

VEX got me into MIT (and so did I)

There are five of us crammed into a room at my house; we are nearing the eighteenth straight hour of building our robot and my eyes are heavy with sleep. “OK team, that’s a wrap,” I say, as I urge the other members to bolt their final screws. “We’ll finish this tomorrow.” We’ve worked hard on this robot and are committed to not just winning the VEX robotics competition, but building the best robot we possibly can. For this, I have my teammates - my friends - to thank, as they challenge and encourage me to succeed. I am incredibly lucky that while in high school, I found an amazing group of friends who share my interests in building and programming robots. We eat gyros together and mock the latest *Pirates of the Caribbean* film. There’s my twin sister, Tara, who is my rock; her unwavering nature keeps me calm though our competition is tomorrow and two aluminum kits in, it’s slowly taking shape. Raluca, is my role model: she helped me overcome my fear of confrontation and speaking on the phone. There’s Adam, who, taught me to make 3D models and zucchini bread and Edward, whose extensive drawings helped me visualize our new robot. My teammates’ unique skills have allowed me to grow as a person and shown me the fascinating sides of technology, inspiring me to pursue computer science and engineering.

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