

Girl Powered[®]

Redefining the Face of STEM

STACKED AGAINST US

WHEN MOST PEOPLE THINK OF THE TERM “GIRL POWERED”, THEY THINK OF A TEAM OF PEOPLE THAT WON’T AMOUNT TO ANYTHING BECAUSE ENGINEERING IS “JUST FOR GUYS”. BUT FOR US, GIRLS BRING A NEW PERSPECTIVE TO OUR TEAM IN THE WAY OF BUILDING, THE ENGINEERING NOTEBOOK, OUR TEAM’S PERSPECTIVE AT COMPETITIONS, BEING ON TRACK DURING THE SEASON, OR EVEN COMMUNICATING WITH OTHER VEX TEAMS. OUR TEAM IS MADE UP OF TWO GIRLS AND ONE BOY, BUT EVEN THOUGH WE DO HAVE A MALE ON OUR TEAM, WE ARE STILL CONSIDERED TO HAVE AN INFERIOR ROBOT, PROGRAM, OR LACK IN DRIVING SKILL. BUT WITH ALL OF THE DOUBT SHONE UPON US, WE STRIVE TO PROVE THOSE ASSUMPTIONS WRONG AND SHOW THE WORLD THE

FUTURE OF STEM: **WOMEN**



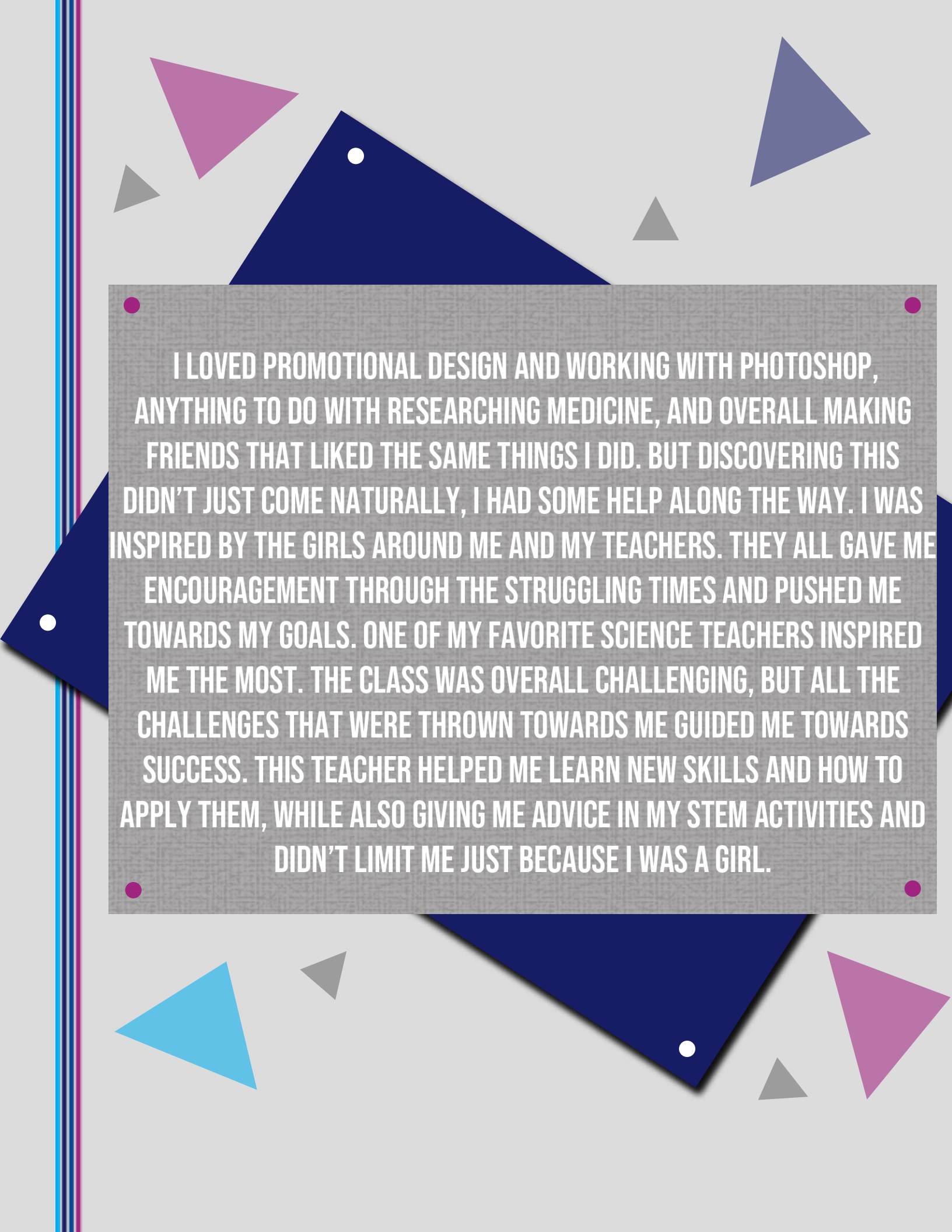
LANA EDWARDS



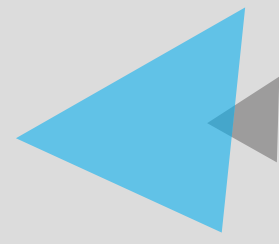
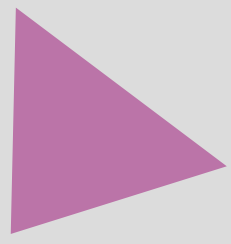
EVER SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL I WAS SURROUNDED BY THE SOCIETY CREATED “GIRL IMAGE”. THIS IMAGE WAS EVERYWHERE AND OVER-INFLUENCED MANY. THIS IMAGE TOLD YOU HOW TO ACT, DRESS, AND WHAT TO DO AS A GIRL. SOME MAY SAY THAT THIS IDEA ONLY AFFECTS OLDER WOMEN, BUT IT STARTS AT A YOUNG AGE. SUCH AS GIRLS NOT GETTING TO HELP BECAUSE IT’S A “BOYS JOB” WHEN IT CAME TO SOMETHING SIMPLE. ALL THAT GIRLS SEEMED TO BE GOOD FOR IN ACTIVITIES WAS TO DECORATE OR LET THE OTHER GUYS DO THE WORK. I DIDN’T KNOW HOW TO ACT OR WHAT TO SAY, SO I THOUGHT IT WAS NORMAL AND CARRIED ON. WHENEVER I REACHED JUNIOR HIGH I WAS WANTING TO TRY SOMETHING NEW THAT INVOLVED STEM. I HAD DEVELOPED A PULL TOWARDS STEM AND FOUND IT VERY FASCINATING, SO I FOUND AN EXTRACURRICULAR GROUP AND INSTANTLY BECAME INVOLVED. AT THE TIME THERE WEREN’T MANY GIRLS, BUT I DIDN’T LET THAT STOP

