

# POWERING FORWARD

## 2915G'S GIRL POWERED STORY

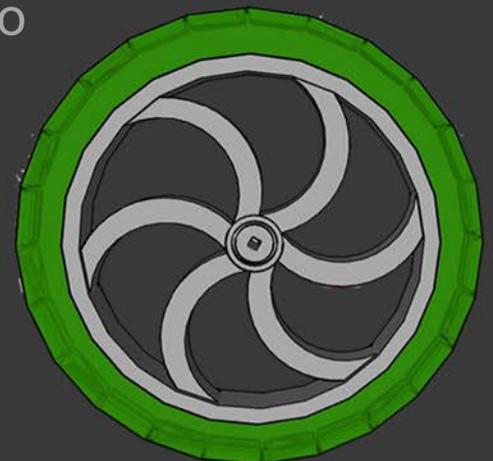
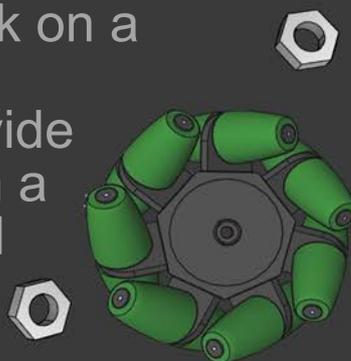
When I hear the phrase Girl Powered, I think of the girls and women that have paved the path that allows us to be part of Vex Robotics. I think of how if I had been born during an earlier time, I may not have had the opportunity to receive a rich and fulfilling education at all. Because of the women before us, we are here today, as females in a traditionally male dominated field. We are 2915G.



Our team consists of a majority of females. We are Girl Powered. We have designated roles that work only as guideline, this ensures at least one person has in-depth knowledge in a specific area such as programming or driving. However, we are definitely not shy when it comes to mixing things up, helping each other in our roles and working together to be our best. No one is confined to their role just as we hope no one feels confined by their gender, background, or any other aspect of themselves. We try our hardest to be inclusive of all, because when you're the only girls in a large room full of boys and men, we've experienced first hand that it isn't easy to fit in when you're primarily very different.

However, these differences we've come to learn can be used to our advantage.

When one person is stuck on a problem, another team member can usually provide some unique insight from a different perspective, and together this is how we work best.

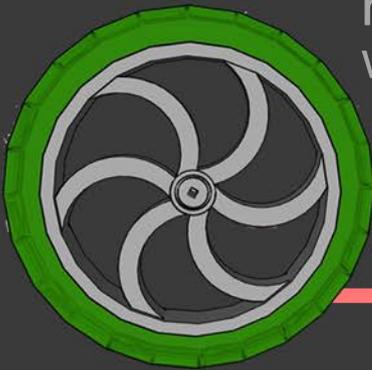


# 2915G

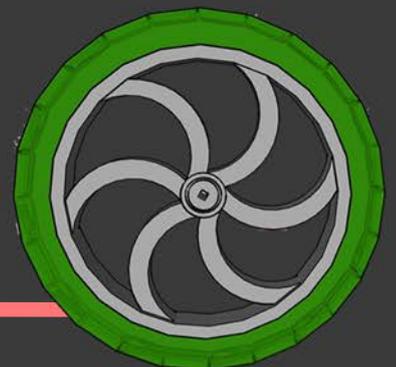
On the outside we are a young, female dominated team who are newbies in the world of Vex Robotics. At our very first (Turning Point) scrimmage a team laughed when they saw our robot. Despite this, we showed up to the next scrimmage, and the next, and the next, with no loss of heart towards Vex Robotics, and with the motivation to improve our



robot. In our experience, Vex is not very welcoming of new, less experienced members. One of our hopes by being active members in our robotics community, and by being an all inclusive team is to close this gap.



Another one of our hopes is to crush the stereotypes regarding girls in STEM. When you think of girls in STEM, you think of females who are tangled in a male dominated field. You likely think of the rather boyish girls; the ones with shorter hair, the ones who don't use makeup, the ones who are into less traditionally feminine things. However, as a female interested in STEM I do not like to endorse these stereotypes. I do not want for younger girls to think that to be interested in STEM they have to be any less feminine than they already are, or that they need to change to fit in. I enjoy wearing skirts and dresses, but I also enjoy building robots, maybe even at the same time. I think that it's important that these stereotypes are crushed so that Vex Robotics and STEM alike can be more inclusive.



In scrimmages we've all observed the blatant male dominance of Vex Robotics, and as females we feel we should be advocates for other girls in these male dominated pathways.

At a showcase of our school, as a team leader I had the privilege of helping to display Vex Robotics to prospective students. I felt proud to be representing not only our school, but all females who have chosen STEM pathways. When the students showed interest in the robots— male and female alike, I felt triumphant knowing the impression I could be making on their futures. I felt like I was doing justice to the females in the past who have shaped my— our present; one of these women who immediately comes to mind is Kate Sheppard. As a team of proud Kiwis we've learnt all about her efforts towards fighting for women's voting rights in parliamentary elections. Her team worked for years before they were able to present a petition to the Parliament, making New Zealand the first country in the world to give women the right to vote. She inspires us in Vex Robotics not to give up, even when it feels like we're fighting a losing battle.



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Another role model is our robotics group teacher/leader/coordinator, Mr Craig Yearbury.

Throughout our time being involved in Vex Robotics, he has always encouraged us to work to our full potential, not seeing gender as any boundary. Without his suggestion, we would not be writing this right now.

His enthusiasm for STEM and Vex Robotics continues to inspire us, motivates us to always work hard and power forward, and embrace the fact that we are a Girl Powered team.

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## CREDITS

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