**For Inspiration and Recognition of Science**

**and Technology**

**Team 3993**

**Parent Handbook**

*Updated Winter-2015*

*Team 3993 thanks:*

*FIRST Hauppauge Robotic Eagles Team 358*

**Forward**

This handbook is intended to be a reference. If you do not find an answer to your question refer to one of the officers or mentors for further information.

Important Sections: Student Organization and Rules of Conduct.

We have handbooks for each major type of team member: student, parent, mentor, officer, and advisor.

These share some common material:

Our mission/objectives, team management/background/organization/schedule, etc.

What we want are highly motivated students able to lead groups and work independently. We shoot for students working 50/50 with professional engineers. The concept is most like the industry outlook of a small engineering firm where freshmen are the “new hires” who need training and skill development, and seniors are the veteran workers supervising and training the new employees. Mentors act as facilitators by introducing and demonstrating new techniques that complement the student’s design concepts.

Ideally, as a team we strive for:

* Good communication
* Respect at all times for your teammates, advisors, sponsors, mentors, parents, other teams, and volunteers (especially the volunteers wearing stripes!).

If there is a single point to take away from this Handbook it is FIRST’s concept of Gracious Professionalism (GP). GP stands for sportsmanship above and beyond the normal. GP means being as supportive to the students on other teams as we are to our own. We want ALL students to be inspired by what we can do. GP does not demand that our kindness be returned before we decide to give ours, it is not a stick with which to bludgeon our competitors if we don’t think they practice GP. The importance of GP is to better ourselves, rather than others, becoming responsible citizens and improving our society by example. Years from now our team alumni will remember a great play, some adversity overcome, helping out another team in need, but not so much the plastic trophies collecting dust in a school display case. We hope that alumni from other teams remember our kids as well for helping them get a robot running, as good sports, fun to be with.

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**Mission Statement**

“*The mission of Hart District Robotics is to promote education in science and technology through a mentor guided program allowing students to experience building and running a team by being student led. The program emphasizes teamwork, self-confidence, gracious professionalism, and leadership. It demonstrates the value of individual diversity, combined creativity, and positive achievements not only in our program but also in our society.”*

Opportunity to participate on a fun and educational FRC team, and apply what they learn in school. Students from all Hart District Schools may join the team, though the majority is from Hart High School. Hart Hybrids is part of FIRST and will inspire youth to enter scientific and technological fields. The goal is to directly *involve* students in the professional field of engineering through collaboration with volunteer professional engineers and in partnership with local technical corporations. All work together as a team to invent technology and design and build a robot to meet the FIRST robotic competition challenge. The FIRST program builds self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, and engineering.

**Team Objectives**

FIRST is the brainchild of inventor Dean Kamen, who created, among other inventions, the portable dialysis machine and the Segway out of his concern for applying our talents for social good. It is an organization with the goal of generating interest among young people in science and engineering. Not only does FIRST support science, but it also hopes to create better people, therefore social conscious engineers, by teaching its creed of gracious professionalism. Although the FIRST Robotics Competition is about creating an innovative robot, it also calls for helping one another as much as possible. All of the FIRST Robotics teams are there for each other, whether they're helping each other with parts and materials, creating custom machined parts for each other, or simply offering advice and suggestions.

Build character and citizenship through community service, sportsmanship, helping others: through Gracious Professionalism (GP) – We come together to compete, and compete hard, but we want every team to have an equal opportunity and experience. Our team motto is “It’s More Fun When Everyone’s Robot Works!” There is no “they,” only “us” - friendly, helpful, courteous, kind - don’t win at another’s expense. GP is a goal for individuals and teams to achieve, not a complaint to level against others. Those who find themselves accusing others of non-GP conduct are those who have failed to exhibit GP. The FIRST robotics competition is structured like a sporting event, however, we strive to emphasize sportsmanship rather than the sport. We want all the robots to compete at their best, so all students are equally inspired. For example, if an opponent breaks a chain, we help them fix it, so we can all be the best we can be. If our opposing alliance has no time-outs remaining, but a critical repair to make, then we take the timeout for them.