ME FROM

Putting in my ALL.

The background features a light gray surface with several overlapping geometric shapes. A large dark blue triangle is prominent in the upper center. Other shapes include a pink triangle in the top left, a purple triangle in the top right, a light blue triangle in the bottom left, and a pink triangle in the bottom right. Small gray triangles are scattered throughout. A central gray rectangular box with a fine grid pattern contains the text. This box is decorated with small purple dots at its corners and white circular marks on the dark blue shapes behind it. On the left side, there are vertical blue and purple lines.

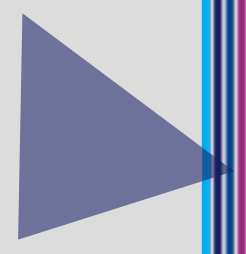
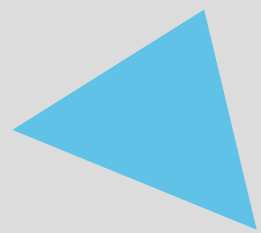
I LOVED PROMOTIONAL DESIGN AND WORKING WITH PHOTOSHOP, ANYTHING TO DO WITH RESEARCHING MEDICINE, AND OVERALL MAKING FRIENDS THAT LIKED THE SAME THINGS I DID. BUT DISCOVERING THIS DIDN'T JUST COME NATURALLY, I HAD SOME HELP ALONG THE WAY. I WAS INSPIRED BY THE GIRLS AROUND ME AND MY TEACHERS. THEY ALL GAVE ME ENCOURAGEMENT THROUGH THE STRUGGLING TIMES AND PUSHED ME TOWARDS MY GOALS. ONE OF MY FAVORITE SCIENCE TEACHERS INSPIRED ME THE MOST. THE CLASS WAS OVERALL CHALLENGING, BUT ALL THE CHALLENGES THAT WERE THROWN TOWARDS ME GUIDED ME TOWARDS SUCCESS. THIS TEACHER HELPED ME LEARN NEW SKILLS AND HOW TO APPLY THEM, WHILE ALSO GIVING ME ADVICE IN MY STEM ACTIVITIES AND DIDN'T LIMIT ME JUST BECAUSE I WAS A GIRL.



