



July 3rd 2020

T.E.A. Distinguished Campus
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Advisory Board with UTEP representative Gabby Gandara.

Agenda item one, we talked about the needs of incoming freshmen into a stem discipline at UTEP. The biggest problem facing those students is that 70 to 80% of them start their math career in pre-calculus, we're truly they should be in calculus. He called it the math problem (TMP) meaning that many of our students aren't prepared to take calculus at the college level, so many students have to spend a year taking a remedial math course.

We also talked about internships and how even college level students have a hard time wrapping their head around taking an internship while they're in college. They want to graduate in 4 years but mentally they are not ready to get work experience. Many of their college graduates are graduating without ever having a summer internship because that is something, we need to work on at the high school level which will hopefully translate to the college level.

Agenda item two, we talked about first robotics and how it compares to vex. Gabby is a big proponent of first robotics given that it tries to give a whole picture when it comes to an engineering project. First robotics not only focuses on the build of a robot, but it looks at the other side's such as business plan, fundraising, video production, mentorship, and project deadlines. Vex Competition focuses only on robot build, robot competition, and notebook documentation. I asked Gabby about the possibility of using the trailer that Marathon petroleum bought for them for the upcoming 2021 season. We hope and we think that we could use the trailer for travel purposes which will allow us to put the Robot and equipment within the trailer. This will help cut down our cost of travel and hopefully allow us to compete and add more than two travel locations within Texas.

Item 3, I asked a specific question on Capstone projects for their seniors. Do you allow them to come up with their own project or do you have specific projects through specific Industries? Gabby said that their students for the most part have specific industry Capstone projects.

Item 4, we talked about a summer internship called AI 4 all. Gabby brought up this internship because they were having a hard time getting local students to apply to this internship. The students could get paid through a grant after they completed so many weeks of his internship so he was hoping if we could get possibly one or two students to be involved in that program. It is very difficult to change the mindset of our local students wanting to do something to further their education. Gabby said that a lot of our students see education as a punishment and not as a way to make themselves better prepared for the future.

This meeting was held on Zoom.