



# MONKEY BUSINESS EXTRA

News of the Lynbrook High School Robotics "Funky Monkeys," FIRST® Team 846



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## Becoming a Mentor

### How Parents Can Be Involved!

Rin Ha, Anna Shaposhnik (*sophomores*)



Mr. Srinivasan (mentor) and his daughter, Nithya (soph.), explore new ways to solve our timing issues.



**H**ello Funky Monkeys!  
It's time to get ready for yet another year of learning, hard work, and of course, fun! Whether you want to get your hands dirty with some metal machining, write software to make robots go, or create art and animations to communicate what we do on the team, robotics has a plethora of ways to get involved.

When I joined the team as a freshman, I had an idea of the areas that interested me, so attending the fall workshops was my first step in solidifying my role on the team. During our fall workshops, you'll have the opportunity to learn about all the steps of the robot building process, from computer-aided design and electrical wiring to

*see Shadaj's Welcome, Page 2*

**O**ver the past sixteen years, our Lynbrook Robotics Club has grown from a group of three students and one supportive father to an organization of over a hundred students and dedicated mentors. We have grown greatly in number and accumulated much knowledge, which wouldn't have been possible without a very supportive and caring group: the parents. We greatly appreciate the parent mentors who helped students during work sessions and shared their knowledge and experience. I interviewed one of our current parent mentors, Mr. Srinivasan, to gain a perspective.

**Q:** Why did you decide to start mentoring our software team?

**A:** I've always been interested in robotics and helping kids fostering their interest in them. When Nithya decided to join FRC, I said I want to get involved as well. It's a fun thing, so I decided to ask the team coach at a competition. It was the kind of place that fit my interests, so it was fun.

**D**ear Funky Monkeys,  
Welcome to the team!

Here at Lynbrook Robotics, we offer a unique environment where you can explore your interests and specialize in what you love the most. To build robots and keep the team running, we need people with all different kinds of talents. No matter what your background is, there's a place for you in the robotics family. Are you a master of Legos? You'll fit right in with the robot design team. Like to program? The software team can always use some extra hands. Like writing? You could have your work featured in our next newsletter!

However, being a member of this team is a reciprocal relationship: You only get out as much as you put in. To get the most out of your

*see Jing-Chen's Welcome, Page 2*

**Q:** How did you feel as you were mentoring us?

**A:** I think it's exciting. Compared to FLL or FTC, FRC is a lot freer form, which means you must do everything yourself. I'm involved in the software team, so I saw kids in FLL and FTC using a set framework, whereas here, you can decide what you want to program in. And I've seen kids involved in this in various aspects: machining, hardware design, marketing, media. It's good to see you guys grow up.

**Q:** How do you think you have helped us improve as a team?

**A:** For the short time I have been involved, I think I was able to create the thinking in the software team that they need to pay attention to timing issues. From the beginning, you need to think about what software choices you make. If you're designing an aircraft control system, you can't afford to have any mistakes, and many are the result of timing errors, because multiple things are running at the same time.

**Q:** Do you think it's worth parents mentoring

*see Becoming a Mentor, Page 2*

**Shadaj's Welcome** *Continued...*

machining and software writing. In addition, you'll be able to learn about the skills needed for the other projects our team works on, such as creating animations and art.

Even with the many ways to get involved, make sure to be proactive when working on different tasks. Planning ahead and always being ready to jump in and help are crucial skills that will open a whole world of opportunities in robotics. It's hard to take responsibility for tasks on the team, especially if it's your first year, but doing so will be extremely rewarding at the end when you see your work in action at a competition.

I can't wait to meet you in person over the next few weeks. There's a lot to do in robotics, so get out there! Learn something new! And have fun!

- Shadaj Laddad, Co-President 2017-2018

**Jing-Chen** *Continued...*

robotics experience, it is critical that you put in a good amount of effort yourself. Instead of watching from a distance, get up close. Ask questions. Learn from the veteran members. Once you get used to how the team works, it'll become easier and easier for you to find a place for yourself.

Working with the team and building robots has been the most fun I've ever had. I am certain that you will find robotics as satisfying and fun as I do!

-Jing-Chen Peng, Co-President 2017-2018

**Becoming a Mentor** *Continued...*

us?

A: Yes, it is. We have a lot of skills in the parent community here that we can use in the team. Not just technical, but also organization, fundraising, graphic design, presentation, documentation, so I would encourage parents to get involved. These are probably the last few years that you can be close to your kids, and you better make use of it, and have fun doing it too.

Mr. Srinivasan has only started mentoring us this year, but he has alerted the software

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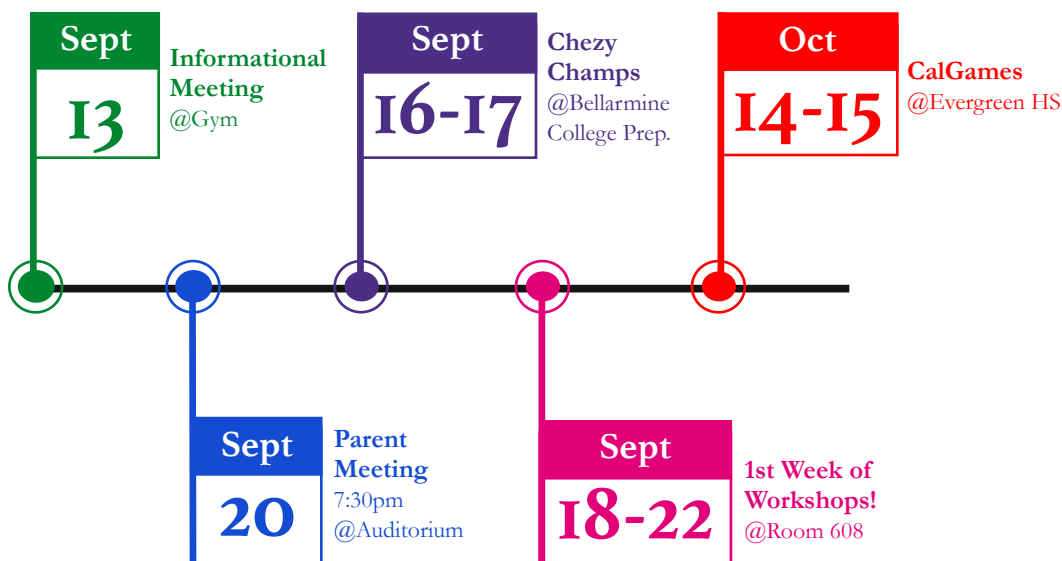
team about timing, a common issue in the real world, which our software team is to solve. Also, his daughter says she feels a strong sense of support due to her dad's ability to contribute to the team.

If you enjoy working one on one with students, please consider becoming a mentor. Being a robotics mentor means you are not only a teacher, but a dedicated life-learner, willing to invest time into exploring new fields. Mentors play a key role in student development, providing them with just enough guidance so they learn to solve problems by themselves. Mentorship is a



two-way street, and you will learn from this experience just as much as the students. In robotics, you will delve into top of the line technologies, have access to large machines like our CNC, and be in a creative environment of problem-solvers. We have an array of exciting activities like 3D computer aided design, programing, animation, writing, design, and more. Whatever your passion, you will find yourself at home nurturing the diverse minds of our club as a parent mentor.

# Upcoming Events!



**Workshops**

- Mon - Machining
- Tue - Robot Design  
- Animation
- Wed - Electrical
- Thu - Website  
- Media
- Fri - Software

**Weekly Meetings**

- Team Meetings**  
every Tuesday  
7-9pm @Room 608
- Lunch Meetings**  
every Wednesday  
@Room 608