I TRIED TO APPROACH MORE OPPORTUNITIES THAT WERE ONLY ACCEPTING OF GUYS AND MAKE MY MARK. LOOKING TO NOW, I'M A PART OF A VEX ROBOTICS TEAM WITH TWO OF MY FRIENDS. WHEN I FIRST JOINED VEX, IT WAS A TOUGH YEAR. I WAS A PART OF AN ALL-GIRL TEAM AND RECEIVED MANY DOUBTS. I STRUGGLED WITH TAKING THE NEGATIVITY, BUT POWERED THROUGH AND ENDED UP QUALIFYING FOR STATE WHILE BEING THE ONLY ALL-GIRL TEAM IN THE COMPETITION. I WORKED HARD AND IN THE END, IT ALL PAID OFF. MY CURRENT TEAM WORKS TOGETHER GREAT IN COMPARISON TO WHAT SOCIETY'S STANDARDS MAY CLAIM. MY GOAL IS TO SHOW YOUNGER GIRLS THAT IT'S OKAY TO EMBRACE WHAT YOU LOVE TO DO AND TO NOT LET ANYONE STOP YOU FROM IT. TO TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCEED. OVERALL, I'M PROUD TO SUPPORT A MOVEMENT THAT ENCOURAGES GIRLS LIKE ME TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.



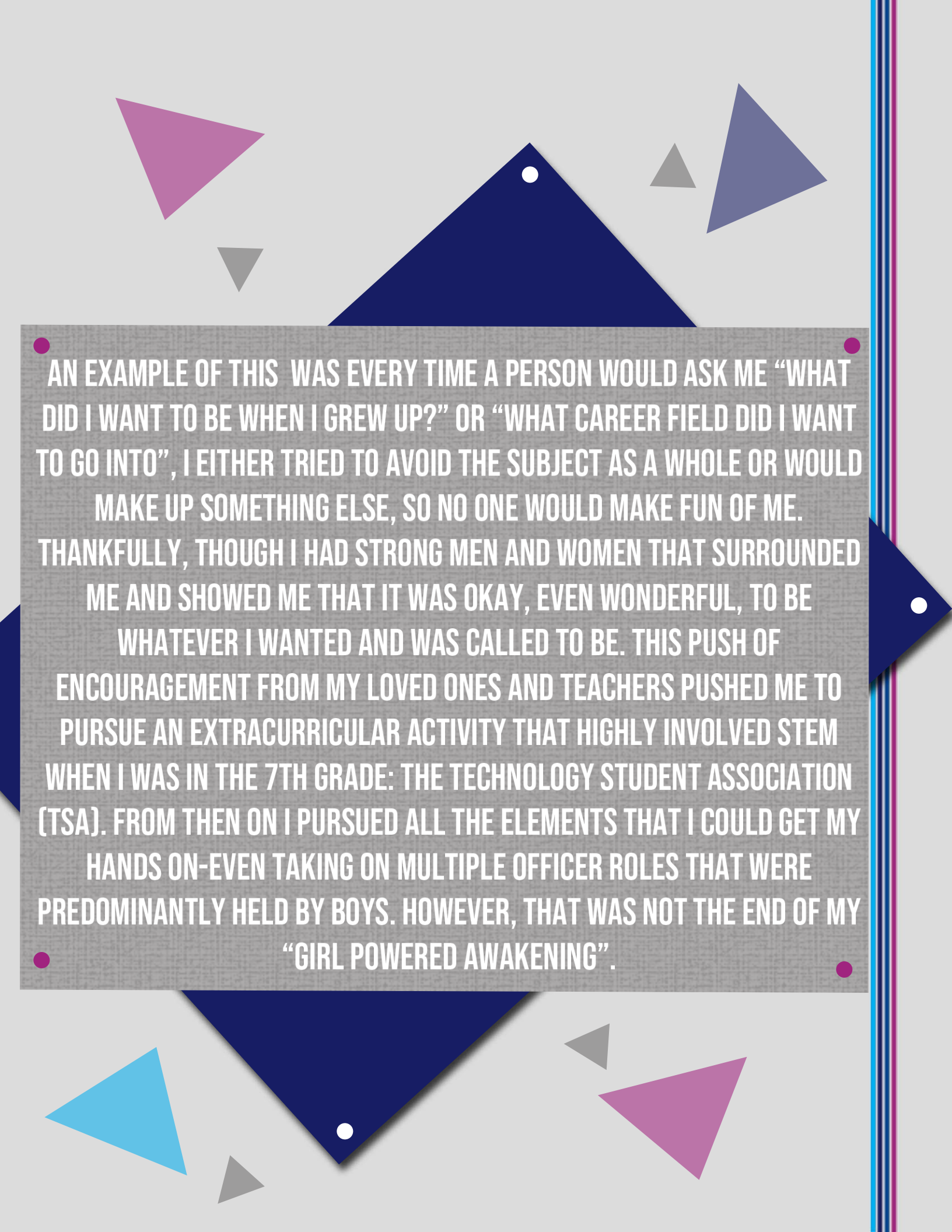
I AM GIRL POWERED.