* Be competitive and play fairon the field, but it is much, much more than a game.
* Expose high school students to college- and professional-level applied technology.
* Develop skills in technology, leadership, teamwork, business.
* Dedicate ourselves to continuous improvement. Ours is not a static organization. We look for new challenges and constantly experiment with improvements and new methods of operating our team and engineering.
* Expect 100% from all participants – students, mentors, parents as a united organization, not an individual’s science fair project. Satisfy the needs of all participants: students for learning, mentors for personal growth, technical challenge for all.
* Strive for quality outreach primarily through mentoring, technical support, and hard work. Many teams lack mentors altogether or may lack in one specialty such as computer science or mechanical engineering.
* Contribute to quality growth and increased technical capabilities of teams in Southern California.
* Maintain a positive, supportive attitude for our team and others at all times.
* Attract a diverse team population so we can expand each other’s minds.
* Have fun.

***A Student samples every technical and organizational job, then gravitates to what they like best.***

Health and sustainability is a priority for the team, but we also introduce the students to broader concerns of the FIRST community that affect us. Engineering ethics teaches that what we do has far reaching effects and we are concerned that those effects are positive. Invent with concern for others. We support a growing vibrant FIRST community. We don’t want to lose sight of our goal to get more students interested in science and technology, whether those students attend Hart High School or some other school.

**Team Management**

Our Team brings a unique experience to students, different way of involving students by not just playing with robots in an after school club but working in a true engineering environment with and alongside of professional engineers. This is not your typical teacher/student relationship but is run as a small business firm, with freshmen students as the new interns (or worker bees), seniors as the group leaders/supervisors (or Product Team Leaders and Chief Engineers), and mentors as the old salts/managers (or project manager). FIRST allows for a wide-range of approaches to running a team, from after-school club style with no parent or mentor involvement to teams that build at a sponsor’s facility with full engineering and machining support. From FIRST’s perspective, all approaches are valid as long as they achieve the primary goal of inspiring youth. Team 3993 has settled on a teamwork approach that involves a student lead approach. Even though the robotics build is student run, we rely on mentors, parents, advisors, and sponsors to give all they can to help support the team. With support in these roles, the students develop an appreciation for engineering by working hands-on side-by-side with professional engineers. All hands are on the robot together, and all ideas are heard and debated as a team. Because we are a co-curricular school organization, ultimate authority for the team lies with the advisors and school district administration; however, the team is an assembly of volunteers - students, mentors, parents - and the team will thrive if all are empowered to insure our success and achieve our goals. Outreach, robot designs, construction practices, the competitions we choose to attend are all up for popular debate and discussion in our practice of shared leadership. During the brainstorming sessions after Kickoff, for example, students and mentors will split into sub-groups to develop, then defend before the team, alternative design approaches. Overriding concerns such as risk, cost, detailed design time, machining capabilities, labor, skill required, etc. will be given weight in coming to a final group decision. In the event of ties, conflicts, sudden changes in circumstances, etc., decisions will be reached by the advisors and student officers, with the lead advisor making final rulings as required and bearing the responsibility.

**How to be Involved**

***A Student is self-motivated***

Being involved is dependent on your self-motivation. We don’t lead you through handing you assignment after assignment. We expect you will develop and pursue your own assignments. Yet we do not expect you to know everything either and you are encouraged to ask for help and guidance when needed. When you start with the team we will be referring to our older robots so you can learn the engineering systems we use. We will have tasks to accomplish as well as workshops on: Drive trains, gearboxes, structural framing, pneumatics, electrical, control system, sensors & programming, carpentry for the playing field, public relations, fundraising, outreach, website, animation, CAD, and spirit. When build season rolls around you need to already know the basics. It’s only on-the-job learning under the crush of a deadline by that time.

