

2023-2024 *FIRST*® Tech Challenge

Dean's List Reviewer Manual

Sponsor Thank You

Thank you to our generous sponsor for your continued support of the *FIRST*® Tech Challenge!



Raytheon Technologies

Volunteer Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to volunteer for a *FIRST*® Tech Challenge event. *FIRST*® and *FIRST*® Tech Challenge rely heavily on volunteers to ensure events run smoothly and are a fun experience for teams and their families, which could not happen without people like you. With over 6,500 teams competing yearly, your dedication and commitment are essential to the success of each event and the *FIRST* Tech Challenge program. Thank you for your time and effort in supporting the mission of *FIRST*!

Revision History		
Revision	Date	Description
1	10/17/2023	Initial Release
1.1	12/5/2023	Selecting Finalists – Added policy for past season finalists

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Introduction

What is FIRST® Tech Challenge?

FIRST® Tech Challenge is a student-centered program that focuses on giving students a unique and stimulating experience. Each year, teams engage in a new game where they design, build, test, and program autonomous and driver operated robots that must perform a series of tasks. Participants and alumni of FIRST programs gain access to education and career discovery opportunities, connections to exclusive scholarships and employers, and a place in the FIRST community for life. To learn more about FIRST® Tech Challenge and other FIRST® Programs, visit www.firstinspires.org.

Gracious Professionalism®

FIRST® uses this term to describe our programs' intent.

Gracious Professionalism® is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.

Watch Dr. Woodie Flowers explain *Gracious Professionalism* in this [short video](#).

FIRST Privacy Policy

FIRST takes the privacy of our community seriously. As a nonprofit and a mission-driven youth-serving organization, we are compelled to understand who we are serving, how our programs are performing, and make improvements so that we can achieve our goals of making FIRST accessible to any youth who wants to be part of the fun, exciting and life-changing experience. Thus, we need to collect certain personal data from participants and volunteers to ensure we are meeting our goals and responsibilities as a youth-serving nonprofit organization.

As a volunteer, you may be asked to handle the personal data, or personally identifiable information (PII), of coaches, team members, and even other volunteers. It is critical that you understand and follow the [FIRST Privacy Policy](#) and complete any data protection and privacy training required by your role. If you have any questions regarding data protection and privacy, please reach out to the FIRST Data Governance Team at privacy@firstinspires.org.

Volunteer General Information

Our [FIRST Volunteer Handbook](#) is a comprehensive guide to the different ways people can volunteer with FIRST. It includes expectations, descriptions of training, policies, and more.

Learn more about the roles of volunteers on our [Volunteer Resources page](#), "Volunteer Role Descriptions

Volunteer Training and Certification

Volunteers must create an account on www.firstinspires.org and apply to the role. Upon application, training can be accessed from within the dashboard. Please follow these [instructions](#) to access training through the dashboard.

If you have applied for a role but do not see the link to training in your dashboard, or you have other training related questions please email FTCTrainingSupport@firstinspires.org.

Gracious Professionalism® - "Doing your best work while treating others with respect and kindness - It's what makes FIRST, first."

Volunteer Minimum Age Requirement

The minimum age requirement of a *FIRST* volunteer is **13 years old**.

A minor must have a parent or guardian give written permission to volunteer. In addition, the *FIRST* Consent and Release Forms will need to be signed by a parent or guardian in the Volunteer Registration system for any volunteer under age 18.

Bring a Friend!

Volunteers are a huge part of the *FIRST* Tech Challenge Program and continuing to inspire students to seek out careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). *FIRST* Tech Challenge needs your help in recruiting new volunteers to keep our programs thriving for future generations! If you have a friend or co-worker you think would be interested in volunteering at an event, there are just a few easy steps to help get them involved!

1. Check out our full list of [volunteer opportunities](#) online!
2. Have them apply for the Event in the [Volunteer Registration System](#). Volunteers must be screened before volunteering.
3. Have them contact Firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org with any questions they may have.

