

# How to Travel with your FRC Team...

without Breaking the Bank!



# Who are we?



**Susan Garduno**  
Parent of 2 AlumNuts &  
CocoNuts Team Mom  
AZ FIRST Senior Mentor



**Dave Thompson**  
CocoNuts Technical Coach  
Packer of Boxes



**Christine Sapiro**  
CocoNuts Impact Coach  
Logistics & Chaos  
Coordinator - Payer of Bills

# Today's Agenda

- Why Travel with your Team?
- Hotels
- Road Trips
- Flights
- Safety
- Packing Lists - Team & Students
- Team Cost vs Student Cost
- Example Itineraries & Budget
  - In State
  - Out of State
- Beyond Competition
- SNOW!
- Meal Ideas & Tips

# Why Travel with your FRC Team?



- Make life-long memories
- Compete with new teams
- New experiences beyond your hometown
- Bond as a team

**It's FUN!!!**

# Hotels



- Free HOT Breakfast
  - *Continental breakfast isn't as filling*
- Students per room
  - *3-5 per room (2 beds)*
  - *5-7 for a suite*
  - *Some are going to sleep on the floor!*
- Look for deals
  - *Ex: Choice Hotels - points add up to free nights*
- Know District rules on chaperones
- Interior hallways preferred for safety
- Hotel location matters
  - *Near venue is great, but is it safe?*

# Road Trips



- Break up long drives
  - *Ex: leave after school and drive part way*
- Bring school work
- Get minibus certified
  - Saves on charter or rental costs
  - Avg FRC team fits in two minibuses
- Bring games
- Bring snacks
  - *Ask parents to donate*
- Gas/food stops take longer with a group

# Flights



- **All students need a state ID!**
- Send luggage with robot/pit if possible
  - *Students carry backpack only*
- Require matching “travel shirts” or uniforms
- Count students as they board
- Write up an announcement for flight crew introducing your team
- Group rates
- Direct flights (no plane changes)
- Pass out boarding passes at security

# Safety



- Set clear expectations for behavior
- Hold Team meetings in a public space
  - Ex: *lobby or conference room*
  - *No guys in girls rooms or vise versa*
  - *No mentors in student rooms or vise versa*
- Bed checks at set time
  - *No one leaves after that time*
  - *Minimum two students per room*
- Pool
  - *No swimming without an adult present*
  - *Shorts and t-shirts suggested*
- Buddy system ALWAYS
- **DRINK LOTS OF WATER** (especially in Flagstaff)
- Follow district policies on chaperones
  - Ex: *RoboProm or overnight trips*

# Packing List - Team



- Robot
- Spare Parts/Batteries
- Toolbox
- Pit Display
- Swag
- Spirit stuff (ex: signs)
- Judging materials & handouts
- Scouting system
- Programming computer/Driver Station
- Team Meals
  - Coolers
  - Gas grill/smoker
  - Snacks
  - Drinks

# Packing List - Students



- Team Uniform
  - *Send a list for each day, including travel days*
- Toiletries
- Pillow + blanket for bus
- Sleeping bag (*give number of students/room*)
- Scouting (ex: iPad or pen/paper)
- Homework
- Phone & charger
- Team branded sweatshirt, hoodie, etc
- Water bottle
- **Money for meals on the road**
  - Ex: Dinner Sat or travel lunches
- Snacks (*cheapest if bought NOT at a gas station*)

# Team Cost vs Student Cost



- **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING:**
  - Travel expenses
    - Hotel, meals, activities, flights
    - Meals on travel days
  - Uniform
    - Travel shirt (yellow)
    - Team shirts/polos/sweatshirts, fleece
    - Shorts/skirts/hats/socks/belts, etc
  - Tax Credit donations & fundraisers
- **SPONSORS & TAX CREDIT DONATIONS COVER:**
  - Robot parts
  - Regional & Championship Entry Fees
  - Coach/mentor hotels
  - Competition Expenses
    - Printing, swag
    - Unexpected (ex: *trailer repair*)

# Example Itinerary & Budget - PHX Regional 2024



## ITINERARY

- Thurs 5 AM Meet at school; travel to regional to arrive when pits open
- Fri All day - Regional
- Sat All day - Regional; depart after awards
- Sat ~9:00 PM Arrive at school

## COST - 16 students

- 2 nights in a hotel: \$800 (4 student rooms)
- Lunches, 3 days: \$550
- Dinners, 2 nights: \$500
  - *Meals were all take out - no "tailgating"*
- Other: \$150 (ex: parking, activities)
- TOTAL COST: \$2000
- COST PER STUDENT: \$120

