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STARBASE Alpena, established in April 2012 at the Alpena Combat Readiness and Training Center, is one of three STARBASE locations within Michigan. The farthest north of these locations, it serves an area with a diameter of almost 80 miles. Since it opened, the Alpena location has increased to two classrooms and continues to add more students each year. It is currently home to a Director, Program Instructor, two Teaching Assistants, and a rotating host of very excited students.

Steven Tezak, whose call sign is Tesla, was born in Great Lakes, Illinois. Steve's father was in the Navy, so he grew up in places such as Illinois, Virginia and Pennsylvania. He graduated from Bad Axe High School in Michigan and pursued a degree in computers. Along the way, he took several detours and ended up working at the Chrysler Technical Center and World Headquarters in Auburn Hills, Michigan. While he gained experience working in many STEM related areas at Chrysler, he earned his Bachelor's in Business Administration. In 2007, he made the decision to leave Chrysler and pursue a teaching career. He earned his Post Baccalaureate in Elementary Education from Spring Arbor University and then his Master's in Principalship from Central Michigan University.

Steve has been a Director since August 2014 and is also a member of the Curriculum Committee. He loves his many experiences at STARBASE Alpena and he looks forward to many years of STEM adventures. Steve and his wife Wynne have two boys, Brogan and Cullen. Besides having imaginative escapades with his children, Steve loves to play drums and read books.

Early in Steve's journey to become a teacher, he was inspired by a quote by William Butler Yeats: "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." This motto shows why STARBASE is a perfect fit for him, why this dream job allows him to use hands on tools and an incredible curriculum to spark an interest in all things related to STEM.

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**Name:** Steve Tezak

## **Academy: STARBASE Alpena** <sup>[2]</sup>

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[2] <http://dodstarbase.org/academies/starbase-alpena>