

- **Team Number**

2996

- **Team Name/Nickname**

Cougars Gone Wired (CGW)

- **1. Briefly describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on team participants with special emphasis on the current season and the preceding two to five years (How have we made a team impact?)**

Our team's business structure teaches students leadership, communication, and project management skills, as well as how to apply for jobs. Our positive atmosphere creates a welcoming environment to nurture a passion for STEM. The Team acts as a family, and we try to include our past members in everything. Lots of Alumni return to team events, and four of our alumni returned to mentor. All 10 seniors are going to college for STEM degrees, some with *FIRST* scholarships.

- **2. Describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on your community with special emphasis on the current season and the preceding two to five years (Community impact)**

Our team had 3,140 hours of team participation in 44 outreach events just this past year, continuing our presence at festivals like What If?, Cool Science, and library demos while adding new events such as demos at summer camps and starting summer camps of our own. Some events, such as the AHA Heart Walk and Care & Share Food Bank projects, are done in support of team mentors and our community.

- **3. Describe the team's innovative or creative method to spread the *FIRST* message**

We take our MuppetBot "Safety Sam" to all demonstrations to connect with younger kids. Social media updates, namely YouTube recap videos, make information on our team and *FIRST* accessible to everyone. We appeared on a local news channel to support the What If? Festival. Our team contacted an all girls school in Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico, and sent them a LEGO Mindstorms kit with Spanish manuals. We also made a successful middle school summer camp.

- **4. Describe examples of how your team members act as role models and inspire other *FIRST* team members to emulate**

Students learn leadership skills through project management and expectations for a constantly positive atmosphere. We use these skills to mentor FLL Jr., FLL, and our summer camps and, at demos, they learn to teach the public about our passion. At competitions, we share our resources, from machinery to awards advice.

- **5. Team's initiatives to help start or form other *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams**

Our team assisted FRC Team 4068 BEARbotics team during their rookie year and have stayed in contact over the years. We also had a teacher from another high school come to us with questions about FRC and we plan to mentor and assist them should they start a team. We build a full-scale field every year to host the Colorado Pre-Ship Scrimmage and invite other teams to practice on our field every Saturday, making it easier for other teams, especially rookies, to prepare for competition.

- **6. Describe the team's initiatives to help start or form other *FIRST* teams (including *FIRST* LEGO League Jr., *FIRST* LEGO League, & *FIRST* Tech Challenge)**

2996 has started 3 new FLL Jr. teams this past year - 2 at Chipeta Elementary and 1 at a local Boys & Girls Club. At demonstrations, we hand out flyers with information about FLL Jr., and our team's "FIRST Outreach" subteam reaches out to local elementary schools. After coming into a contact with a teacher at an all girls school in Mexico, we took the opportunity to boost their technology program by sending them a LEGO Mindstorms EV3 kit so they can build an FLL team.

- **7. Describe the team's initiatives on assisting other *FIRST* teams (including *FIRST* LEGO League Jr., *FIRST* LEGO League, & *FIRST* Tech Challenge) with progressing through the *FIRST* program**

Our team strives to inspire kids to be involved in FIRST, and continue their inspiration throughout the years. This past year, our primary focus has been FLL Jr. so we have a foundation of kids interested in STEM. We hosted our 5th annual FLL Jr. Expo, covered the registration costs of a new FLL Jr. team at a local Boys & Girls club. To introduce the ideals of FIRST to middle schoolers, we created a robotics summer camp. We have set goals to increase our involvement in FLL and FTC.

- **8. Describe how your team works with other *FIRST* teams to serve as mentors to younger or less experienced *FIRST* teams (including *FIRST* LEGO League Jr., *FIRST* LEGO League, & *FIRST* Tech Challenge)**

2996 mentored 5 FLL Jr. teams this year, going to local elementary schools twice a week during the first semester, and 1 FLL team in Black Forest, CO. During our 5th annual FLL Jr. Expo this year, we gave FLL Jr. teams a chance to show off their hard work and learn more about other branches of FIRST, namely FRC. Kids have the chance to ask questions about our team and our robots, learning about what they can one day accomplish. We also volunteer at the Southern Colorado FLL Qualifier.

- **9. Describe your Corporate/University Sponsors**

Our success depends on our sponsors, both new and old. Vertec, a local fabrication company, produces metal pieces based on our CAD. BPO Elk's Lodge 309 is a charity organization that provides us with better connections to our community. Companies like Spectranetics and Raytheon have employees mentoring our team in addition to sponsorship, while other mentors own their own companies that sponsor us such as SmartMountain Technologies and Hospice Analytics.

- **10. Describe the strength of your partnership with your sponsors with special emphasis on the current season and the preceding two to five years**

We volunteer at the BPOE Lodge 309, helping with their annual events, in turn they assisted us with a fundraiser. Through our NAWIC sponsorship, we have connected with female business leaders who also sponsor our team, and we host their January meetings at Coronado. Vertec, a fabrication company, works with our team on CAD and gives members a tour of their facility. All sponsors are invited to our Parent-Sponsor Dinner, where we introduce our robot and formally thank them for their support.

- **11. For *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams older than 5 years, briefly describe your team's broader impact from its inception.**

Our team builds a full field for scrimmage, giving Colorado teams an opportunity to test and perfect their robots, and also uses this field as the practice field at the Colorado Regional. We've started other FIRST teams, new summer camps for middle schoolers, worked with Challenger Learning Center on Sea Perch,

and sent a LEGO Mindstorms kit to Mexico. Since its inception, the vast majority of CGW alumni have gone into STEM fields.

- **12. Describe how your team would explain what *FIRST* is to someone who has never heard of it**

FIRST is a nonprofit organization dedicated to STEM education, with four different engineering-based competitions for elementary, middle, and high school students. FIRST teaches students leadership and problem-solving skills, creating workforce-ready engineers, and exposes kids to science & engineering role models. FRC is considered a varsity sport in our eyes, being the hardest fun you'll ever have. The kids involved work hard and are more prepared than any others for futures in STEM.

- **13. Briefly describe other matters of interest to the *FIRST* Judges, if any**

Students make all major decisions on the team, and the application process they go through for leadership positions prepares them to interview and apply for future jobs. Our community outreach has been consistent and extensive, and families in our community recognize who we are. We provide the practice field for the Denver Regional and host the CO Pre-Ship Scrimmage. We teach members passion and make FRC as affordable as possible for them.