If they are concerned about jumping in head first, no worries! Job shadowing at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge Event is a great way to get a taste of what a full day's worth of competition looks like. New volunteers can discover ways they can fit their personal skills into a volunteer position!

Helping Teams Succeed

A volunteer's role is about helping a team succeed so they can compete. Teams spend countless hours, weeks and sometimes months working and reworking their robot design and strategies. After all this effort, some teams will still need a friendly volunteer to help create a positive event experience for the students.

Job Description

Role Overview

The Dean's List reviewers' responsibilities include:

- Reading this manual and complete the Dean's List reviewer certification test.
- Complete *FIRST*'s Data Privacy & Protection training.
- Access and review nominations prior to the event.
- Review interviewers comments from the interview.
- Select regional finalists.

The Dean's List reviewers are responsible for selecting the Dean's List Award finalists. There will be at least two reviewers in a region that work together to determine the finalists for that region. The reviewers must access the [Dean's List Award System](#) to view the original nomination as well as the notes from the Dean's List interviewers. Once all the nominations and notes have been considered, the reviewers are responsible for choosing the finalist students to be announced at the regional championship. Dean's List reviewers do not need to be present at the event; rather they review each semi-finalist and enter the finalists in the Dean's List Award System. This information will feed up to the regional championship tournament director.

- **Physical/Technical Requirements:**
 - Technical – Medium

- Physical – Low
- Administrative – High
- Communication – High
- **Time commitment:** Dean's List reviewers should read this manual prior to serving in this role. They should speak to the tournament director or program delivery partner to check for additional requirements, such as collaborating with other reviewers to make final selections. Dean's List reviewers should read through each student nomination, notes from the interviewers, and decide the finalist for the region. Generally, reviewers should expect 3-4 hours for reading the nominations and selecting finalists.

Conflict of Interest

"Conflict of Interest – a conflict between the private interests and the official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. "Conflict of Interest." Merriam-Webster.com Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 2 Oct. 2014. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conflict_of_interest"

Conflicts of interest should always be disclosed, either to the tournament director or program delivery partner. Volunteers serving in the role as a Dean's List interviewer must not interview teams with whom they have a conflict of interest with. Some scenarios of conflict of interests:

- A coach/mentor is volunteering as an interviewer.
- A parent/relative of a team member is volunteering as an interviewer.
- An alumni (student or adult) of a team is volunteering as an interviewer.
- A sponsor of a team is volunteering as an interviewer.

Having a conflict of Interest, or even the perception of a conflict of interest can impact a team's experience, even if decisions that were made were not biased in any way. The perception of potential favoritism is enough to discourage a student, coach or mentor, and take away from their overall experience. Knowing what conflict of interest is, and how to avoid being in a position that could be a conflict will ensure all students feel they have been evaluated fairly.

What is the FIRST® Tech Challenge Dean's List Award?

In an effort to recognize the leadership and dedication of the most outstanding secondary school *Students* from FIRST®, the Kamen family sponsors awards for selected 10th or 11th grade* *Students* known as the FIRST® Robotics Competition and the FIRST® Tech Challenge FIRST Dean's List Award.

There are three (3) levels of FIRST Dean's List Award *Students*.

1. **FIRST Dean's List Semi-finalists** – comprised of the two (2) *Students* in their 10th or 11th school year nominated by each *Team*.
2. **FIRST Dean's List Finalists** - The *Students* selected for each Regional Championship.
3. **FIRST Dean's List Winners** - comprised of the ten (10) FIRST Robotics Competition and ten (10) FIRST Tech Challenge *Students* selected from the applicable FIRST Dean's List Finalists.

The *students* who earn FIRST Dean's List status as a Semi-finalist, Finalist or Winner, are great examples of current Student leaders who have led their *Teams* and communities to increased awareness for FIRST and its mission. It is the goal of FIRST that these individuals will continue, post-award, as great leaders, student alumni, and advocates of FIRST.

