

2008 Woodie Flowers Nomination – Warren Hildebrandt

I've been on the team for three years and I believe Mr. Hildebrandt still shows all the attributes of a Woodie Flowers award winner. Since actually receiving the honor in 2006, he has worked even harder at inspiring our team members to do our best at whatever we do. He helped us prepare for a visit from Michigan Congressman Joe Knollenberg last year. He helped us successfully convince the school system to allow the awarding of a varsity letter for active participation on the Robotics Team. He helped inspire us to get involved in community events, including spending the entire 24 hours at the Relay for Life fundraiser two years in a row. He continues to spend countless hours after school and on weekends teaching us about designing and engineering a robot. He worked with our school principal to get her to a fall robotics competition where she was allowed to drive the robot during a special adult only drive team event. He continues to let us make mistakes so we can learn by doing, not just by listening.

He does all this without seeking recognition or fame. He also inspires us without fanfare or flamboyant behavior. He quietly works every day at showing us how to put things together, then take them apart and put them together again in an improved state.

He also allows other adults to have an active part in the team. He lets them use their skills and knowledge to cover various parts of robotics so more team members can have a hands-on experience. He delegates the tasks so four or five teams can be working at the same time. Even though he is the team coach he lets others share their opinions and he listens to their suggestions. Students watch how the adults behave and students have learned that collaboration is better than competition when we are all trying to accomplish the same objectives.

For some mentors robotics is a winter event, starting in January and ending in April. For Mr. Hildebrandt, robotics goes all year round. He works with us to design and build a robot for the Oakland County Competitive Robotics Association competitions in the fall. After a one month break he starts right up with *FIRST*. After the *FIRST* season he works with us on team building, fund raising and community service. During the summer we visit Continental to work on robot designs that we did not have time to do during the six week build session.

In summary, he continuously inspires us to greatness and inspires our adult mentors to continue to give their all to help our team learn about areas of science and technology. Our team is lucky to have him as a mentor and coach. We appreciate him very much.