MAKAYLA WHITTENBURG



FROM A VERY EARLY AGE, I WAS ALWAYS TAUGHT TO BE PROUD OF BEING A GIRL. THE UNIQUE QUALITIES THAT GIRLS POSSESS AND CHERISH HAS CERTAINLY RAISED THE BAR IN TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL SKILLS, AND OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS IN TODAY'S WORLD. WHILE MALE AND FEMALE EQUALITY RINGS TRUE IN THE CURRENT SOCIETY, IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO LOSE FOCUS OF WHAT QUALIFIES EACH GENDER FOR EXCELLENCE. AS A CHILD, I GRAVITATED TOWARDS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE MEDICAL FIELD AND STEM, SO MUCH SO THAT I BURIED MYSELF AND BECAME ENTHRALLED IN IT. THE SURROUNDING SOCIETY AT THE TIME WAS NOT TOO KEEN ON GIRLS OR WOMEN BECOMING A DOCTOR OR ANYTHING TO DO WITH STEM FOR THAT MATTER, SO I HAD OFTEN FOUND MYSELF *Ashamed* FOR BEING INTERESTED IN SUCH A FIELD.



AN EXAMPLE OF THIS WAS EVERY TIME A PERSON WOULD ASK ME “WHAT DID I WANT TO BE WHEN I GREW UP?” OR “WHAT CAREER FIELD DID I WANT TO GO INTO”, I EITHER TRIED TO AVOID THE SUBJECT AS A WHOLE OR WOULD MAKE UP SOMETHING ELSE, SO NO ONE WOULD MAKE FUN OF ME. THANKFULLY, THOUGH I HAD STRONG MEN AND WOMEN THAT SURROUNDED ME AND SHOWED ME THAT IT WAS OKAY, EVEN WONDERFUL, TO BE WHATEVER I WANTED AND WAS CALLED TO BE. THIS PUSH OF ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MY LOVED ONES AND TEACHERS PUSHED ME TO PURSUE AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY THAT HIGHLY INVOLVED STEM WHEN I WAS IN THE 7TH GRADE: THE TECHNOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION (TSA). FROM THEN ON I PURSUED ALL THE ELEMENTS THAT I COULD GET MY HANDS ON-EVEN TAKING ON MULTIPLE OFFICER ROLES THAT WERE PREDOMINANTLY HELD BY BOYS. HOWEVER, THAT WAS NOT THE END OF MY “GIRL POWERED AWAKENING”.



GAP™

I WAS INTRODUCED TO VEX ROBOTICS BY A FELLOW GIRL TSA MEMBER, WHO ALSO HAPPENED TO BE MY BEST FRIEND AND FUTURE VEX TEAMMATE. THIS BROUGHT A WHOLE NEW PERSPECTIVE TO MY LIFE. I HAD TO BE BOLD AND TRUE TO MY BELIEF THAT I CAN BE WHOEVER I'M MEANT TO BE, NO MATTER IF THIS PROGRAM IS HEAVILY DOMINATED BY MALES. EVEN THOUGH OUR TEAM IS LOOKED DOWN UPON MOST OF THE TIME FOR HAVING MOSTLY GIRL MEMBERS, I COULDN'T LET SOCIETY'S PRISON CAPTURE ME INTO BELIEVING THAT I AM NOT ABLE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE AS A GIRL IN THE STEM FIELD. AS EMMA WATSON SAID "IF NOT ME, THEN WHO? IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?" VEX BROUGHT A WHOLE NEW PERSPECTIVE TO MY WORK ETHIC, MY ABILITY TO WORK WELL ON A TEAM, AND MY INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AS A PERSON.

