

Team 3206 Royal T-Wrecks

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Project Goals and Outcome:

Last season, we had students that left our team, and students that began to dread coming to robotics because of the lack of a welcoming environment. We knew our team could be better. Solving this would not be possible with only one person - it had to be a team effort. So we got to work.

In order to enact lasting change, we started with improving how welcoming the shop appeared to people unfamiliar with our program. Our shop was one of the only classrooms in the school without an "All Are Welcome Here" sign, and we wanted to fix that. While it may seem like a minor fix, it meant a lot to students. It helped them feel like they were seen and recognized. The same goes for their family and friends. Stickers and buttons have always been what our team brings with us to competitions, so we invited a student to create fun pride designs with our team logo on them. When it came to competition season, they were a huge hit, and we purchased a larger design to help them stand out. We also purchased two pride flags - one to hang in our shop, and one to bring with us on competitions. Being able to hang a pride flag in our pit was a huge step up from last year, when doing so would have been difficult or almost impossible due to the lack of understanding within our team. It meant a lot to returning students to see that change and be able to feel represented on the team. We also created cards for students with FIRST resources for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training, women in STEM, members of the LGBTQIA+ community on them, in case they ever need additional support. We plan to include the hyperlinks on our website in order to ensure all students have easy access to them.

While it was a good start for the shop to look welcoming, the most important part was that it had to *feel* welcoming. This step takes more than a year, and it is something that we will always be looking to improve. When we put on our fall competition and invited friends and family members into our shop to experience our program firsthand, we provided not only rainbow doughnuts, but a conversation over how robotics hadn't always been the most welcoming to everyone, and how our team intends to change that. We participated in team bonding activities, helping people get to know each other and connect through something other than robotics. One of these bonding activities was making beaded bracelets for competition - something initially intended to be a solo or duo project that turned into the whole team pitching in and having fun. Students had so much fun connecting with each other and making fun, colorful bracelets that helped show off our team. When it came time to the actual competition, the bracelets went so fast that students in the stands began to make more in between matches. We even had

another gathering after the scouting meeting was over to destress and make bracelets. It helped us connect with other teams, but more importantly, it helped us connect with each other. Our team also underwent a leadership change. We currently have eight leaders that identify as female or non-binary, and our captain positions will both be filled by women next season. Our student body has also increased through the addition of six women and non-binary students and ten students of color.

We had students return after seeing the changes we made, and they intend to stick around for the upcoming seasons. We had mentors that returned to help grow and foster the welcoming environment that we created, creating an experience for us high schoolers that they may have missed out on themselves. Our team is so proud of the progress we made this season, and it meant so much to us that we were able to take action and make a noticeable change for the better. We will continue with this growth into the future, with outreach projects over the summer and continued discussions about how to make our team one for all.

Future Plans:

We plan to continue to build a more inclusive and safe environment for all students. This year we plan to continue our team building activities over the summer with team bonfires, parties and other welcoming events. We also plan to work to include more students with disabilities (both seen and unseen). We want to make sure that our neuro-diverse students feel safe, comfortable and included and plan to work with them to help create spaces where they can go when the shop or other spaces become overwhelming. We are also working to make sure that the shop spaces are accessible for people with physical limitations and that they can have the ability to participate and contribute in all aspects of the team.

As far as continuing to build a safe and inclusive space for our LGBTQIA+ community, we have a new mentor this year who is also a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. They will be helping plan more activities and be a safe place for students to talk about their concerns and ideas.

Our long term goal is for the Royal T-Wrecks to be known in the school, community and greater area as a team that is kind, inclusive, helpful, and welcoming. On our team, everyone is welcome, important, respected, encouraged and loved.