* Be self-motivated.
* When you take up a job finish it. Don’t just walk away when you get stuck or lose interest.
* If you cannot make a meeting, be sure your group has what it needs to do the job without you.
* Sample everything then gravitate to what you like best.
* Latch onto an experienced worker and learn by observing. Learn the names of tools and parts by fetching and handing them to someone else.
* Wait patiently by a worker’s shoulder until they need a hand.
* When you are done with your task look for the next one. No one else will know you are idle.
* Be there when the work needs you. The work won’t always be there when you need it. We avoid make-work, but there will not always be enough work to go around. Only so many hands can reach a robot at one time.
* Be willing to help out in any way you can.
* Develop your own role within the team.
* Insinuate yourself into working groups
* Take on tasks that no one else steps up to.
* Invent tasks that no one else has thought of.
* If there isn’t immediate work to be done then learn the robot systems on older robots.
* Read through the team library.
* Teach yourself with all the spare parts we don’t need. Ask when you need advice or a hand.
* Leave socializing for the end of the day.
* Mentors (both adults and senior team members) are waiting for students to step up. The tasks will get done even if a student doesn’t step up, but when a student takes initiative mentors will work hand-in-hand and step back out of the way when they are no longer necessary.
* Become involved with the *FIRST* community at large through the popular Team forums at www.chiefdelphi.com. Remember that you represent our whole team when you post, so behave always with respect and concern for others. Please post responsibly.

**Student Organization**

First and foremost comes the Team. We want the most dedicated and best self-motivated students representing us in positions of responsibility. Some positions require more dedication, time and effort than others. If you seek any of these positions be sure first that you will be able to fulfill the duties involved and are dedicated to the success of the Team. A secondary responsibility of each of these positions is to train your replacement!

**Student officers** – At times in our history we may have student officials. This is dependent on our team size and needs. They may include, but are not limited to the following positions.

*President/Chief Engineer* – Develop specific student rules in accordance with general Team and District rules. Assigns and coordinates student working groups, develops and implements plans to keep every-one busy and productive. Plans, calls and runs meetings.

*Vice President*– Stands-in for Chief Engineer when he or she is not available and shares responsibilities as determined by Chief Engineer.

*Secretary* – Coordinates design, tracks estimated robot weight, parts list, tools required for robot maintenance in the event pits. Keeps everyone informed -communications specialist: website, email, phone.

*Head of Scouting* – Organizes scouting teams (all students serve as scouts), develops/refines the scouting program, creates scouting record sheets, trains scouts, and prepares recommendations and alliance pick list.

**Appointed positions** – Determined by student officers and advisors. Not all positions may be filled by a single person or needed each year.

Competition – one person cannot hold multiple competition positions.

* Drive team – generally 4 people (coach, driver, manipulator operator, and human player) determined through tryouts and selected by advisors, mentors, and student officers. Knows and able to repair all robot systems. Attend every competition. Human players sometimes rotate, but NOT drivers.
* Pit Chief – Must live and breathe tools, spares, batteries, and raw materials. Selects proper tools, etc. for event pit. Rules pit with an iron hand. Attends all competitions.
* Lead Programmer – Sadly, most programming gets during the competitions.
* Spirit – Preparation and plans are made before competitions, but is most “active” during competitions.
* Safety Captain – Sets safety rules during the build season and enforces them at competitions.

Non-competition

* CAD Designer – learn to use Autodesk Inventor to layout robot designs.
* Lead Animator – show an interest and talent and performs most of the work at home or during free time. Will do this to the exclusion of most robot build work, but will be free during competitions.
* Field Construction Coordinator – gets the practice field built.
* Outreach Director – stays abreast of rookie teams and their needs. Mentoring, tooling, materials, skills, etc. Initiates new, creative team outreach programs.
* Webmaster – maintains and improves the Team website.
* Team Awards – creates awards we can present to other teams at competition.
* Photographer – records all team activities from recruitment to competitions.
* Videographer – also records all team activities. Edits year-in-review slideshow.
* Inter-team relationships – build contacts and friends on other teams to facilitate sharing of information and resources, and just to have fun.
* Integrated Product Lead – Coordinates/teaches mechanics, electrical, pneumatic, and programming.
* Artists – t-shirt design, pit, and robotics room beautification.
* Writers/editors for submitted awards, marketing brochures, presentations, publicity.

**Student Meetings**

An advisor must be present in the Robotics room at all times, otherwise meetings cannot take place. Members will not be able to make all team meetings especially during the build season, due to conflicting priorities with school work/events and family events. However, when the team travel size must be limited, priority will be given those students who hold critical positions (officer, drive team, critical scouts, pit chief/crew, safety captain, etc.) and to those demonstrating team dedication by being the most useful. Attendance will be recorded in a log by the robotics lab door, so each student should be sure to sign-in/out at meetings.