In 2019, the [Woodie Flowers Memorial Grant](#) was established for Dean's List Award Winners pursuing STEAM fields of study.

Student Eligibility

Every registered *FIRST* Tech Challenge team can submit up to two (2) students as *FIRST* Dean's List Award semi-finalists.

- Students must be a sophomore (grade 10) or junior (grade 11) to be eligible for this award.
 - Note: For regions of the world that do not use grade levels such as this to identify years of schooling: This award is intended for students who are two (2) to three (3) years away from entering college or university. Students that would be attending college or university in the next academic year are not eligible. Mentors will be asked for the year of graduation during the nomination process.
- The coach or mentor nominating the student(s) must submit an essay explaining why the student should receive this award. The essay must be 4,000 characters or less.

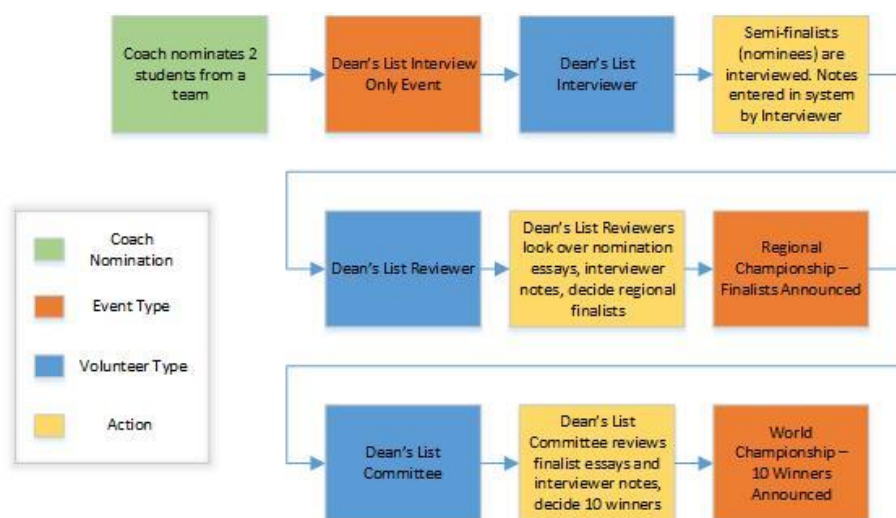
Dean's List Award Criteria

Criteria for selection of the *FIRST* Dean's List Award shall include, but not be limited to a student's:

- Demonstrated leadership and commitment to the *FIRST* Core Values
- Effectiveness at increasing awareness of *FIRST* in their school and community
- Demonstrates passion for a long-term commitment to *FIRST*
- The student's individual contributions to their team contribute to the overall success of the team
- Proven experience in areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
- The student is a role model and can motivate and lead fellow team members

Dean's List Award Evaluation Structure

The chart below is a visual aid to show how each category feeds into specific levels of competition, starting with the coach making the nominations. Dean's List interviewers are responsible for interviewing semi-finalists (nominees). Interviews are done either in person at a traditional event, or remotely (this will be region dependent, please check with your local program delivery partner). The Dean's List reviewer will then review the nominations and the interviewer notes within a state/region to determine which students will move to the next level as Dean's List finalists. Depending upon the size of the region, there will be 2-4 Dean's List finalists within each state or region (see [Number of Advancing Finalists by Region](#) for further details). These finalists will be announced at the Regional Championship Tournament. A separate panel will review the Dean's List finalists and choose the 10 *FIRST* Tech Challenge Dean's List winners.



Dean's List Reviewer Role

Access the Nominations

Dean's List reviewers are required to apply for this volunteer role through the dashboard on firstinspires.org. All reviewers are required to apply and complete YPP screening prior to accessing any student information.

Dean's List Award nominations are posted on a private, password-protected site where only the interviewers, reviewers, and authorized *FIRST* staff can read the entries. The link to the system is below. Please see the [Dean's List Award System](#) section of this manual for further instructions and features of the system.

