


 SEARCH

Vision & Mission

Gracious Professionalism

Impact

FIRST At A Glance

FIRST History

Leadership

Annual Report & Financials

Brand Standards & Trademarks/IP

FIRST Sponsors

Alliances

Scholarships

Press Room & News

Employment

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**FIRST Values**

**Gracious Professionalism™**

Dr. Woodie Flowers, *FIRST* National Advisor and Pappalardo Professor Emeritus of Mechanical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, coined the term "Gracious Professionalism™."

Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of *FIRST*. It's a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.

With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions. Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. They avoid treating anyone like losers. No chest thumping tough talk, but no sticky-sweet platitudes either. Knowledge, competition, and empathy are comfortably blended.

In the long run, Gracious Professionalism is part of pursuing a meaningful life. One can add to society and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing one has acted with integrity and sensitivity.

**Coopertition™**

Coopertition™ produces innovation. At *FIRST*, Coopertition is displaying unqualified kindness and respect in the face of fierce competition. Coopertition is founded on the concept and a philosophy that teams can and should help and cooperate with each other even as they compete.

Coopertition involves learning from teammates. It is teaching teammates. It is learning from mentors. And it is managing and being managed. Coopertition means competing always, but assisting and enabling others when you can.



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