

## Trent McCarthy

**Explain how the student embodies the philosophies of Gracious Professionalism and Coopertition through the FIRST Core Values: Discovery, Innovation, Impact, Inclusion, Teamwork and Fun. Please provide examples.**

To Trent, FIRST is more than winning a match or a regional. For example, when Trent was our human player, the mentors remember seeing him wish other teams 'good luck' and 'good game' before and after each match. Similarly, when another team damaged our robot in a match, other team members discussed damaging our robot to get the match replayed. Trent did not listen to this, and continued to act graciously and professionally towards this team.

As a leader of programming and media, Trent aims to be inclusive and collaborates with all of the students on his subteams, especially rookies. Trent asks all team members about programming decisions, and looks for help from new students on website and media projects. His inclusivity also shines through his 3 years of mentorship with a local FLL team.

**How has the student increased the awareness of FIRST? Describe the student's interests and/or plans to continue to engage with FIRST beyond high school. Please provide examples.**

Trent started his journey in FIRST back in 5th grade when he joined an FLL team at a local community STEM hub. Since then, for the last 3 years, Trent has volunteered as a mentor for the team, helping them with programming and design ideas throughout the season. Trent also spends every weekday over the summer months to help run the STEM Hub's summer camp activities, including astronomy camp and FLL robotics.

Trent enjoys making an impact on the students he mentors, and believes he's inspired other students to pursue science and engineering. He has even motivated some to join our team once they start high school.

After high school, Trent looks to study computer science at UB. He also plans to continue to mentor our team after graduating, just like he has done for his former FLL team.

**Describe the student's technical expertise, using specific examples in the areas of programming, electronics, design, fabrication, making, illustrating how these skills have contributed to the team's success. Please provide examples.**

Trent's determination is best shown through his work in electrical and programming. As a freshman, Trent worked very hard to learn as much as he could as quickly as possible. He frequently attends our C++ programming course, and always asks clarifying questions. Because of this, Trent pushed himself to take on large-scale projects, unusual for someone new to programming.

Trent is most proud of his work in programming the 'feeder state machine', which enabled the robot to intake multiple cargo at once. While Trent could have easily become frustrated when his code did not

work, he turned to his mentors and upperclassmen around him, asking questions and seeking guidance. After rewriting this code multiple times, Trent saw his work come to life, and found beauty and passion amidst frustration.

**How does the student's individual contribution to the team benefit the team as a whole in the areas of fundraising, outreach, entrepreneurship, and creativity? Please provide examples.**

In an effort to help the team afford a potential trip to championships, Trent has been very involved in fundraising. Most notably, Trent was able to help secure a sponsorship from his father's employer, a local automotive company. Trent presented to the owners of the company about his experiences with FIRST and our team. After seeing how passionate Trent was about the program, this motivated them to sponsor us. Trent has also attended many of our outreach events, helping to educate members of the community about our team.

Trent was also heavily involved in our recent bottle drive, having helped transport and sort bottles at the redemption center. Trent also prepared baked goods for a recent bake sale, and sold tickets at our meat raffle. All of Trent's hard work helped the team raise 18k.

**Explain the student's leadership to their fellow team members. How do they motivate others? What is their leadership style? Please provide examples.**

Over the past 2 years, Trent has been an excellent leader and role model. While some students may only engage with those also on their subteam, Trent actively works to befriend everyone. He engages quiet rookie members in his programming projects, and is always working to 'inspire pride in the squad'. For example, when Trent needed help in designing the controller for our new swerve base, he made sure to survey everyone, including new students, for their opinions.

Outside of programming, Trent is also a leader of our Imagery team. This year, Trent spearheaded updating the Student/Mentor bios on the team website, which has not been done since 2020.

We cannot express how grateful we are for the leadership Trent has shown already, and know that he will be a go-to person for many years to come.