Link to Dean's List Award System:

<https://my.firstinspires.org/Judging/>

Reviewer Collaboration

There must always be at least two reviewers that will work together to read all the nominations and decide who the finalists will be. In some regions, a committee might be formed to review the nominations and to make final decisions. Reviewers should check with the program delivery partner in their region to determine if a committee has been formed to review nominations, or if they will need to collaborate with one other individual.

Reviewers can choose to either meet in person, or via conference call to discuss each semi-finalist in detail. It is most helpful for each reviewer to read the nominations prior to this meeting and have ideas of which candidates are the top contenders and why.

Review Timeline

Working together with the other assigned reviewer(s), plan to discuss the nominations approximately 2 weeks before the championship tournament. This will allow plenty of time to collaborate and decide which semi-finalists will be named Dean's List finalists and provides time for the finalists to be communicated to the tournament director and/or program delivery partner.

Dean's List Reviewers – Selecting Finalists

It can be a difficult task for the reviewers to determine which semi-finalists will move to the next level as finalists. The reviewer should always keep in mind the criteria when making their decisions. This section goes over some other items the reviewer should and should not consider when making their decision.

Essay Nomination

The essay nomination that is submitted by the coach of the student is broken down into five prompts. The prompts ask the coaches to provide specific examples of how the student meets the award criteria. Each of the prompts has an 800-character limit.

1. Explain how the student embodies the philosophies of *Gracious Professionalism*® and *Coopertition*® through the *FIRST* Core Values: Discovery, Innovation, Impact, Inclusion, Teamwork and Fun. Please provide examples.
2. How has the student increased the awareness of *FIRST*? Describe the student's interest and/or plans to continue to engage with *FIRST* beyond high school. Please provide examples.
3. How does the student's individual contribution to the team benefit the team as a whole? Please provide examples.
4. Describe the students' experience in areas of STEM. This could include but is not limited to skills in engineering, software, CAD, fabrication, etc. Please provide examples.
5. Explain the student's leadership to their fellow team members. How do they motivate others? What is their leadership style? Please provide examples.

Additionally, there is a 500-character limit prompt for sharing additional information about the student:

1. Please share anything else you'd like us to know about the student, including academic performance, specialized skills, technical expertise, or additional extracurricular activities.

FIRST Robotics Competition/FIRST Tech Challenge

Both *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* Tech Challenge are eligible to be nominated for the Dean's List Award in their region's program. There is no rule that states a student cannot be nominated for both. Reviewers should focus on the student's accomplishments in the program they have been nominated for, rather than disregarding a student that has been nominated for both programs.

Individual Contributions

Many essay nominations will outline team activities, but not necessarily discuss what the student's individual contributions are to the activity. This is where the job of the interviewer is very important, and they have been instructed to include these types of notes to better assist the reviewer in making their final decisions.

Other questions a reviewer can ask themselves when making final decisions:

- Is the student a great ambassador for *FIRST*?
- Is the student a leader?
- Is this a student that will continue to be involved with *FIRST* and its mission in future years?
- How have they helped increase the awareness of *FIRST*?

Previous Year Finalists

If a student was selected as a finalist in the previous year, they are still eligible to be considered as a finalist for the current year, as long as all other eligibility criteria are met.

Number of Advancing Finalists by Region

The number of semi-finalists that will move onto the next level as finalists depends upon the region. Regions with larger team numbers will have additional spots to advance students. Below outlines the number of advancing finalists by region:

North America

2 Finalists	3 Finalists	4 Finalists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alabama Alberta, Canada Arkansas British Columbia, Canada Connecticut Delaware Hawaii Idaho Kentucky Louisiana Montana Nebraska Nevada New Hampshire New Mexico North Dakota Ontario, Canada Quebec, Canada South Carolina Texas – South* Vermont West Virginia Wyoming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alaska Arizona California – San Diego Colorado Georgia Indiana Massachusetts Mexico Mississippi New York – Excelsior New York – Long Island New York – NYC North Carolina Ohio Oklahoma Pennsylvania Rhode Island Texas – East Texas – West and Panhandle* Utah Wisconsin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California – LA California – NorCal Chesapeake Florida Illinois Iowa Minnesota Missouri New Jersey Oregon Texas – North* Texas – Central* Washington

*Although these regions are now merged, they will continue to have separate allocations for the Dean's List award.