# Example Itinerary & Budget - Utah Regional 2024



## ITINERARY

- Tue: Meet after school; drive to Panguich, UT
- Wed: Bryce Canyon; Drive to SLC; load in
- Thurs: Utah Regional
- Fri: Utah Regional
- Sat: Utah Regional; dinner on the road; drive to hotel south of SLC
- Sun: Drive home; ~3:00 PM Arrive at school

## COST - 17 students

- 5 nights in a hotel: \$4000 (includes adults)
- Meals (Wed-Sat, lunch & dinner): \$500
  - *All meals tailgate style - no take out*
- Other: \$50 (ex: parking, activities)
- TOTAL COST: \$4550; COST/STUDENT: \$200



# Beyond the Competition

- National Parks & Monuments
  - *National Parks allow school groups to visit for FREE*
  - *Apply for a fee waiver at least one month in advance*
- Science Centers, Art Museums, Aquariums
- State/City Parks
- Hiking Trails
- City Centers & Local Attractions
  - *ex: Street Art experience in Miami*
- Many attractions offer school discounts



# Flagstaff Fun!

- National Parks & National Monuments
  - Grand Canyon
  - Sunset Crater/Wupatki/Walnut Canyon
  - *Free with a school field trip waiver!*
- Meteor Crater
- Flagstaff Snow Park
  - *Snow play and tubing; day and night sessions*
- Sedona
- Lowell Observatory
  - *Where Pluto was discovered!*
  - *NEW astronomy discovery center*
- Flag Laser Tag
- Flagstaff Urban Trail & Park System - *free!*



# Is it going to SNOW?!?

*(Your guess is as good as ours!)*

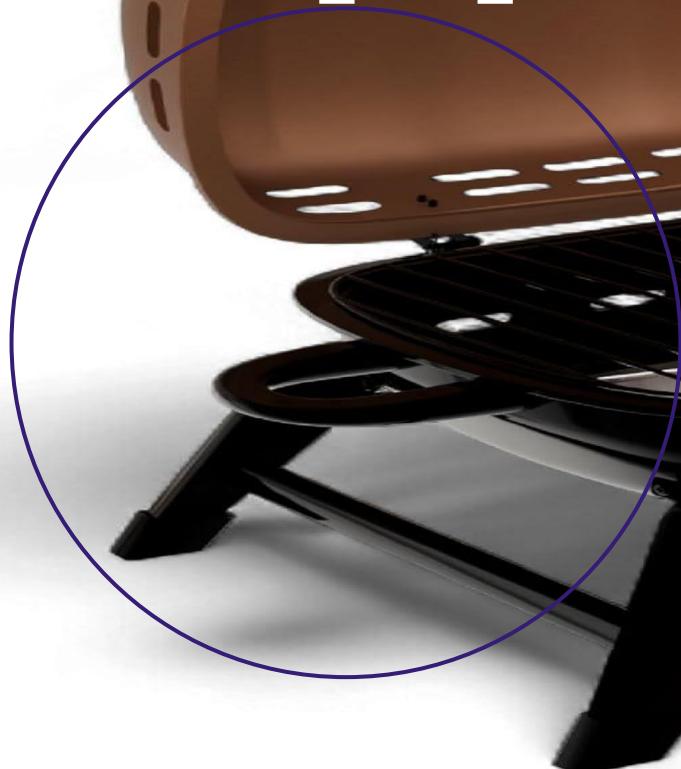
- Have a plan B
  - *Leave early or stay an extra night*
  - *Will your school pay for an extra night due to weather?*
- Driving
  - *Go slow & allow extra time for travel*
  - *Drive in the daylight if temp is freezing*
  - *Stay on main roads - they're plowed 1st*
- Stay near the venue on a main road
  - *Consider staying in walking distance*
- Team sweatshirts
- ***ENJOY! Go play in the snow!***

# Feed the Team!



- Equipment
- Prep
- Donations
- Gift Cards

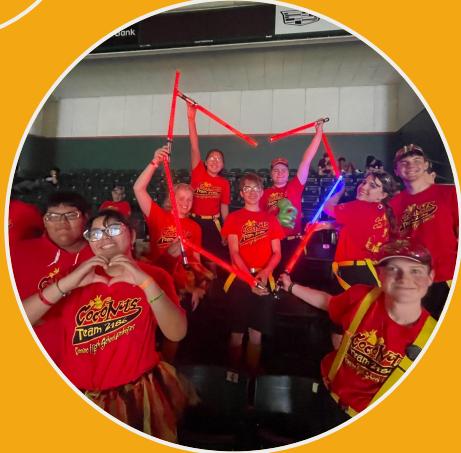
# Equipment



Let's

Get

Excited!



# Any Questions?