Imagine your average everyday teen, wandering through middle school and greeting his friends in the hallway. The high fives, the handshakes, and the occasional chest bump from a good friend. Now envision him going home to nothing, walking into a silent house, no lights on, no after school snack, and no greeting from a parent. This kid was me. I spent on everything aside from homework. As I entered high school in a different district, my doctor diagnosed me with dysthymia, better known as chronic depression, and I thought that life was worthless. I had only my friends in middle school, and now they were gone. But as I entered the second half of the worst place on earth, my friends reached out to me. They invited me to join in on something called VEX. Skeptical at first, I felt that this was going to be no help, but it seemed like my way out of my vortex so I showed up.

It’s been over half a year since I joined VEX, and everything has changed. When I reflect on myself prior to joining in on VEX, I could not believe what I had become. I did not accept the team at first, but I slowly began to find them to be like my family. It felt like the community I never belonged to, looking out for one another. It’s been 4 months since I last took my medication, and I swore to myself that I would never go back.