers

- K-12 Engineering Outreach Activities
- Summer Camps / Enrichment Classes
- Internships for High School Students
- Mentor Positions for ECE Undergraduate Students
Robotics

Why Robotics?

- Critical thinking skills
- Problem solving skills
- Hands-on skills
- Math and science
- Engineering process
- Programming
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Time management
Pipeline of K-12 Robotics Competitions

GEAR 1st-8th grade

BEST 7th – 12th grade

FRC 9th-12th grade
Get Excited About Robotics (GEAR)
Get Excited About Robotics (GEAR)

- 6 - 8 week LEGO robotics competition for elementary school and middle school students
- Goal: get students excited about STEM disciplines, learn problem solving skills, design, troubleshooting, etc.
- Most schools work on challenge after school or during special class periods
- No participation fee for schools
- GEAR competitions at TTU since 2006
- 50 participating schools, about 200 teams, 600 participants in 2013
- www.gearrobotics.org
GEAR Events

- New Teacher Training Workshop (January)
- Advanced Teacher Training Workshop, live video streaming to remote locations (February/March)
- Kickoff Event: (February)
- GEAR Trial Run (March)
- GEAR Game Day (April)
GEAR Kickoff Event: February

- Reveal Challenge
- Relationship to Real World Engineering Tasks
- Hands-on Activity
- Distribution of Game Pieces
GEAR Trial Run & Game Day
Engineering Student Involvement
ENGR 1315: Introduction to Engineering

- ENGR 1315 is taught as Service Learning Course (45 students in 2013)
- Students mentor elementary and middle school students participating in GEAR and participate in GEAR events
- Students come to all LEGO robotics meetings at the schools
- Students are knowledgeable in LEGO robotics through course assignments
- Students can provide teachers with ideas for curriculum
ENGR 1315 Students at GEAR Trial Run
Hutchinson Middle School
Robotics
Toby Klameth
Technologist

Achieving Excellence through Technology
Background

- 15 Years teaching experience
- Science, Math, and Social Studies
- Introduction to Technology – Digital Media and Animation
- GEAR Robotics – 6 Years
Curriculum

• Technology Applications
  – 126.14(c)(1)(B-D)
  – 126.14(c)(4)(A-F)
• Creativity
• Innovation
• New Technologies
• Real Word Experience

Achieving Excellence through Technology
Why

- Motivation
- Inspiration
- Opportunity
- Integration
- Problem Solving

Achieving Excellence through Technology
Value

- Unique opportunity for students
- Excitement
- Interest
Don’t Take It From Me!

- Team work
- Learn from others
- “Play” with a robot

Achieving Excellence through Technology
BEST Robotics
Middle School and High School (6-12)
What is BEST?

- 6 weeks program for middle schools and high schools (clubs, after school programs)
- Design and build a functioning machine that can perform certain, specific tasks in three minutes
- Robotics kit consisting of e.g. plywood, PVC pipe, screws and other hardware, irrigation valve cover, piano wire, aluminum paint grid, a bicycle inner tube
- Vex Cortex programming node: EasyC, RobotC, MatLab/Simulink
BEST Robotics Inc. (BRI) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization headquartered at Auburn University (AL).

Schools participate at no cost -- there is no fee.

Any school may participate regardless of socioeconomic status, size, or location – 750 schools

Students are the primary participants and benefactors; mentors serve as guides and advisors – 11,000 participants

Engineers and other technical professionals from local industries serve as team mentors.

Over 3500 volunteers help run the local competitions and regional championships.
As a result of participating in BEST, students...

- Understand the practical use of math concepts and applied physics
- Solve real-world science and engineering problems
- Gain an increased interest in engineering, math, and science
- Understand what engineers do — the engineering profession is “demystified”
- Experience “design-to-market” product development
- Receive recognition and acclaim typically reserved for their peers in sports
As a result of participating in BEST, Estacado High School and students…

- **Have access to applications for math and physics**
  - *BEST Robotics Challenges are based in Math, Science and Technology*

- **Get the opportunity to compete in hands-on problem solving**
  - *Outside of the academic multiple choice format*
  - *Gives the hands on students a chance to prove themselves*
As a result of participating in BEST, Estacado High School and students...

- Introduced to engineering
  - Format
  - Creating for an end product
- Allows them to work with college mentors
  - SHPE mentors for technical and engineering
  - College life and expectations
  - Interact with successful college students with a similar background
As a result of participating in BEST, Estacado High School and students…

- Get to experience real-world expectations and results
  - *Successes*
  - *failures*
- BEST allows Estacado to showcase other programs and individuals
  - *EHS JROTC*
  - *EHS Choir and Band*
Establish the next step for local students
Very technical, very challenging, very rewarding

LEGO’s => BEST => FIRST

Peer, and near peer program
Year-round contact
Help develop confidence and relevant skills
Founded in 2005 www.team1817.org
First competition year in 2006
Funded by NASA grant for first 3 years
Boeing, X-FAB, and Texas Tech are current primary sponsors
First robot was steel, machined primarily with hand tools
Current robots are primarily aluminum, CNC’d
2005: students from 2 local high schools

2010: students from 5 local high schools and 1 middle school

Teachers participation not required

Open to all students in the Lubbock and surrounding area
2012 Success

Woodie Flowers Finalist: Travis Ray

Dean’s List Finalist Award: Kenyan Burnham

Excellence in Engineering Award

Industrial Safety Award

The Chairman’s Award
2013 Successes

Started Hub City Regional

- Started 14 New FRC Teams
- Technical and Non-Technical Resources

Competition Awards

- Judges Award
- Industrial Safety Award
- Dean’s List Finalist Award: Hiro Goodson

College Entrance Success Rate
- Advanced problem solving
  - *FRC has very challenging problems*
  - *National Promotional materials and kickoff inspire students*

- Mentorship
  - *Working with professionals*
  - *Technical and non-technical roles*
Assume roles with in an organization

- Marketing
- Engineering
- Real world time and budget constraints

Exposure to college

- Exposure to college and expectations
- College row
- Universities look for extra-curricular and value FRC participation
• Ability to compete and represent Estacado High School, Lubbock ISD and Lubbock on a State and National Level
  • FRC Competitions allow banners and promotional items

FIRST has a proven success rate for Estacado High School and Lubbock ISD
High school demos

Mentors help BEST and LEGO Robotics teams

Mentors participate in as many COE events as possible

- Catch the Engineering Bug
- Admitted Students Day
- Prospective Student Tours
- Middle school group presentations

Summer camps
Peer and Near-peer mentoring

College mentor-student relationship

Mentor
- Learning by teaching
- Learning by taking responsibilities
- Leadership

Student
- Easy to bond with mentors
- Learning by doing
- Inherent values of diversity
Influence on Retention of Engineering Students
Influence on Retention of Engineering Students
Key Success Factors

- Flexibility of implementation at school level
- Collaboration between teachers and engineering students
  - Students are familiar with LEGO robotics
- No participation fee for schools
  - We provide game pieces and game mats for schools
- Educational opportunities for engineering students
  - Participation for partial course credit
  - Service learning projects
- Promoting engineering (STEM) through role models