International

2 Finalists	3 Finalists	4 Finalists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brazil Chinese Taipei Cyprus Egypt & Lebanon Hong Kong India Israel Jamaica Kazakhstan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australia United Kingdom & Ireland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> China Romania

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lebanon• Libya• Netherlands• Nigeria• Qatar• Republic of Korea• Russia• Saudi Arabia• South Africa• Spain• Thailand• UAE		
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Appendix A – Resources

Game Forum Q&A

<https://ftc-ga.firstinspires.org/>

Anyone may view questions and answers within the *FIRST*® Tech Challenge game Q&A forum without a password. To submit a new question, you must have a unique Q&A system user name and password for your team.

Volunteer Forum

Volunteers can request access to role specific volunteer forums by emailing FTCTrainingSupport@firstinspires.org. You will receive access to the forum thread specific to your role.

FIRST Tech Challenge Game Manuals

Part 1 and 2 - <https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/ftc/game-and-season-info>

FIRST Headquarters Pre-Event Support

Phone: 603-666-3906

Mon – Fri

8:30am – 5:00pm

Email: Firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org

FIRST Tech Challenge Event On-Call Support

The on call event support number is available for event personnel only. Please **do not** call these numbers if you are a team looking for a ruling, a decision, or assistance. We trust that you will not misuse this resource.

Day of event robot control system and scoring system support: 603-206-2450

All other day of event support: 603-206-2412

FIRST Websites

FIRST homepage – www.firstinspires.org

[FIRST Tech Challenge Page](#) – For everything *FIRST* Tech Challenge.

[FIRST Tech Challenge Volunteer Resources](#) – To access public volunteer manuals.

[FIRST Tech Challenge Event Schedule](#) – Find *FIRST* Tech Challenge events in your area.

FIRST Tech Challenge Social Media

[FIRST Tech Challenge Twitter Feed](#) - If you are on Twitter, follow the *FIRST* Tech Challenge Twitter feed for news updates.

[FIRST Tech Challenge Facebook page](#) - If you are on Facebook, follow the *FIRST* Tech Challenge page for news updates.

[FIRST Tech Challenge YouTube Channel](#) – Contains training videos, game animations, news clips, and more.

[FIRST Tech Challenge Blog](#) – Weekly articles for the *FIRST* Tech Challenge community, including outstanding volunteer recognition!

[FIRST Tech Challenge Team Email Blasts](#) – contain the most recent *FIRST* Tech Challenge news for teams.

