



Together We Rise

The beginning of a **Girl**  **Powered** world





“Women don’t belong in STEM”

“STEM is going to stay mostly run by men anyways”

“Just stick to liberal arts”

“That’s not a toy for girls”

Ever since the beginning of humanity, women haven’t been encouraged or given the roles of building and discovering in our world. We’re met with the same remarks and same treatment, no matter what career we decide to pursue, but it’s always more prevalent in engineering careers. **It’s time for change.**



A rough start (or was it?)

I stepped into the engineering lab. It was our first meeting.

My mind was a wreck of anxiety, I was afraid. I was afraid that I wouldn't provide enough to the team. I was afraid I wouldn't be needed by the team because everyone else would be more capable, more than anything I could achieve. I was afraid that I would be looked down upon for my abilities because I'm a woman, to begin with. But it didn't take me long to realize that there was no logical reason to be afraid to join this amazing VEX community anymore. I realized how welcoming everyone here was on the first day and how supportive they are of each other as team, men and women alike. STEM is not a field concerned with widening the gap between the achievements of men and women anymore, but is rather concerned with unifying accomplishments altogether, all reflected in my minute community: team 1356B at Parkview High School.





Changing the world with one, diverse team

1356B

A dark blue silhouette of a world map is centered on the slide. A small, light blue rectangular callout box with a downward-pointing arrow is positioned over North America, containing the text '1356B'.



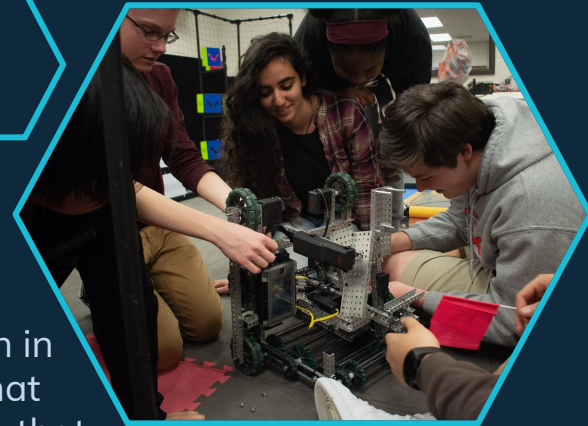
What it really means to be **girl** **powered**

Let's start with the basics



Forming the balance

Girl powered doesn't mean removing the input of men in STEM related fields; it's about removing the stigma that women can't be in STEM fields and enabling the truth that they can also be technological leaders in our world. The meaning of girl powered is lucid through us girls taking a lot more initiative in what we want out of the robot. We have a plan in STEM and we're not afraid to pursue to it. Our team has made an extremely welcoming environment for everyone to join VEX. We never mentioned or believed in separating roles based on gender. It's clear to ourselves and everyone else that we base our decisions on logic, reasoning, and ability, regardless if the input comes from a male or a female.



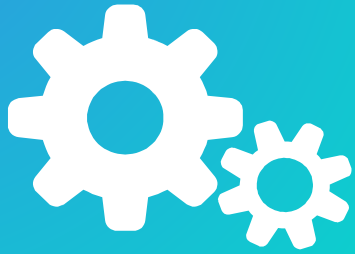


Our hardworking advisor, Ms. Camelia Calvert

Look around

At a quick glance, it's hard to see many women in power being CEOs of tech companies or any women working hard in STEM fields. For one, the statistics are stacked against us. Women only make up 5% of the CEOs in the world and only around 25% of the people in the STEM workforce. Take a look closer. It's evident that women are working as hard as ever to reach these positions. I've seen it with my amazing TSA/VEX advisor Ms. Camelia Calvert and all of the other diligent girls I work with in VEX. We never stop encouraging each other and inspiring each other to be the best we can. It all begins with building a robot, to striving for world changing ideas we create in our future and changing those odds of our success.





Diversity?

It's easier than you think





The VEX melting pot

When you look at our team, you don't see only one race, or only one gender. You see 6 main important roles we each have mixed together into an engaging melting pot. No one has ever, is ever, or will ever be placed on a pedestal above other students. Everyone has each other in their best interest because we all function as one VEX family who supports and raises each other up. We love to ensure that every student's voice is heard and recognized in the engineering process. It's about nurturing the growth of a team through group accomplishments, especially by ignoring whether it was a girl or boy who contributed.





How many roles did you say there were?

Our roles are always changing in order to allow for everyone to have a full robotics and engineering experience. Though our co-captains, Aidan Mitchell and Jacob Hinson lead us through designing our robot, we are also able to take on leadership roles on our team. For instance, Kidus Hailu, Jaron Sheffield, Zayd Avant, and I are in charge of documenting everything about the robot into the notebook, whether it's a new build or an idea anyone in our team has. Aidan is our head programmer and builder, always coming up with great solutions to any incoming problems, with the help of our driving coach and builder, Anthony Nguyen, and our main driver, Jacob. John Reed and Justin Turnbow also like to help with building and programming the robot. Husna Merchant helps a lot with scouting during tournaments. Though we gravitate towards certain roles, we are always mixing it up to try other roles to help with the robot design. No one ever feels or will ever have to feel left out because there's an important place for everyone on our team. However, we always share one role: To always support each other.

Roles
Co-captain
Programming
Driving
Notebook
Building
Scouting



VEX=Family

Building up the robot while building up our
relationships with each other



It's our differences that bring us together



Everyone has personalities of their own in which allows for a learning experience that is a fair representation of the diverse, real world. Learning to integrate and accept other regardless of gender allows us to for stronger bonds with each other and work much better as a group to produce our common goal: the robot.





Girl Powered

It's time for us to begin a Girl
Powered world

I don't know what I would be without VEX robotics, without the encouragement of Girl Powered to empower myself as a STEM passionate female, without my amazing team, and I am deeply grateful. I have been inspired to apply to be a co-captain next year, to work harder on the robot, and form an astronomy club from my STEM interests. Everyone should have the right to join and lead our increasingly STEM fueled world, no matter their gender. Seeing how women have positively impacted our world when given the opportunities only pushes us more to empower women in engineering and all other workplaces. Together, men and women alike, we rise up to solve every problem that comes our way.





Thank you!

“If women understood and exercised their power they could remake the world.”-*Emily Taft Douglas*





Credits: Together We Rise

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