I AM GIRL POWERED.

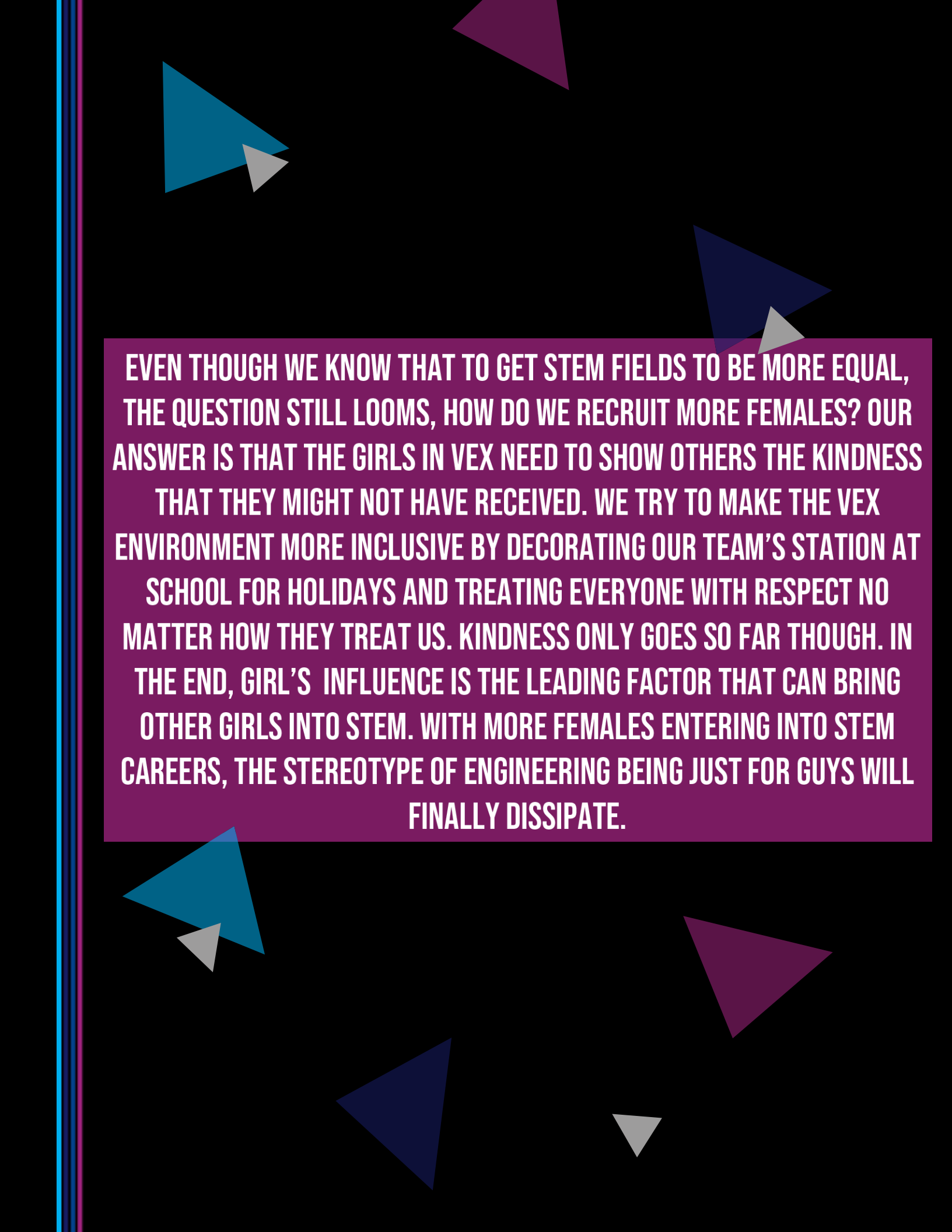
HOW GIRL POWER AFFECTS OUR TEAM

GIRL POWERED HAS AFFECTED OUR TEAM IN MANY POSITIVE WAYS, NOT JUST NEGATIVELY. FOR INSTANCE, IN OUR TIME TOGETHER AS A TEAM, WE HAVE WANTED TO BE AS KNOWLEDGEABLE IN VEX AS WE CAN BE. TO DO THAT, WE HAD TO LEARN HOW TO WORK WITH EACH OTHER, NOT AGAINST EACH OTHER. WE ALL HAD A SAY IN DESIGNING THE ROBOT, BUT FOR THE REST OF THE BUILD, WE MADE SURE TO SPLIT UP THE WORK EVENLY. WE HAD A LEAD BUILDER TO OVERSEE ALL BUILDS, BUT WE SPLIT UP THE BUILDING WORKLOAD BY ASSIGNING DIFFERENT SUBSYSTEMS TO EACH TEAM MEMBER. WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE V5 CONTROL SYSTEM, WE ALL ARE LEARNING HOW TO PROGRAM. ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT THAT FULLY COMFORTABLE WITH THE SOFTWARE YET, EVENTUALLY WE WILL ALL BE GREAT AT THIS TASK. FOR DRIVING, WE HELD DRIVER TRIALS TO SEE WHO COULD SCORE THE MOST POINTS IN 2 MINUTES. THROUGH THIS, WE HAVE LEARNED HOW TO BUILD UP OUR INDIVIDUAL WEAKNESSES, WHILE HELPING OUR TEAM BECOME MORE WELL ROUNDED.



SINCE WE HAVE SPENT THE TIME TO TEACH ONE ANOTHER ABOUT THE INNER WORKINGS OF ROBOTICS, WE NOW HAVE THE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES THAT WE NEED ON BUILDING. WE ALL HAVE HAD THOSE MOMENTS WHEN WE WORK ON SOMETHING SO MUCH AND THEN WE HIT A BLOCK WHERE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING YOU CAN THINK OF WILL WORK. BUT AFTER HOURS OF THINKING, A TEAMMATE COMES OVER AND IMMEDIATELY SOLVES THE PROBLEM IN A WAY THAT