Feedback

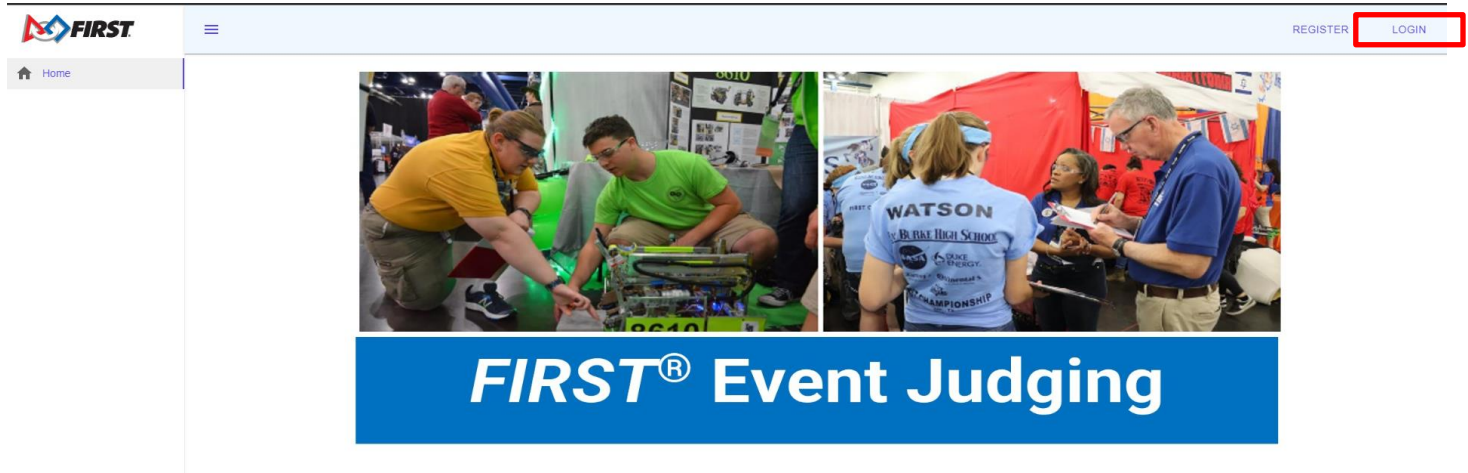
We strive to create support materials that are the best they can be. If you have feedback about this manual, please email firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org. Thank you!

Appendix B – Dean's List Award System

Review Nominations

Link to System" <https://my.firstinspires.org/Judging/>

- Click "Login" at the upper righthand corner. This will redirect to the www.firstinspires.org login page.



- Log in using your username and password for your www.firstinspires.org account.

Login With *FIRST* Account

Email Address

Username

Password

Password

☐ Show Password
☐ Remember My Login

Login

[Forgot Password](#)
Not registered yet? [Sign Up here](#)

- Once logged in, click "FTC – Dean's List Award"



- Click "Edit/View" to access the nominations for the event.

FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC)

Dean's List Award System

2023 Dean's List Award Summary

2023 FTC Events			
Event Name	Due Date	Winners / Finalists	
September			
October			
↑ Back to top ^			
NH Test DLA Interview Only Event <i>Interview Only</i> Nashua, NH USA	Oct 01, 2023	(interview-only event) 4 Completed Submissions	EDIT/ VIEW
NH Test DLA Interview Only Event Remote <i>Interview Only</i> Nashua, NH USA	Oct 01, 2023	(interview-only event) 1 Completed Submissions	EDIT/ VIEW
November			
↑ Back to top v			
December			
↑ Back to top v			
February			
↑ Back to top v			

- Click "Details" to access each individual nomination

FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC)

Dean's List Award System

2023 Dean's List Award - NH Test DLA Interview Only Event Remote

[← Back to Event Summary](#)

Semi-Finalists to be Judged at this event

Semi-Finalist	Team Number	Team Name	
John (Jack) Smith Concord, NH Modified:12-Oct-2023	8845	Trinity High School	Print All Contact Info
			Details

[← Back to Event Summary](#)


- The student information, along with the essay from the coach will be shown on this screen. Make sure to read through the nomination essay prior to interviewing each student.
- **NEW!!! Preferred Name** – If the student has a preferred name, it will be listed in parenthesis next to their legal name. If a preferred name is present, please be sure to use the preferred name when addressing the student during their interview.

