What Does VEX Robotics Mean to Me?

The air is thick with the smell of sweat and metal; the tension in the air so thick you could cut it with a knife. Adrenaline courses through my veins as the screams and cheers of my teammates, covered in face paint and spirit gear, on the sidelines fade to a dull roar in the back of my mind. I’m focused on one thing and one thing only: my robot. I take in the field and our opponents, analyzing everything and directing my drivers to victory. All too soon the chant of the 10 second countdown cuts through my thoughts, we’re ahead but not by much. I shout a few last minute commands and pray it’s enough to keep us ahead. Five long, silent minutes later, the crowd erupts from tense silence. We won, we’re going to the World Championships, we did it! Thousands of thoughts race through my mind as I’m overtaken by my cheering teammates. My nostalgic moment is over all too soon as I’m pulled back to the practice field in front of me by my teammates. Nearly a year later, I’m still caught in the victorious moment every time I approach the field.

By field I mean home, and by teammates I mean family. VEX is more than nerds and STEM, so much more. That’s not to say I’m above suspenders and putting tape on my glasses, I wear both on a regular basis. VEX isn’t just robots and programs. Sure, they’re important but, to me, that’s not what VEX is. It’s not just a game or club, VEX has become a part of my life. My teammates have become my second family, offering constant support and kindness. The field has become a second home, a place where everything makes sense. To me VEX is crazy socks and face paint, not bowties and pocket protectors. VEX is cheering your team to victory until you lose your voice, not quite geeks. VEX is putting everything on the line and just going for it because not only do you believe in yourself, but so does you team. VEX is never leaving anyone behind because we can all achieve great things. VEX, to me, is so much more than a game. It helps us to make lifelong friends and learn life skills. It lifts us up and shows us we can accomplish anything we want too. VEX is my life, and I’m proud to live it like this.