YOU NEVER THOUGHT OF. ALTHOUGH YOU FEEL ANNOYED THAT YOU COULDN'T FIGURE OUT THE PROBLEM WHEN SOMEONE ELSE COULD, YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR THAT PERSON TO ALLEVIATE THE STRESS OFF OF YOU. THIS HAPPENS CONSTANTLY IN THE ENGINEERING FIELD, BUT A SET OF NEW IDEAS COULD DRASTICALLY IMPROVE YOUR CREATION. WE ALSO CAN HELP OTHER TEAMS WHEN THEY NEED HELP WITHOUT IT INTERFERING WITH OUR OWN PROGRESS.



The background features several large, semi-transparent triangles in teal, purple, and blue, scattered across the black background. A central purple rectangular box contains white text. On the left side, there are two vertical lines, one blue and one purple, running from top to bottom.

EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW THAT TO GET STEM FIELDS TO BE MORE EQUAL, THE QUESTION STILL LOOMS, HOW DO WE RECRUIT MORE FEMALES? OUR ANSWER IS THAT THE GIRLS IN VEX NEED TO SHOW OTHERS THE KINDNESS THAT THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE RECEIVED. WE TRY TO MAKE THE VEX ENVIRONMENT MORE INCLUSIVE BY DECORATING OUR TEAM'S STATION AT SCHOOL FOR HOLIDAYS AND TREATING EVERYONE WITH RESPECT NO MATTER HOW THEY TREAT US. KINDNESS ONLY GOES SO FAR THOUGH. IN THE END, GIRL'S INFLUENCE IS THE LEADING FACTOR THAT CAN BRING OTHER GIRLS INTO STEM. WITH MORE FEMALES ENTERING INTO STEM CAREERS, THE STEREOTYPE OF ENGINEERING BEING JUST FOR GUYS WILL FINALLY DISSIPATE.

TITLE : STACKED AGAINST US

**ENTRANTS: WILL GREER, LANA EDWARDS,
MAKAYLA WHITTENBURG**

TEAM: 9545Z - THE OUTLAWS

