

WHY Join VIKotics?

Hello Parents and future VIKotics Team Members!

We are excited to include both high school and middle school students into our FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team at GarPal High School. We are introducing middle school students for multiple reasons:

1st- we could use more hands and minds to help us reach our goals. Many of the teams we compete against are compiled of 20-50 students, where our team is typically 10-12 students.

2nd – There is a high learning curve and part of the learning is commitment. We want to give students a part time opportunity starting in 8th grade to understand all the pieces that go into a successful team, so they are confident if they choose to be a full-time member when they join high school.

3rd - We want middle schoolers: We believe in this program. It changes the trajectory of many students and builds confidence for both current future challenges.

Five top reasons to join VIKotics:

#5 Travel and Exposure- Our team provides tremendous opportunities throughout the year to visit college campuses, attend industry tours, and travel to competitions. VIKotics team member have had the opportunity to fly on an airplane for the first time, see the ocean for the first time, and interact with students from across the northwest and the world. Much fun and memories are created on our travels, and we take pride on giving students the opportunity to see the northwest and learn about educational and career opportunities.

#4 Values of persistence and perseverance- “A dream doesn’t become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.” We set goals as VIKotics members, as individuals and a team. We believe success is contagious. Success with small/minor goals leads to learning to set bigger goals and success on a larger scale. FRC is hard work. There are long hours and times when we tear apart what we just built. The soft skill of persistence becomes invaluable for a student’s future. We create confidence by overcoming adversity. Failure is expected; we learn from it and improve.

#3 Scholarships and Experience- Each year FIRST robotics offers over 80 million in scholarships. The opportunity alone is reason to join! Recent GarPal VIKotics graduates received funding for their education due to involvement on our FRC team. Also, experience gained through relationships with mentors and industry leaders can be as valuable as obtaining funding for college. Industry contacts make a difference in our success.

#2 Gracious Professionalism- This term is coined by FIRST robotics and It’s a way of doing things that encourages high quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. Gracious Professionalism (GP) allows fierce competition and mutual gain to be joined on common ground. Gracious professionals learn and compete at a high level, but treat each other with respect and kindness in the process.

How GP plays into being a VIKotic is that we show up to competitions with the attitude “how can we help?” We help other teams, we help set up the field, and we help by encouraging others. I believe volunteering is a learned skill; even if required initially, We strive to teach VIKotics members to learn to appreciate helping others, and in turn become lifelong volunteers within their workplace and community.

#1 A place to belong- not to perform- A great quote from an FRC student when asked why they are involved, was: “In FIRST I’m lifted up for what I learn, not put down for what I don’t know.” A successful FIRST team is MUCH MORE than robots. It includes aspects of business, creating marketing plans, photography, videography, presentations, promoting our team by hosting booths at local community days and the local fair. All these elements have nothing to do with coding a robot, understanding electronics, or fabricating parts with power tools. If students want a place to feel valued and a place to belong, we believe that can be found as a VIKotic.

Lead Mentor Contact Information: Robert Lopez, Jr.
Email: robertlopez_jr@yahoo.com; Cell: 509-339-3102



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