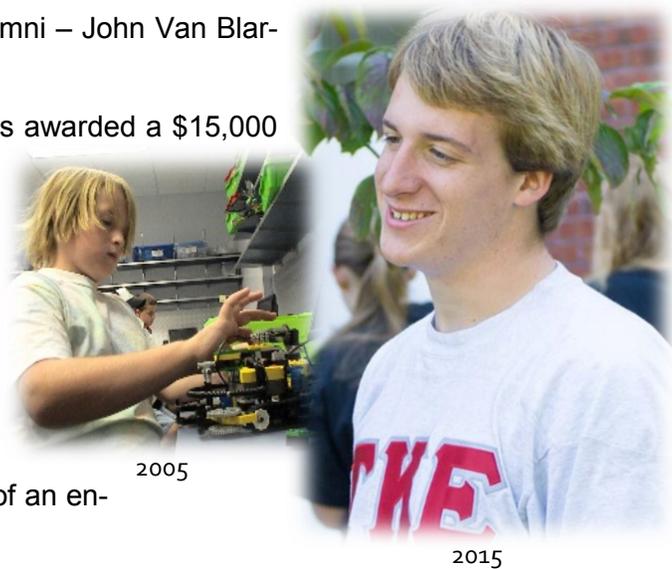


We received a heart-warming email from a parent of one of our alumni – John Van Blarcum (as most of us know him by the name “Morgan” instead).

Morgan, one of SR’s alumni who began attending WPI in 2014, was awarded a \$15,000 scholarship during his Sophomore year. That is an annual Grant typically awarded to mechanical engineering Junior or Senior students. This award is based on academic success as well as the proven great quality of one’s character which will benefit the community in the future. Part of the requirement also includes the description of how they plan to put their degree to good use in the future.

Morgan was his peers’ “go-to-guy” throughout his 9 years at SR (from 2005 to 2014). He not only possesses all the great qualities of an engineer, but also is humble and gracious.



With the permission from him and his parent, I am sharing part of his mail to his scholarship application:

“... I credit my passion for engineering to the efforts of my long time mentor Elizabeth Mabrey who founded Storming Robots. This unique academy is bringing robotic engineering to students as young as elementary school. I was one of those lucky students.

In less than a week, and at the age of 9, I had built and programmed my own robot to autonomously solve a maze. The maze could be changed to any variation of a given set of parameters. She compared my little rover to the rovers that had just landed on mars. Forget the sky; forget the moon. Both those boundaries had long since been passed. In the world of engineering there is no limit. I was hooked.

This passion served to push me through high school and all the way to WPI. Now I have summer internship with United Technologies Aerospace Systems. My career, though it hasn’t even begun feels like it is progressing smoothly. Accordingly, I will be using my remaining time at college to develop myself as a qualified innovator for sustainability. It is not enough to enjoy or succeed as an engineer, I want my work to have real world value and I am aiming to make contributions by designing technologies to begin healing our broken eco systems.

... The story of myself and why at 20 years old I want to be a college professor. My first experience teaching was at Storming Robots where Elizabeth gave me my first job as a technical instructor. Every day I got to teach students to program and create their own robots just like Elizabeth had instructed me. I have never felt more accomplished than after a successful class. Ultimately Storming Robots was the experience that really made me shine.

... My time here at WPI has evolved into something much more than my academics. ... The result, my academics are on mark. I have a work study job with the event staff. I am steward for TKE, planning and buying all of my brother’s meals. I have found myself again as an educator in not one, but two positions. As a Peer Learning Advisor for the mathematics department I lead conferences of students in problem analysis and class discussion on new topics. Finally I am an Engineering Ambassador, a unique organization whose purpose is to change the conversation about engineering. We are a national networks of students and professionals who are presenting engineering topics as fun, inspirational, and important to prospective students of all ages. Like at Storming Robots I find sharing engineering and teaching to be the most immediately rewarding activities I am currently involved with....

... I will accomplish my goals, one way or another; but I will do so bearing in mind that the influence of a single person can completely alter someone’s life....”