

# OnlineMetals Launches Sponsorship Program for High School Robotics and College Engineering and Architectural Teams

*OnlineMetals' new program empowers student teams to create innovative engineering and robotics projects.*

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- OnlineMetals, a pioneering

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*Brent Schultz, lead mentor,  
Viking Robotics*

e-commerce leader in the metal and plastics industry, is proud to announce its new Sponsorship Program aimed at bolstering mechanical engineering and robotics programs in high schools and colleges across the United States. This initiative provides selected institutions with credits to purchase high-quality materials, helping students bring their innovative ideas to life.

“Our commitment to supporting future engineers and innovators is stronger than ever,” said Greg Raece, President of OnlineMetals. “This Sponsorship Program aligns with our mission to deliver exceptional customer

experiences and extend our support to educational institutions that nurture the next generation of creators.”

One of the program's beneficiaries is the Viking Robotics team at Ballard High School in Seattle, WA. “We could not run this program without OnlineMetals,” said Brent Schultz, lead mentor for the team, which consists of around 40 students. “Their support allows us to be competitive.”

Schultz, a technology professional, has mentored the student team for the past 12 years. He first got involved when his stepdaughter, then a student at Ballard High School, convinced him to join. “It took her three months to talk me into it,” Schultz recalls. “The first time I went in, I was like, oh, I'm 100% doing this.”

The team, which won the 2017 world championship, has grown in both size and capability over the years. “When we first started, we were building junkyard robots, but you can't teach solid engineering with that. Now, thanks to OnlineMetals and other supporters, we've upgraded our tools and materials and can build real, competitive machines,” Schultz explains, noting that some

of these robots weigh up to 150 pounds. The program is demanding, with students working long hours to meet competition deadlines. "This is a hard program," Schultz adds. "We'll get some kids who are lost at first, but they figure out what they want to do."

As a mentor, Schultz has seen firsthand how OnlineMetals has supported the team by providing both materials and guidance. "OnlineMetals has been invaluable. The ability to access their educational resources has helped students make informed decisions about material selection and sourcing," Schultz said. "Some of our students are very competent junior engineers who design things in CAD, but they don't always know how to source materials. OnlineMetals has guided us toward using better materials."

Schultz, who built his own metal shop at home after becoming a regular OnlineMetals customer, teaches CAD workshops and mentors students in various aspects of robotics, from design to machining. Many of the students he's mentored have gone on to prestigious engineering schools such as Cal Poly and the University of Washington, and some return to mentor new students.

This is true of his own stepdaughter, Cecilia Kalthoff, who graduated with a biology degree from Western Washington University in 2021 and returned as an adult mentor three years ago. Kalthoff echoes her stepfather's sentiments: "Having the OnlineMetals sponsorship is so helpful. We are able to build such incredible robots with the kids," she said.

Kalthoff now works as a research scientist at Seattle Children's Research Institute, where she raises mosquitos for malaria research. According to Kalthoff, her job required an unusual combination of biology and engineering skills. "I had the weirdest intersection of skills, and I got a lot of those through robotics," she said.

## Program Details and Participation

Online Metals values the opportunity to support customers and communities through sponsorship programs. U.S. High School Robotics Teams and U.S. College Engineering and/or Architectural Team Projects are encouraged to apply. Successful applicants will receive a credit towards a metal/plastic purchase on Onlinemetals.com (items sold by 3rd parties not applicable) and/or a cash sponsorship based on one of the levels offered by your program. We look at features such as logo promotion, web site links, social media call outs, and receiving project updates when making our decision.

OnlineMetals invites students and educators to follow the company on Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn, where they can share photos and videos of their projects. By tagging @OnlineMetals and using the hashtag #madewithmetal, participants can connect with a larger community, gain inspiration, and showcase their work to a global audience.

To apply, visit <https://www.onlinemetals.com/en/sponsorships>.

Laura Porto Stockwell  
Big Thinkers Society LLC  
+1 206-225-1514  
laura@bigthinkerssociety.com  
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