

Belonging

the newsletter from the FIRST NC ED&I Team – January 2022

Equity – Treating everyone fairly, having equal opportunities and removing barriers

Diversity – The way we are all different

Inclusion – Creating space for everyone where differences are embraced

Thank you to all who completed our survey!

13 lead coaches and mentors filled out our exploratory survey of what's going on with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion among the FRC teams in NC. If anyone else would like to fill it out, here is the link to the survey: <https://bit.ly/3s0kWF6>

Some great things are happening with FRC teams in the state - several teams are actively recruiting mentors and students to reflect the community around them, looking for opportunities for leadership for those who often aren't represented in tech, and partnering with schools and organizations in their area.

The strength of this diversity is apparent:

- *Our team is a unique mix, and because of this we have learned to be more accepting and loving to people who are not like us. This has helped us build strong relationships amongst ourselves. There is always someone with a different viewpoint to help us problem solve and see things in a new and different way.*

And several teams had good suggestions such as:

- *The biggest thing is to listen to the students. Find out if they have religious or faith based rituals, food allergies/intolerances, financial difficulties or anything else that will make them feel like they don't belong. Strive to make everyone included and nobody left out. Keep the lines of communication open between the students and mentors and make sure they know we are a safe space.*

Next steps: We're summarizing what you all have told us and are using this information to put together a shorter and less open-ended survey for students so we can hear what their experience is with respect to EDI on their teams. What's it like from the team member's side? What challenges are they dealing with?

As we go through that process, we'll share results with the FIRST NC community so we can all work to make a more inclusive and equitable FRC community in NC.

January: World Braille Day.

January 4th, World Braille Day, celebrates the birth of French educator Louis Braille who created a system of reading and writing for those who are visually impaired. It is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people. Created in 1824 the system remains largely unchanged today.

Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: Carlos Noriega

Born: Lima, Peru. October 8, 1959.



Carlos Ismael Noriega made history as the first Peruvian-born astronaut to fly into outer space. During his time as an astronaut, he completed a total of 221 hours and 20 minutes in space and traveled 3.6 million miles in 144 orbits of the Earth on the space shuttle STS-84.

Click the link below to learn more.

https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/noriega_carlos.pdf

ED&I Recruitment Tips: *Communicate with families.*

Communicate with parents and families about the values of FIRST, particularly when recruiting younger students. Reach out to families who may not think their children fit in with a FIRST team or those who are part of communities that are not currently on your team.

Click the link below to learn more.

<https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/training-equity-diversity-inclusion>

The FIRST NC ED&I Team: Contact us at: FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com

We are a team of coaches / mentors who want to help create a community and culture of people who embrace the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, who want to develop themselves, and who understand that growth and diversity of all types lead to team excellence.

Anisha Patel - The Pitt Pirates 2642

Dave Lashley - Team SPORK 3196

Linda Whipker - Team PyroTech 3459

Melissa "Bee" Bube - Girls on Fire 5679