

On FIRST Team 461, Westside Boiler Invasion (WBI), mentor Brad Thompson embodies the message of FIRST by inspiring not only us, but also the community. He is always available to assist in any way he can. Rookie team member Nia Colver explains, “He opens countless doors for us, both literally and figuratively. From stopping what he’s doing to unlock a back closet for us to teaching us fundamental skills to unlock our full potential, he inspires us in everything we do.” Brad has pledged years of his time promoting the team at local events and in the classroom, yet has remained diligent and enthusiastic through all his work.

Brad has committed countless hours to our team and team members in order to open new and exciting doors to the future. The first year he joined WBI, he revolutionized the way our programmers coded by introducing a new programming system that was easier to learn and use. He continues to work with our programmers to develop the website and prepare for competitions by organizing where we need to be and how we get there. His eager dedication to our team opens extraordinary doors for us and helps us be the best we can. He always has time for WBI even though he is a full time teacher at our high school. He not only inspires students on our team, but also students throughout our community.

Brad frequently supports us at many local events, notably workshops for Boy Scouts. With them, he has established several programming workshops to help the Boy Scouts earn their Programming and Robotics Merit Badges. Brad arranges presentations and creates a welcoming environment for others to learn, generating interest in STEM for future generations and giving them the tools they need to unlock their full potential. In addition to assisting with all of our team events, Brad helps at local football and basketball games by running the scoreboards and working the video displays. Above all, he has supplied us with the guidance vital to educate people, allowing us to pass his wisdom on to others and inspire them the same way he inspires us. By creating and organizing many outreach events, he has greatly motivated the community and opened new gateways for many people.

Although Brad has only been with us for two years, he has enhanced WBI profoundly and devoted himself to the team in everything he does. Senior team member Ryan Kim notes, “Brad is a great mentor because he wants to teach and inspire us in the classroom in a fun and intelligent way while still encouraging us to succeed in our other activities outside of Robotics.” Not only do all of our students and mentors admire his hard work, agreeable attitude, and lively demeanor, they admire how he has dedicated years of his life to the success of WBI. Brad does more than just motivate our team, Brad also inspires the people around him to try their best. He gives us the opportunity to constantly improve and unlocks the doors to a better future for us and future WBI members.