



March 22, 2016

Dear Dr. Ricks,

It is with great pleasure that I write a letter of support for the University of Alabama Astrobotics team. We have had the privilege of working with the Astrobotic program for the past four years, and can attest that this partnership has had a positive and profound impact on our students and our school.

University Place Elementary School (UPES) is a STEAM school, with a mission to instill in our students an interest in, and understanding of the fields of science, technology, engineering and math through hands-on projects and activities. We could have no better partner in this endeavor than the UA Astrobotics team. The UA students come to our school each week to conduct classroom demonstrations and lessons, and explain or model the engineering process. They also bring the requisite skill set and level of expertise to enhance our daily instruction while simultaneously serving as role models for the future scientists and mathematicians we are trying to create.

This year we are working on a "Genius Hour" program in which third and fourth graders get to delve deeply into STEM-related subject matter that they'd like to explore. The Astrobotics team members act as personal mentors on these projects, often working one on one with our students to ensure that each project reaches its full potential. UPES is also running a school wide aeronautics program and the UA students have been able to volunteer in multiple classrooms during these activities. It's this type of academic and social intervention that makes UA's involvement so invaluable. Our students get to interact with serious, career-minded young people and our teachers get irreplaceable classroom support.

Lastly, it should be noted that our connection with UA Astrobotics has helped us forge additional partnerships at the University and legitimized our reputation as educational trailblazers in the community. We can honestly say that UPES provides opportunities that no other school in the system can match. For this, and for the reasons stated above we are indebted to the Astrobotics team, and could not be more grateful or proud to be affiliated with them.

Sincerely,

Brian Rose

Assistant Principal

University Place Elementary