



Our Journey

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Team 824K

Indigo Dynamics

Armijo High School

How we started

In early September, our teacher, Ms. Dianne Halsey, called all the girls in the entire class up to her desk which added up to measly four. We didn't know each other and had no idea why we were getting called up.

She gave us the task of creating a all girl powered robot and possibly competing in competitions. The next day, we stayed in a separate room that was attached to the classroom and we were given a instruction manual and a plastic 64 quart sized container filled with various metal parts. We didn't know what to do with them as none of us had ever built anything. We had help from a female mentor from the robotics club and got to work.



Isolation

When we have meetings in the robotics room alongside the other teams we've noticed that our group is the only group of all girls. Infact, there are only a handful of other girls that are there.

There's always a lot of pressure to succeed in this setting since we're the only group of all girls. It feels like if we fail then suddenly we're not capable, especially since we're new to this whole experience of robotics.

Even though it's tough, it's helped us strive to be better.





Classroom

Our team of all girls participates in an engineering class at our school. The four of us have worked together to build a robot to participate in VEX competitions. However, the four of us are the only girls in the entire class.

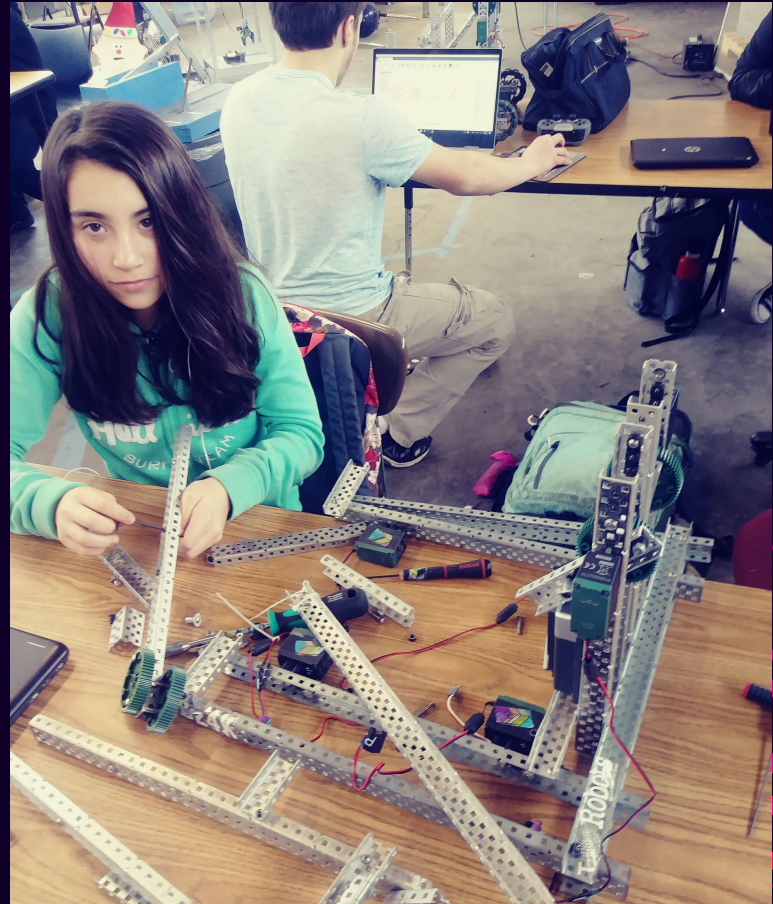
All of us know that the amount of women in STEM occupations is less than the number of men and it's more that a little bit intimidating. However, it's also helped us get closer since we're always together working on our robot.

