
Team 2014R – Teamwork is Everything!

When we hear the phrase “Girl Powered” we think about how girls and boys can change the world. We can show that we are strong and that we never give up. In robotics you can’t give up and your team is there to support you and help you succeed.

The boys in our team thought that Girl Powered was just about girls and felt a bit excluded from this but now they understand that it really means that everyone is included. This is reflected in our team’s approach to robotics because during practice we make sure that everyone has the same amount of practice time and we all listen to each other’s ideas.

Last year, the three boys on our team (Dmitri M., Dmitri V. and Alex) welcomed two of us girls (Nadia and Monika) to their team and this year, we welcomed two more kids (Rohan and Maya) from other teams to our team. Our team has increased by two friends and our hard work has paid off. Now our team has four boys and three girls and is very diverse and we work very well together. We are always looking out for each other and making sure that everyone is being included and every time we have a practice, each family takes turns bringing dinner so no one is hungry!



We always listen to each other and treat each other equally. For example, when Alex and Rohan started to build the robot and Monika wanted to help they were happy to have her help so she built the robot with the boys.

Originally, we had team roles like builder, driver, etc. but in the end we decided to try everything in case someone was not there. It helped us prepare for that. For example, Dmitri V. tried doing strategy and it worked out pretty well. Next he tried programming. It was more interesting but it was harder for him. He learned that not everything is made for you, and some things can be hard but to never give up. Dmitri M. tried building and programming but decided STEM was the best part for him. So Dmitri M. is the leader of our STEM project and he stayed up until 11:00 one night to find us a good topic! Monika is one of our designer/builders and she learned that when you try to build a robot you won’t get it correct the first time. Each practice you have to try something new and see if the team is ready to get comfortable with the robot. Maya took on programming and learned that she has to keep trying to make the robot move correctly.



Everyone has a role on our team and a purpose. We decided at the beginning that we would pick the roles we liked best but that we would try different roles as well. For example, Nadia is responsible for the engineering notebook but everyone reviews and adds to it each time we meet. We learned that our notes in the engineering notebook have to be very neat and we have to make sure that every sentence makes sense. Our engineering notebook shows how dedicated our team is by coming to each practice and taking their time off their weekends to go to tournaments. Our team is amazing when we work together, girls and boys - we are all treated as equals!

We definitely have many perspectives and this helps with the robot design because with more suggestions it improved! The robot is easier to drive and is better for picking up hubs. Each of us wants the robot to be good from everyone's perspective because if everyone likes the design of the robot, then our chances of winning go up. With so many perspectives, our team chemistry is great because when things become stressful we work it out and try to stay as positive as possible! As a team, we learned how to strategize and communicate well with other teams too.

Our STEM role model is Dmitri M. because he really is inspired by STEM and took the lead in this even though STEM is not required this year. He encourages everyone, and best of all, he has a great sense of humor! He taught us about how math and shapes work together in great detail and we really appreciate him. We are also inspired by Marie Curie who was very smart and creative. Marie Curie had many obstacles in her life but each time she didn't give up and went on to win two Nobel Prizes! She inspires us to never give up and to try harder.

In conclusion, everyone is special, our team is amazing when we work together, girls and boys, and we are all unique but we are also the same in many ways!



Credits

Entrant names: Dmitri Varaksina Anand, Alex Hall, Nadia Kanakis, Dmitri Menchtchikov, Maya Nakamura, Monika Tekic, Rohan Yadavalli; Team 2014R, Sandpiper Scorpions; Title: Team 2014R – Teamwork is Everything!