VEX: Cooperation and Compromise

I joined a VEX Robotics team with two goals in mind: to make friends at my new school, and to further my understanding of programming, engineering and physics. Although robotics has done just that for me, it also provided me with an education I wasn’t expecting.

When you put eight ambitious high school students together, all with different ideas and skill sets, and try to build a robot, many difficulties arise. We disagreed about strategy and robot design elements. We struggled with distributing tasks and managing our time. This was reflected in my team’s first competition where we placed dead last.

This utter failure fueled a drive we hadn’t experienced before. We learned not just how to cooperate, but how to compromise. We incorporated new ideas and worked efficiently. Our newfound push for excellence paid off, we placed 4th out of 29 teams at our next competition, only a few weeks later.

While many high school students learn the complex workings of team cooperation through sports, I received this education through my VEX Robotics team. As I’d hoped, VEX Robotics introduced me to the exciting world of mathematics and science, but it also did more. Participating in the formation of an effective team is an experience that will be valuable throughout my academic and professional life.