

Citizen Recipient

Michael Goldsmith has been a mentor for Lake Monsters Robotics since 2012 and has been Lead Mentor since 2018. Lake Monsters is part of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). FIRST prepares young people for the future through a suite of inclusive, team-based robotics programs for ages 4–18 (PreK–12). In addition to his role on Lake Monsters, he also volunteers at robotics competitions, where as many as 60 teams from around the Pacific Northwest come to compete. In this role, he encourages students to also volunteer. He has been recognized by FIRST as Outstanding Volunteer and has been nominated three times for a Woody Flowers Award (recognizing distinguished mentors) by his students. His students have also awarded him Punniest Mentor. During his 20+ years at Intel, he received the Intel Achievement Award, Intel’s highest honor.

In the FIRST program, students learn to conduct research, fundraise, design, build and showcase their achievements. The team also has an award-winning outreach program, with more than thirty programs in diverse areas such as food insecurity, hospitalized children, human trafficking, people with disabilities, DEI and more. One program, POWR (Patient Outreach With Robots), is conducted in partnership with Doernbecher Childrens Hospital. It impacts 160,000 children annually worldwide.

