



## 2016 Dallas Regional WFFA – Adrienne Emerson

Since its inception 25 years ago, our team has developed into a program that does more than build robots. The way the Robowrangers mix fun and professionalism in a healthy work environment stays with students for the rest of their lives. Mentors exemplify the true meaning of FIRST to the team, and constantly remind us why we are here. One mentor goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure students understand the values of FIRST. Ms. Emerson effectively communicates core values, educates our team in STEM concepts, and drives us to go outside of our comfort zone to exceed expectations.

Ms. Emerson's mentorship provides students with a zeal to pursue a field in which they flourish. Norman Morgan, the coach of team 2468, says it best, "She has given students a passion for science and engineering not only through words, but through her obvious excitement for what she does. She naturally passes along a love of engineering." Current student Andrew Walker remembers a time when Emerson had a huge personal impact on him. He states, "I talked to her before I joined the team because I was scared to be in robotics while knowing little about engineering. She reassured me, and explained that being a Robowrangler was about willingness to learn. She helped me realize that STEM isn't just about knowing a bunch of math; it's being curious about how the world works."

Ms. Emerson is respected throughout the FIRST community. She extends a helping hand to struggling teams by offering advice and stretching resources to aid them. At a previous World Championship, Emerson supplied a newer FIRST team with lunch. Not only did this relieve the team of stress, but it also allowed both teams to interact. Andy Morrison from FRC team 558 recalls the moment, "One of their mentors asked Emerson, 'Why are you doing this for us?' She responded, 'I know how strenuous and overwhelming it can be to plan and care for a team coming to Championships for the first time. Strengthening Texas FIRST and having our teams become friends is well worth the cost of pizza.'"

Ms. Emerson makes an extreme effort to inspire her students in more ways than illustrated in her job description. In the words of alumni Alyssa Ruprecht, "Emerson puts an insane amount of effort into encouraging students to build relationships so there is always somebody to turn to, always some way to learn, and always somebody to inspire you. She never failed to emphasize the importance of teamwork. She makes the team a second family." By volunteering her time and working diligently, she molds every student into a responsible young adult. As William Powell, a fourth-year student, says, "Emerson taught me how to have fun while handling my responsibilities. She frequently reminds us that we aren't just here to learn about engineering; we are here to grow and learn as people." Because of her enthusiasm, knowledge and leadership, Ms. Emerson leaves a powerful, lifelong impression on every student who goes through this program.