View Submission

Printable Page

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2023 NH Test DLA Interview Only Event Remote - Team 8845 - John (Jack) Smith 12-Oct-2023

Team			 Unlock	
Team Number	8845	# Student on team		
City,State	Concord, NH			
Dean's List Award Nominee				
First Name	John (Jack)	Last Name	Smith	
Year of graduation	2025	How long has the student been involved in FIRST?	5 years	
Judging Venue				
Judge Nominee At	NH Test DLA Interview Only Event Remote			
Submitter Contact Information				
Submitted By	Coach Name			
Phone	6036663906	Email	coach1@gmail.com	
Explain how the student embodies the philosophies of <i>Gracious Professionalism</i> ® and <i>Coopertition</i> ® through the FIRST Core Values: Discovery, Innovation, Impact, Inclusion, Teamwork and Fun. Please provide examples.				
Essay Test 1				
How has the student increased the awareness of FIRST? Describe the student's interests and/or plans to continue to engage with FIRST beyond high school. Please provide examples.				
Essay Test 2				
How does the student's individual contribution to the team benefit the team as a whole? Please provide examples.				
Essay Test 3				
Describe the students' experience in areas of STEM. This could include but is not limited to skills in engineering, software, CAD, fabrication, etc. Please provide examples.				
Essay Test 4				
Explain the student's leadership to their fellow team members. How do they motivate others? What is their leadership style? Please provide examples.				
Essay Test 5				
Please share anything else you would like us to know about the student, including academic performance, specialized skills, or extracurricular activities.				
Specialized skills, extracurricular activities, etc.				

- The finalist must be selected in the system to be reported to *FIRST*. Select each finalist from the dropdown and click “save”. Note that there will be the correct number of dropdowns for each region based on the region allocations.

FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC)
Dean's List Award System

2023 Dean's List Award - NH Test DLA Regional Championship Remote

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Assign Award

Select Finalists

Finalist Please Select ▼	Finalist Please Select ▼		<div>Save</div>
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Appendix C – Dean's List Award: Helpful Terms

These terms are intended to assist mentors in writing the nomination essays and for students to use during the interview. The use of these terms is not a requirement for submitting a nomination.

- Dean's List Semi-finalists – Comprised of the two (2) students in their 10th or 11th school year* nominated by each team.
- Dean's List Finalists – The students selected at each *FIRST* Tech Challenge Regional Championship or *FIRST* Robotics Competition Regional and District Region.
- Dean's List Winners - Comprised of the ten (10) *FIRST* Robotics Competition and ten (10) *FIRST* Tech Challenge students selected from the applicable *FIRST* Dean's List Finalists.
- Leadership titles:
 - Captain - a top-level position of responsibility over the team.
 - Teams with a flat leadership structure may have captains that cover specific areas, while making larger decisions as a group with no defined leader
 - Teams with a structured leadership would have one or more captains with multiple Leads working under them to lead smaller team areas.
 - Lead - A leadership position over a specific area of responsibility and should include a "team area" below.
 - Either of the above can be preceded by "co-" to indicate they shared that responsibility with one or more individuals.
- Team Areas
 - Marketing - responsible for items like team branding, newsletters, website, etc.
 - Awards - responsible for working on award submissions or pit presenting preparation.
 - Finance - responsible for fundraising, grant writing, and sponsor relationships
 - Outreach - responsible for organizing and leading demonstrations and events not tied to competitions.
 - Drive Team/Scouting/Strategy - responsible for guiding the team's strategy, representing the team at competitions, and collecting data on the performance of other teams.
 - Mechanical - responsible for the mechanical design and build of the robot.
 - CAD can be included as a separate lead position or included alongside mechanical.
 - Electrical - responsible for the electrical design and build of the robot, including any sensors or custom circuits.
 - Programming - responsible for programming the robot.
 - Any team area that falls outside of the areas listed above should be detailed to provide the judges with appropriate context.
- Action-specific words:
 - Mentored – the student advises or trains, either in person or via phone/email/video conference, another team or team member, helping with technical or non-technical *FIRST* program specific issues.
 - Lead - the student leads an event if they are responsible for planning and execution. Can be preceded with "co-" to indicate a shared responsibility.
 - Planned - worked on the planning of the event but did not lead the execution.
 - Executed - responsible for the execution of the event - onsite leader throughout the event.
 - Conceived - Indicates the student introduced the initial concept.
 - Helped/Assisted - Indicates the student had significant impact or participation, without being a leader in that situation.