

To me, VEX is about making a difference. The competitions and the awards are great, but my VEX is about the community - about inspiring the next generation, teaching STEM in the greater community, and about encouraging and supporting the people around you.

My VEX is not about where we place in the standings. Seeing our names at the top of the scoreboard is a rush, of course, but it is fleeting. It is stress to remain there, to not feel like you've let your team down, to prove that you can do it again and again and again. Personally, I get more of a rush when children in local schools come up to me in the street and ask "weren't you that girl with the robots?" and proceed to tell me how much they enjoyed the presentation we gave them months ago. I get a rush when parents tell us how their kids can't stop talking about our robots. I get a rush when crowds of children are telling me "I want to be an engineer when I grow up!" at the end of a demonstration.

The way young students' faces light up when you offer them the remote control is a look you cannot imagine if you have not experienced it for yourself. The intense concentration and ecstasy in their eyes is something that us, as competitors, could learn from.

And that, to me, is what VEX is about.