How Funds Were Spent:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fqFzpz5tvNjN3tI5cqScDUHbmVJI-Elh2FCidjMIh84/edit?usp=sharing>

Receipts: FUM Grant Docs

Photos:







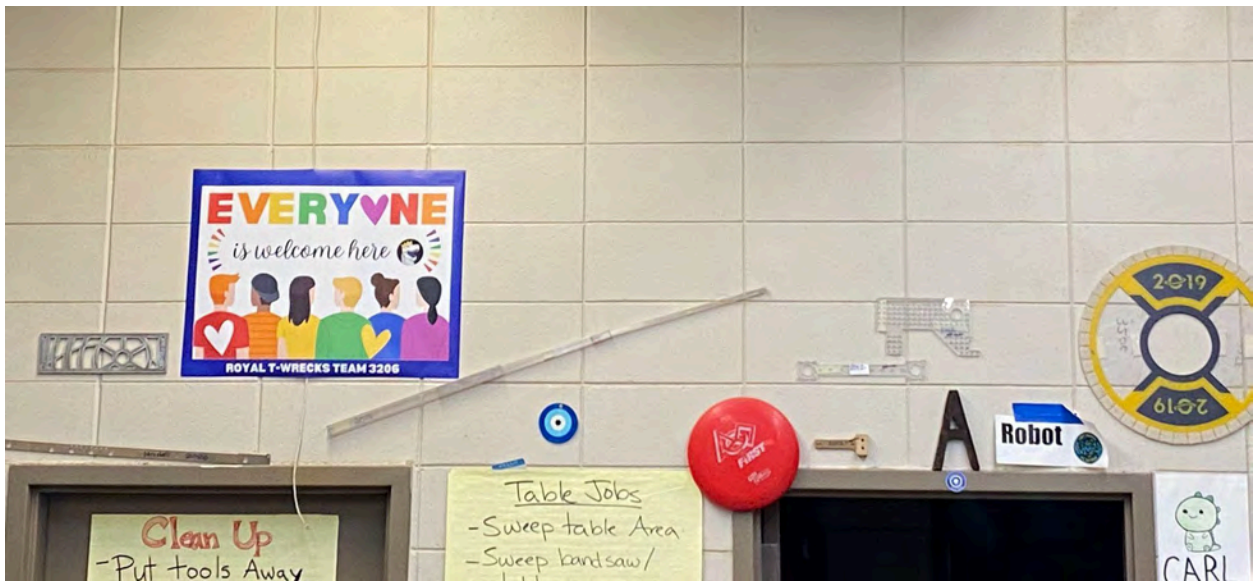
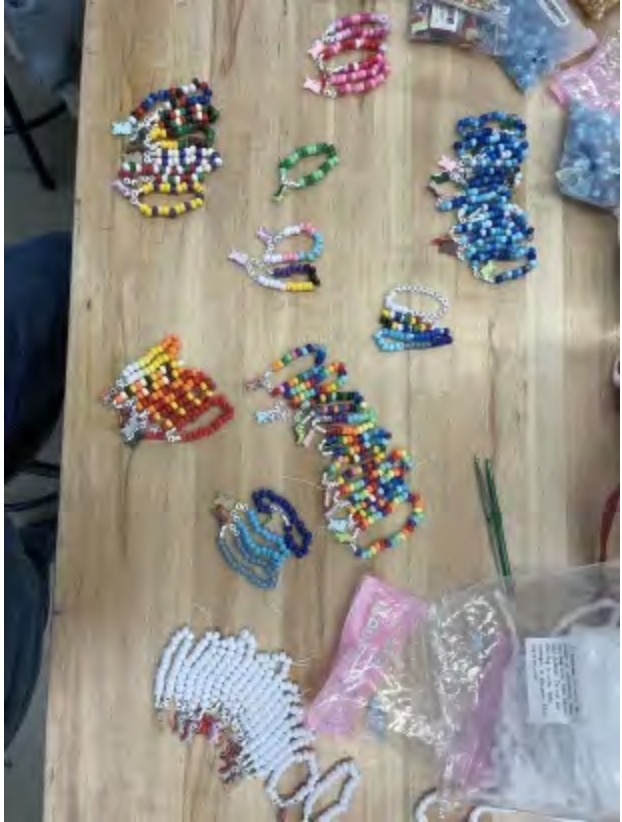












EVERYONE
is welcome here
ROYAL T-WRECKS TEAM 3206



Robot

Table Jobs
- Sweep table Area
- Sweep bandsaw/

Clean Up
- Put tools Away

