



Rising Stars: Reece Watson fits dimension of multi-faceted youth, earns special Dean's List honor

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
April 10 2018 1:23 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville High School junior Reece Watson is a young man who can definitely be called a multi-faceted kid.

Reece is a leader in his Scout troop, an EHS band member, has his own rock band and has done robotics of some kind since sixth grade. Reece's band is "Infinite Limit" and has concerts every other month.

The FIRST Tech Challenge section of FIRST Robotics is an outstanding program with more than 3,000 teams worldwide. Reece is a team member of 8620 Worm Gear Warriors and the season just ended.

Reece's season hasn't concluded because he was chosen as one of four students from Illinois to receive the Dean's List Award from the FIRST® Tech Challenge.

The Dean's List Award recognizes nominated leaders and ambassadors from every FIRST® Tech Challenge team who exemplify leadership qualities, an entrepreneurial spirit, and are ambassadors of FIRST and FIRST Tech Challenge. The Dean's List Award began in 2010 when Dean Kamen realized that for FIRST to continue its mission of inspiring youth, he needed leaders who understand and demonstrate the values and ideals of FIRST; students who will help drive the FIRST movement. Already inspired by their own FIRST involvement, these students ensure that future generations are able to experience the positive impacts of FIRST.

The logo for the Rising Stars Club is centered on a light green rectangular background. It features the words "RISING", "ST", "RS", and "-CLUB-" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, arranged in four lines. A red, five-pointed star is positioned between the "ST" and "RS" lines, acting as a visual separator and a central graphic element.

**RISING
ST★RS
-CLUB-**

"I am a junior in high school, and plan to study computer science at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Indiana," Reece said in an interview. "I have

been the programmer on the team for all four years that we have been around, and developed a reputation among Southern Illinois teams as a resource that they can contact for help. I have taught multiple classes at training days held in St. Louis for FIRST teams, ranging from electronics to preparing for their rookie year.

“I volunteer at many events, filling a variety of roles, not only for FTC but also for the younger program, FIRST Lego League (FLL). I hope to continue to expand the community of FIRST wherever I go, starting with an FTC team in Terre Haute, and possibly an FLL team or two. Essentially, my hopes for the future are simply to demonstrate to others the culture of FIRST, and to help people learn to help each other, so that we can build a better, stronger world.”

Each FIRST Tech Challenge team may nominate up to two students who are in 10th or 11th grade that exemplify leadership qualities, an entrepreneurial spirit and are ambassadors of FIRST and FIRST Tech Challenge. Each FIRST Tech Challenge team should work together to determine which two teammates they feel most deserve to be nominated for the Dean's List Award.

The criteria for the Dean's List Award include:

- Demonstrates leadership and commitment to the ideals of FIRST;
- Interest in and passion for a long-term commitment to FIRST and its ideals;
- Overall individual contribution to their team;
- Technical expertise and passion;
- Entrepreneurship and creativity;
- Ability to motivate and lead fellow team members; and
- Ability to effectively increase awareness of FIRST in their school and community.

Upon submitted nomination, these students are automatically considered Dean's List Award Semi-Finalists. Each student will receive a 5-7 minute interview at an event where they are competing. At each Regional Championship, the Finalists for that region are announced. All Finalists are invited to Championship, where the 10 winners of the Dean's List Award are announced at a special lunch event with FIRST Founder, Dean Kamen, and FIRST President Don Bossi.