

Robin Olson

Woody Flowers Nominee Team 1792

Robin Olson has been a mentor of 1792 for as long as the team has been around. Mrs. Olson is the epitome of a “Steminist.” She is a physicist and mechanical engineer, and encourages all of the students on the team to seek out opportunities to grow as people, engineers, and leaders. More specifically, she works closely the girls on our team in order to help us be more confident with our ideas, and get their hands dirty in a safe environment. Being an engineer, she is the ultimate role model for every girl in a male dominated field.

Mrs. Olson is the safety mentor as well as a metal shop mentor and does the most she possibly can to help us succeed. Last year, she helped us start the “Dead Battery Project” in Wisconsin, which provides a platform for girls at FIRST events to help each other get out of uncomfortable and potentially dangerous sexual assault situations by sharing the code phrase “my battery is dead.” This code phrase tells a teammate or mentor that you need help. Working with her on this project was eye-opening, because she is the definition of strength and resilience, and this project showed it.

Despite manning a serious project, Mrs. Olson is not Mrs. Olson without fun! Every year, she hosts an end of the year bonfire in her backyard where we burn all of the field elements from the prior season. This is not only a celebratory end to the season but a collective bonding experience that creates a team environment. Every year, team members eagerly mark this date on their calendars months in advance because the word is out on how much fun it is making “pudgy pies.”

Mrs. Olsen’s involvement with FIRST doesn’t end with mentoring RTR. Since 2015, she’s volunteered at numerous FLL and FRC events. This season alone she judged at two FLL events and plans to continue judging more events every year. She truly believes participating in FIRST improves intellectual development and increases technical skills. She demonstrates this belief by being fully committed to providing new and interesting opportunities to expand our horizons. This year Mrs. Olsen provided our team with an opportunity to scrub into a robotics surgery so we could observe up close!

Mrs. Olson is a role model for all of us. She teaches us that it is okay to be outspoken because even the craziest ideas could be applicable! She will always be needed on the team to guide us in the right direction. Lucky for us, we know that she will because even after her sons graduated, she still attends every meeting and event, remaining our good luck charm, motivator, and believer.

The wise words that we know Mrs. Olson by is “I’ll print it at work.” And, she always has. Thank you for always encouraging us to grow and learn, and more importantly, teaching us what it means to be resilient, reliable and consistent.

