

Girl⚡Powered : LIGHTNING DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE

Girl Power

By, Kaylea Hall

When I hear the phrase “Girl Powered,” it means girls are involved giving input and making decisions. Right now, STEM and robotics have mostly boys. Girls aren’t always involved as much. They don’t get to make as many decisions. Sometimes girls’ designs get overlooked by boys, but when I hear the phrase “Girl Powered” it inspires me and other girls in robotics to get more involved. We need to get more involved because girls have good ideas too!

“Girl Powered” is reflected in our team’s approach to robotics and how we make decisions. I’m the only girl on a team of four, so sometimes I have to be brave and share my ideas too. For example, when we were deciding on our STEM project for this robotics season, all of the boys wanted our topic to involve soccer because that’s one of their favorite sports, but I don’t like soccer. I love volleyball. We sat down as a team and discussed how our designs could work for both sports. The boys listened to my ideas and we figured out how to make it work for both sports. I felt involved and represented in having my ideas accepted.

I think sometimes being “Girl Powered” and standing up for your ideas means that girls must be willing to take on the work and responsibility too. We cannot just sit on the sidelines and watch the boys do the work. Being “Girl Powered” means we need to get involved and take on more responsibility.



Kaylea working on Ringmaster robot.



Kaylea adding blockers to our STEM robot.

Our diverse group helps give us more ideas when fixing problems like this faulty wheel.



Diversity

By, Cameron Tross

We are a robotics team of three boys and one girl so we are diverse. Diversity helps our team because it gives us more ideas. Getting more ideas means more opportunities to succeed because we have more options to choose from.

Our team chemistry is better because we have learned to respect each other’s opinions. By getting many ideas to solve problems we perform better as a team. For example, Kaylea thought our robot needed to have blockers. This was a good idea so we agreed and added the blockers.

Sometimes, because we are diverse, we all have different ideas. We have learned that we can vote to take the best ideas from each member of our team. This has made us stronger and respect each other.

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Our STEM Role Model

By, Kaylea Hall

Our STEM role model is our science teacher, Mrs. Thompson. She shows us that science can be fun. Since she is a woman, Mrs. Thompson shows us that girls can be successful in science fields. She gets everyone involved with hands-on experiments that help us learn and understand the science concepts. For example, Mrs. Thompson had us do a bottle flip challenge in class one day. We got different bottles with different amounts of water in each one. We learned that the more water you have in a bottle, the harder it is to flip because of the science concept of gravity. By creating the challenge, she kept us interested in learning about gravity. Mrs. Thompson is very encouraging to our robotics team and is always interested to hear about our team's achievements.



Jessica Thompson with
VIRUS: Team Lightning 3547P

Sharing the Work

By, Cameron Tross

There are a lot of jobs to do to get ready for competition. Sharing the work helps our team because we get things done quicker. It's also important to keep everyone happy. It isn't fair if one person does more work than others on the team.

When we started VEX IQ robotics we all tried different roles. Now we have assumed the roles we are best at and we know what to do when we are needed, but we all help out if we need to get something done. For example, on our team Wyatt is our lead builder. I tend to do the programming. Kaylea and Tiernan are good at helping out where needed and the more creative side (like designing our advertisement and writing our script for STEM).

We also share the tasks we don't like as much, like writing in our notebook or doing CAD. These are jobs that we take turns doing because it wouldn't be fair for only one person to do them.

When it comes to designing our robot, or making important decisions we always vote. For example, when we are designing a new robot we each make a design at home and we bring it back to class and talk about our ideas together. Then we take the parts we like and vote on which designs to use.

What we have learned is that everyone has things they are good at and everyone has good ideas and different ways of looking at things. By working together as a team, we are stronger.

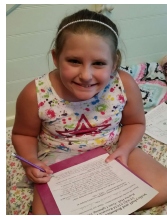
Right: Wyatt working on our robot.



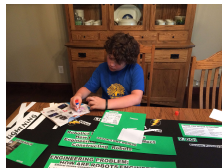
Below: Cameron programming the robot.



Right: Tiernan working on STEM board



Above Tiernan: Kaylea working on STEM interviews.



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VIRUS: Team Lightning 3547P at Earth Day Expo



Tiernan at the Monroe County Fair

An Inclusive Environment

By, Tiernan Strimpel

Our team has taken initiative in many ways to include anyone interested in robotics so they can join the fun world of robotics. We recently took part in a meeting at Monroe County Community College where we spoke to people about VEX IQ Robotics. We were lucky enough to be on the front page of our area newspaper.

We also talked with our classes about our experience at Worlds and how much fun we had and how it was great to see our hard work pay off. There were a lot of people at our school that hadn't heard of VEX IQ or robotics and were very interested. We were also in our school newsletter and info about our team was on our school TV. We had a lot of people talk to us at school about robotics. They asked us questions and were excited to learn about the program. Because of this, we have at least doubled the size of students from our school in our robotics organization.

We also participated in the Earth Day Expo at Monroe County Community College. We had a booth and field and showed a huge amount of kids how fun robotics is. Everybody seemed interested and our team talked a lot about robotics.

At the Monroe County Fair over the summer, we had our robots and fields out again. We showed hundreds of kids how to drive robots and talked about how to work on robots and what a competition might be like. Every boy and girl, and even some adults, wanted to drive our robots and some even joined our organization! We loved seeing so many people excited and interested in robotics.

Our team has worked very hard to be a role model for other teams and include any student that is excited about robotics by mentoring and working at area events. We welcome all students to the fun world of robotics.

Credits

VIRUS: Team Lightning 3547P

Team Members:

Wyatt Dirkmaat

Kaylea Hall

Tiernan Strimpel

Cameron Tross

Title: Lightning Doesn't Discriminate