

Learning From OCCRA

This year in OCCRA, or Oakland County Competitive Robotics Association, prepared me for FIRST Robotics more than anything else. OCCRA gave me one-the-job training that helped a ton. Like we did in FIRST this season, we made a chart of everything we needed to make our robots awesome. Also, between a short period of time to finish two robots and all-knowing upperclassmen, I had to learn quickly or get left behind. On the bright side, the occasional helpful teammate taught us rookies to use “scary” equipment safely and how *not* to chop your hand off. Also, we learned plenty of other useful information. For example, I had no clue what a shaft collar or bolt was before this experience. I was also quickly educated on how to build a drive train for both sizes of robots used in the competition. On top of everything, there was a deadline and a competitive drive that motivated my teammates and I. If there weren't a full team effort, we would have never finished in time for the first competition. Overall, OCCRA was a great experience that prepared me for the FIRST season ahead.