

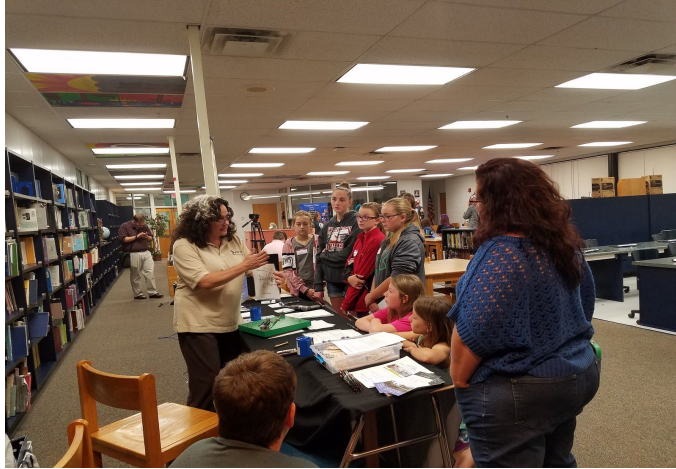
SteamBotics are **GIRL POWERED!**

We are **GIRL POWERED**. We are VRC team 8330B, **SteamBotics**, an all-girl team from Westwood Middle School in Morgantown, West Virginia. We are a team with the mission of not only building successful robots to compete with, but also striving to encourage young girls in our community to follow their dreams, because they can do the same things everyone else can. We host an annual **Girl Powered** event, sponsored by VEX Robotics and the REC Foundation, for the girls in our community.

Because our first event in 2016 was so successful, we added extra speakers for our next **Girl Powered** night. In the left photo from our first event, a representative from West Virginia University's Society of Women Engineers helps one group design their quick-build vehicle.



By year two, we were able to have WVU's ECO-CAR team demonstrate their hybrid car project to rotations of



girls attending the event, as you can see in the photo at right. An aviation professor from Pierpont Community and Technical College demonstrated foundations of flight science at lower left.

When thinking of what **Girl Powered** means to us, we think of women having the same job opportunities as men, women having equal participation for all STEM jobs, strong and intelligent women coming together to support each other, and women using their unique skills and gifts to make a difference in the world. **Girl Powered** is girls getting a chance to do things they might not normally do because of society's expectations. Our team

reflects this with girls who help each other and encourage others to fulfill their dreams. We all work towards a common goal, proving that we are just as capable as anyone else in the STEM field. After reading that the gender gap in computer science has gotten worse in the last 30 years, we decided to start a **Girls Who Code** club at our school. This, in addition to our robotics program, is helping to reach more girls and expose them to all the opportunities for STEM that are possible in our future.

Our larger program, Westwood VEX Robotics, accepts all students, male or female, to join our robotics ventures. The 8330 family of teams (A, B, & H) teaches robotics, engineering and programming to 25 members, 12 of whom are female. We don't look for certain requirements; we look for students who are dedicated to robotics and the work we do. We ask anyone and everyone to be part of our program, and help us work toward our goal of building robots while also encouraging girls to do and be the best that they can. In the photo at right, we went into the quarter-finals as an all-Westwood alliance in the Starstruck season. Working toward these goals takes a lot of time and effort and requires everyone to work together. We all have our strengths and weaknesses, but try to do



everything we can for the benefit of the team. We do mechanical work together, and programming is open for anyone wanting to help or learn it. Game strategy is usually done in groups, and then combined into one, and all our research for our **Girl Powered** side project is done as a group. As for any awards we win, we collect them as a team.

With all the different types of people on our team, we have different types of designs and different perspectives. We believe this helps our team to build a unique robot made from everyone's combined ideas. If we have an idea that maybe needs help we all pitch in with different solutions to make it work. Different people also helps us build strong bonds and close team relationships. It makes it easier to work together as a whole.



Our STEM role model is our high school mentor, Jade, shown in the picture below on



right, because she helps keep our team on track, she invests a lot of her time to STEM, and she also pushes us all to work harder. She will be the first SteamBot to go out and tackle the STEM field professionally, and she encourages us to follow our engineering dreams. She is able to deal with the wildness of our team, and we have all learned a lot from her. Without her, our team wouldn't be what it is today. We know what it

means to be a **Girl Powered** team because of her leadership.

In our adventures with VEX Robotics, we have faced many challenges, from mechanical and programming malfunctions to gender discrimination, but these only push us to work harder. These are lessons that are dealt to us to make us stronger. We all want to succeed and be the best we can, but we have learned that we can only do that if we work as a team. We continue to work harder each day to be a **Girl Powered** team and follow our dreams. We are **GIRL POWERED**.



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