***A Student finishes the job he or she takes on.***

Most of the year is laid back, however, the 6 week January/February build period is intense and requires extra commitment. This does not mean neglecting your commitment to school work, but it usually preempts winter sports except in the few hours immediately after school. School is very important. Those who cannot maintain their school responsibilities may have team attendance and travel restricted based on the judgment of their parents and team advisors. On the upside we have quite a few knowledgeable people on the Team who can help if you are having trouble with almost any subject.

Officer Meetings

Summer preparation

Organizational

Advisor/mentor conferences

General Membership

Fall workshops and projects

Off-season preparation

Competition season

Post-competition

Summer projects

Other

Recruitment

Fundraising

Outreach

**Code of Conduct & School Rules**

The following general Team rule highlights help us to maintain a safe, productive environment. The full listing of all rules is contained in the Appendix and are also available on the website at http://www.team3993.tk

In addition to these general rules all School District rules apply as with any school sponsored activity. We also have safety rules for the safe operation of equipment and each year after a couple of months of meetings, the officers will create revised rules addressing any particular repeat problem areas that seem to be cropping up. Any new rule revisions will be distributed and the problems they cover that have arisen will be discussed at regular team meetings. Non-district students are subject to the same district rules as other team members.

* One of the official Advisors must be present for the Robotics room to be used. No students may remain in the room without an Advisor present. The principal can close down the club for infractions.
* Please work and remain in the Robotics room and do not wander the school or form little parties isolating yourselves from the rest of the team.
* School rules apply.
* School advisors must know where students are at all times. Please let them know when you arrive and leave meetings. On trips their explicit permission is required to leave the group even with your parents or guardian.
* Permission to leave must be given by one of the school chaperones.
* Buddy system – never be alone, always be with another team member.
* Working in the school is a privilege that cannot be abused. The custodians and security staff all do favors for us, but we cannot abuse their trust and friendship by unruly actions.
* Atmosphere of respect and kindness
* Practical jokes are not tolerated. They are disrespectful of others, produce an unsafe or hostile environment, and are never practical. Leave your joy buzzers at home.
* No horseplay in the robotics room or anywhere around tools or robots.

***A Student watches out for others.***

**A Parent is supportive, cheerleader, transportation, fundraiser, mentor, positive role model**

**Parent Meetings**

One meeting during each of the months of January, February, March, April for:

* Program orientation
* Travel plans/expenses
* Fundraising efforts
* Sponsor solicitation
* Competition
* Year-end party

**How Parents Participate**

We actively solicit parental involvement. Our team brings adults and students of all backgrounds and talents together. The following are only a few of the tasks to be done. We welcome new ideas every year and you can help define these roles. Some involve organizing and mentoring the students while others are purely adult functions. If you head up a particular effort, please give the team a one page summary report at the end of the year, no matter how trivial. Things will run that much smoother if we keep a record and you wouldn’t believe how much easier it will be to get the new volunteer to step-up if they can see how trivial it is. It’s your responsibility to train your replacement!

**General**

* Recruit other parents, retirees, sponsor mentors, etc.
* Network through friends, family, neighbors, co-workers.
* Be an advocate for our team and *FIRST* with the District and in our community.
* Help your student attend team meetings either by driving or arranging car pools with other parents. Our team meetings are in the evenings so the mentors can meet with the students after regular working hours.
* Make the Advisors aware of any student/mentor/parent medical conditions that could cause issues in the shop or while traveling.

**Technical Mentor**

* General technical or engineering backgrounds, machinists, etc.
* A willingness to take a backseat and let the students experiment, but to step-in when they need to learn something new. Keep the students hands in.
* We’ll teach you what you need to know about robotics (veteran mentors and students)
* Mentoring needed for: structural, mechanical, electrical, pneumatic, control systems, CAD, computer animation, website, safety

**Non-Technical Mentor**

* Work with students in any of these areas:
* Organizational, management skills for running the team and coordinating meetings
* Writing/English for award submissions, college scholarship essays, promotional literature, and competition judge presentation materials.
* Art needed to decorate the Robotics room, our pit at competitions, and website
* Crafts to develop spirit accessories and team awards given to other teams
* Parent Support
* Feeding the team members during the build Jan/Feb season
* Solicit sponsors for cash donations, materials, engineering mentors, tools, machining, excess equipment, and going-out-of-business tool or material clearances.
* Sponsor thank you banner displayed at events

**Fundraising**

* Pays for *FIRST* and off-season competitions, and offsets individual student expenses
* Special fundraisers need to be organized for students to cover their personal travel expenses.
* Helps students in financial need make the trips
* Looking for innovative ideas and the people to run them.

