**Aaron P. Bloch**

**Vex Inspired Me**

**The Biggest Room is…**

*Oh no!**Too short! I could not believe it! I positioned my robot in a different stance but was met with the same result. I had to quickly face the fact that I was unable to score in the high goal! We had just arrived at the robotics tournament, and I had been anxious to test our team’s robot on the playing arena. We had worked for several months building our robot, but we had been unable to test it because our school did not have the new game pieces for the arena. While the robot could still score on the lower goals and there were several more tournaments in which we could compete, I decided to immediately disassemble the lift and try to increase the height of the robot’s reach. My teammates completed the registration process and then helped me tighten the last bolts of the modification moments before the first match. Five hours later we received the championship trophy!*

Although I have participated in many robotics tournaments, this particular day I discovered for myself that the old saying, ”nothing ventured, nothing gained” is certainly true! I was reminded of some valuable lessons that day which will help to shape my future.

First, I realized that there is always room for improvement. Even though I may think that I have done my best on Tuesday, on Wednesday I may have an even better idea. It is vital to explore new ways of overcoming difficulties to attain my goals. I have tried to apply this to all areas of my life. Whether it is raising a grade or score in school or beating my own high score on a video game, there is always room to improve!

Secondly, this experience helped me confirm that I will not quit and accept a subpar performance. Even if the future looks dismal and all seems lost, it is never time to throw in the towel; it is simply time to persevere and work that much harder! Assessment, strategy, risks, and follow-through can result in going from a middle of the pack finish to a first place finish! Giving up is NOT an option!

Third, I was reminded that it is imperative to collaborate with other team members in order to field the best robots possible. Together we can design robots that make us a more competitive school. On one occasion our team worked together until 4:00 in the morning to improve our score. I have not only benefited from our collaborative efforts, but also from my teammate’s words of encouragement in our struggle to win each match.

I am looking forward to applying these lessons to a challenging college experience. I know that I will need to work diligently to improve my first efforts again and again. I am not afraid of hard work and will keep striving for excellence! I look forward to working with other individuals on projects. Through collaboration a team can produce far more than a single worker can. Even though there may be some tough assignments and work projects in my future, I will embrace the challenges. It is important to consider the big picture; hard work often reaps huge rewards!

My college years will give me the skills and maturity to work not only in our country but also the world. There are many difficult dilemmas facing our generation. I want to be armed with the knowledge and skills I’ll need to face those challenges and work together with others to solve these challenges. It is not time to sit back and simply do our best; together we must strive to make the world a better place.