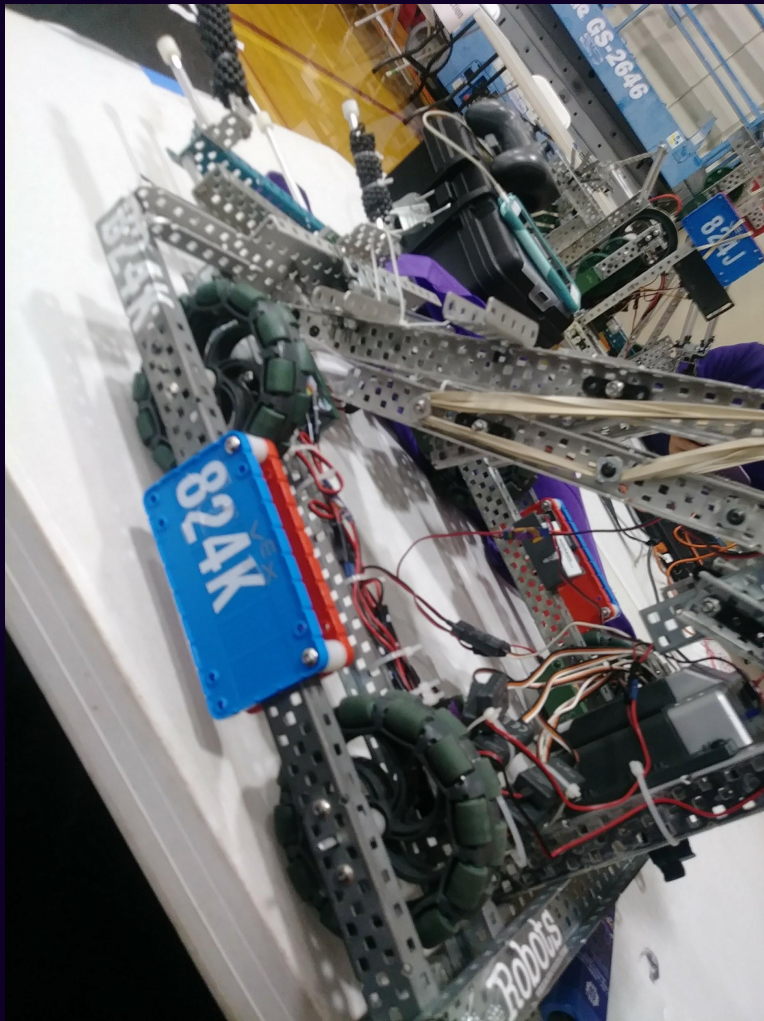
Building

When we started getting further into the building process of our competition bot, we ran into many problems. Many of them required us to turn to our male counterparts for help. Not only was there the looming fact that men are most commonly seen in STEM fields, but there was also the fact that they were more experienced than us in robotics.

Long story short, it was incredibly intimidating.

Despite all of the setbacks and complications that we had, we were still able to finish our robot on time for our first competition.





1st competition

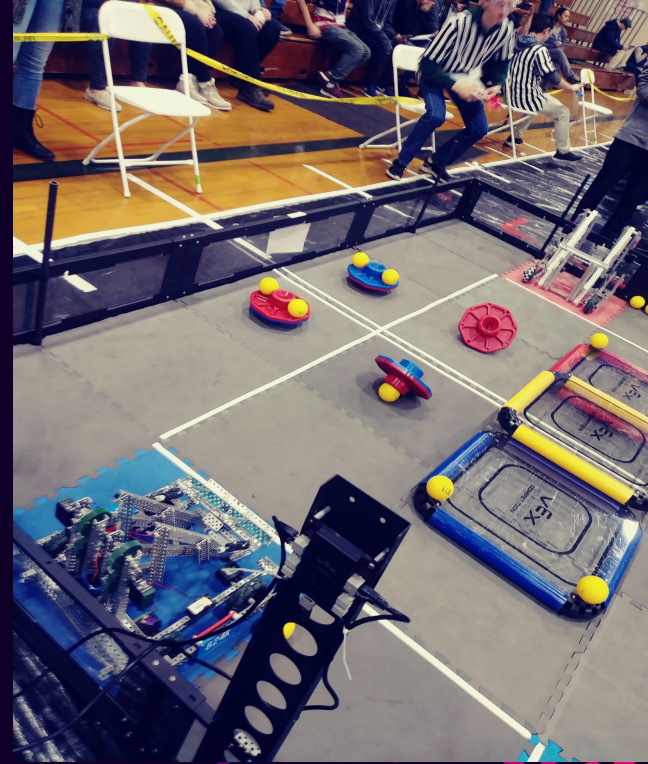
Our first competition was a hard to adjust to since we were still new to the whole experience. Our robot ended up breaking down several times and we couldn't figure out what was wrong. One of the other girls in our school's robotics program helped us out a lot.

However, since our robot continuously broke down it felt like we were letting our allies down. Once again, we felt inferior because of the fact that the people we were supposed to be working with had to pick up our slack since our robot wasn't working. It was incredible frustrating for everyone.

2nd Competition

The day of our second competition, only one teammate was able to attend. the entire week leading up to the event, she had to learn how to drive the robot as she knew that she'd be going to the event alone.

At the competition, she was paired up with the little sister of another team member. The competition was a success and we ended up finishing in 13th place. We also made it to the top 8 after taking pride in our role as underdogs and defeating the 9th and 11th ranked teams in the Quarterfinals.





What's next?

A couple of the people on our team have decided that they want to continue doing robotics. They will be moving to the next class offered at our school called Principles of Engineering which offers 3 college credits. We hope to do that next year. Even if we aren't in the same class we will always have this strong friendship and the memories from our first year of robotics together.

Conclusion

Through the months that the four of us have worked together, we've grown closer through our struggles and learned just how hard it is to be the underdogs. We're all glad to have been together through the good times and the bad.



Credits

Team 824K from Armijo High School

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