**Travel/Events**

* Travel arrangements (bus, airline, hotel, restaurant)
* Organize hotel rooming assignments and airline seating.
* Arrange to feed the team on the bus and during our stay.
* Laminated cell phone contact lists (all students, chaperones)
* Trip chaperones
* Sponsor banner
* Spirit preparation
* Team luggage tags (so we can readily grab them off the airport carousel) if we are lucky enough to make it to the championships!
* Team T-shirts
* Team handouts for competitions
* Supervise bottle-cap mass-production
* Organize team building exercises
* Publicity and public relations
* Local carpooling for mentoring rookie teams, attending workshops or off-season events.
* Promote the team before the school board and administration.
* Teacher/mentor/sponsor/senior awards and thank you’s
* Videotaping / photography for meetings, mentoring, outreach,
* End of season pot-luck dinner

**Competition**

* Cheering
* Gracious professionalism comes into play strongly when we’re in the stands rooting. We want all the students on all the teams to do well, to feel good about themselves, and to be inspired by the competition. We are supportive and positive at all times under every adverse condition. If our robot is unfairly pushed around by another team, or what seems to be a terrible referee call goes against us, please accept it graciously. Demonstrate by example to your children what good sportsmanship is. Don’t blame our losses on anyone, not ourselves and not others. Don’t expect the competition or the outcome to always be fair. We resolve to do better, put setbacks behind us, and move on. The robot is a vehicle to learning much more.
* We cheer for other teams, especially teams that don’t have many supporters in the stands.
* No booing at any time will be tolerated. If you cannot “cheer” anything good, don’t cheer at all, but you should still applaud politely if not enthusiastically.
* During our qualification matches we cheer for our team by name (SCV CoasterBots) and Team number (3993). We also cheer for the other teams on our alliance for the match.
* During Finals we always cheer for our whole alliance (Red or Blue). We do not chant our team number alone. We are an alliance of typically of three teams working together.
* Oversee rotation of students in the mascot costume, and create a mascot!

**Awards**

* If we win an award the entire team, including parents, is expected to troop down to shake hands with the judges, *FIRST* representatives, dignitaries, etc. Thank them.

**Event Volunteers**

* The Regionals are always in need of volunteers to keep things operating smoothly and you don’t have to know a thing! They’ll teach you everything you need to know. Please consider volunteering your time for the three days of our local Los Angeles (Long Beach) Regional and at any of the away events we attend such as the Championship.

**Historical Costs for Individuals**

The fundraising efforts cut most of these expenses, and fundraisers need to be developed for students to reduce their personal travel expenses. However, fundraising to cut expenses by its very nature is not guaranteed for future trips. Costs will fluctuate with gasoline prices, inflation, and where we actually compete.

* Team dues – Students do not have to pay dues to the team. Their time they put in at meetings and build season makes up for a monetary payment.
* Team uniform – pants: TBD, one team T-shirt is provided- additional team shirts ~$10 each (we would like to offer an *optional* team jacket or hoodie in the past ~$TBD)
* Personal safety goggles ~ First pair is free, replacements are $5.
* Off-season events parent carpooling, volunteer drivers absorb the gas.
* Year-end Party/gift for advisors ~ donations are always appreciated, pot-luck dish
* *FIRST* events –
* Ventura Regional – lunch, dinner, and snacks each day at event ~$25-40/day

**Personal Expenses**

* Optional Extras
* Goggles (replacement)
* Car pooling
* Year-end party

**Team Background**

Hart Hybrids, team 3993 was started August 2011 as a break away from HDR Team 691. When 691 decided to move to Academy of the Canyons a new team was started so students at Hart High School could be involved in the competition of robotics. The team was started by Michelle Hughes, Special Education Teacher at Hart High School.

