



TEAM KIKA MANA – TEAM 368

2008 HAWAII REGIONAL WOODIE FLOWERS ESSAY SUBMISSION

Mr. Alan Ing

We have been very fortunate to have a mentor who has given us strength in everything we do and it is with great honor that we nominate Mr. Alan Ing for the Woodie Flowers Award. He has been with us from the very beginning of our involvement with FIRST Robotics and has given us much more than an ordinary mentor gives to a team.

After receiving an email in 1999 from fellow engineers about mentoring FIRST teams in Hawaii, Mr. Ing decided that he wanted to be a temporary mentor for McKinley High School. So in year 1999, Mr. Ing mentored the very first robotics team at McKinley High School who was one of two very first teams in the state of Hawaii. What was supposed to be a temporary volunteer job grew into a permanent volunteer job for Mr. Ing as he became passionate about sharing ideas and working with students. Today, he inspires us more than ever and even uses up his vacation time to help us.

Mr. Ing has always been a resource for our own team as well as other teams needing guidance; as senior John Paik would put it, "Always there and always willing to lend a hand." With the Hawaii Regional occurring for the first time this year, many new rookie teams are starting out this season in the state of Hawaii. As one of the oldest teams, we know how hard it is to start out and Mr. Ing has made great efforts in helping our team to help other teams. He offers help to teams other than our own and encourages us to embrace the idea of gracious professionalism by offering guidance and answers to questions from other rookie teams. Mr. Ing was involved with several formal committees for the Hawaii Regional and has therefore has taken the initiative in making the Hawaii Regional a reality.

Even though Mr. Ing graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, he learned mechanical engineering theories on his own. He also learned to machine to supplement all his other skills and knowledge to share with students and mentors. Over the years, Mr. Ing has donated many of the equipment in the machine shop used today to build our robots. According to first-year member Helen Chang, "Mr. Ing teaches us machining skills in a very fun, effective way." It is interesting how Mr. Ing inspired many students over the years to go into mechanical engineering even though he is an electrical engineer. Daniel Hong, a 2007 graduate of our robotics team, is now at the University of Hawaii studying mechanical engineering. He says, "Mr. Ing has showed me many aspects of engineering and made me realize that mechanical engineering was for me when I worked with him in the machine shop."

In his first year with Team #368, he instilled a passion for engineering within many former students including Elaine Owens. After being taught by Mr. Ing, she pursued an education in electrical engineering at the Rochester Institute of Technology thanks to the influence from Mr. Ing. Upon earning a degree in electrical engineering, she returned to team #368 as an electrical/programming mentor and describes her experience with him as, "Inspirational."

More importantly, Mr. Ing's enthusiasm exemplifies the vision of FIRST. Mr. Ing has helped us understand the intricacies of the practical application of science and technology which many students will not learn in school. In this sense, he is the hero who has imparted a new generation of mentors and teachers for Team Kika Mana and has also inspired students to pursue professional careers in engineering.