**Team Organization**

* Student Officers – outreach, publicity, recruitment, design/build/competition
* Advisors – school legalities/rules, supervision, mentors, advice
* Technical mentors - mechanical, electrical, pneumatics, programming, etc.
* Booster Club – fundraising, food, travel arrangements, chaperoning.
* Sponsors – financial, engineering, and material support.

**General Schedule**

The detailed team schedule is to be found on our team website (http://www.team3993.tk) and is updated frequently.

FALL – moderate schedule

* Team meeting one evening a week training new members by working on a common project
* Fundraising events, such as ….
* Outreach/demo. events, e.g., …
* Off-season competitions

WINTER – Busiest time for us

* January Saturday kickoff – game and rules are revealed via webcast, and we receive the motors & electronics we must use along with any specialized equipment required by the game.
* Jan/Feb: Intense 6 weeks of robot design and construction, generally 6pm – 10pm, but schoolwork comes first so students don’t have to attend the full time or every meeting.

Rookie mentoring visits

Brainstorming game play, strategies, robot designs

Construction of practice field

Design/build/integrate sub-systems

Test and redesign/rebuild where necessary

Final programming integration

Driver testing

Robot ships and we rest

SPRING – heavy involvement only during events

* Fix-it Windows – one or two evenings a week to make replacement parts
* Two March three-day Regional events. A local competition at Hofstra and one away trip.
* Late April Championships are held in Atlanta, GA
* Outreach activities such as I-CON at Stony Brook and Special Olympics
* Team meeting one evening a week until the end of school organizing the robotics room, laying plans, and working on projects.
* Officer elections
* Year-end debrief reports from officers-what worked, what didn’t, and recommendations.
* June end-of-year party and awards
* Team awards (seniors, mentors, boosters, sponsors, members-at-large)
* Season assessment
* Synopsis of the year
* What could have made this year more enjoyable and rewarding?
* Was everyone engaged and will they return?
* Did the veterans all teach something to at least one other person?
* Did everyone learn something from a mentor?
* Reflections

SUMMER – light effort

* Casual experimentation and special projects
* Self-taught Computer Aided Design and Animation tool training
* Fall preparations

**Team Communication**

– Our website is our *primary* source for schedules, news, history, photographs and videos,

technical papers, organization, fundraising, as well as topical discussions. The student Secretary also commands all modern forms of communication (Facebook, Twitter, IM, email, phone). Provide an email address and you can expect periodic email from the Secretaries and advisors. Information may also come through discussion at Team meetings.

**Team Contacts (2015-2016)**

Email and phone contact information is maintained separately and is available on the team contact list.

Student Officers

* President – Joseph Ang
* Vice President – Youn Jae Kim
* Secretary – Eugene Mesina
* Scouting – Chan Gi Kim
* Public Relations – Jayson Tan-Say & Erin Alonzo q

Advisors

* Mrs. Michelle Hughes

**Handbooks in This Series**

These handbooks must be dynamic if we are to continue to succeed. Coming up with fresh ideas, trying new approaches, and revisiting lapsed practices all serve to keep our creative energies flowing and everyone fully involved. This is not the culmination of what we know, but always the beginning. The message in this series of team handbooks needs to be told verbally and visually as well as in print. These handbooks will be updated and revised yearly, to include new best-practices and fresh ideas.

* Student Handbook – Student roles on the team and in the FIRST program
* Officer Handbook – Student officer duties and concerns
* Parent Handbook – How parents contribute to the Team and FIRST program
* Mentor Handbook – Involvement of volunteer mentors
* Advisor Handbook – Behind the scenes administration required to operate the team.
* Handbook Appendices – Travel, what to expect at competitions, detailed rules of conduct, fundraising history.

**References**

* Student Officer Responsibilities
* Team Contact List
* FIRST Awards Summary
* FIRST Team Safety Manual:
* Publicity Manual/Publicity Tips
* Team Business Plan / 5-Year Strategic Plan

**Find Out More**

– Our website www.team3993.tk

 www.usfirst.org – FIRST website

 www.chiefdelphi.com/forums – Team discussion forum