48327W

Girl Powered

online challenge

❀ The Team ❀

Paris Jorja James Chiara

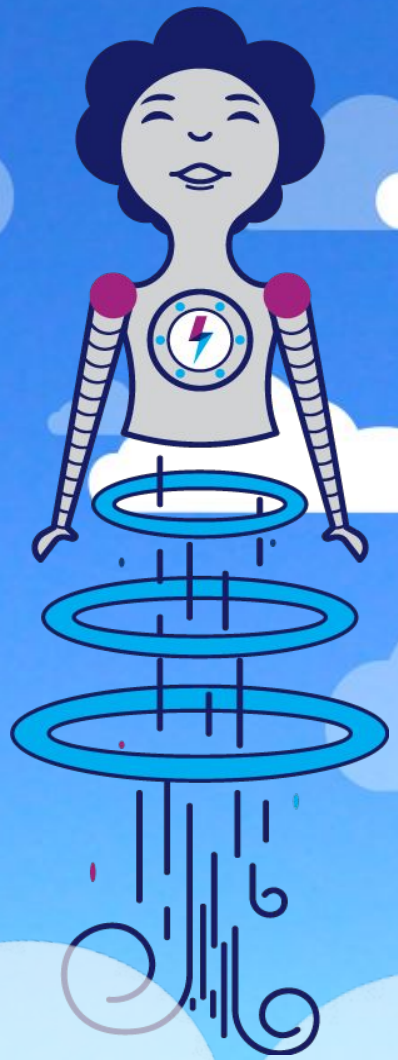
To our team, “Girl Powered” is a very important phrase. The first thing that comes to mind is the growing diversity in the robotics community with more women and underrepresented minorities engaging in STEM fields. Having a message such as Girl Powered in a male dominated industry can make a positive difference by encouraging *everyone* to explore the STEM world, no matter their identity.

“ Science is not a boy's game, it's not a girl's game. It's everyone's game. It's about where we are and where we're going.” -- *Nichelle Nichols*, former NASA Ambassador and Star Trek actress.

Girl Powered!

During VEX competitions, our team is very open to helping, taking advice and talking with other teams which reflects our thoughts about Girl Powered; that it's about being inclusive.

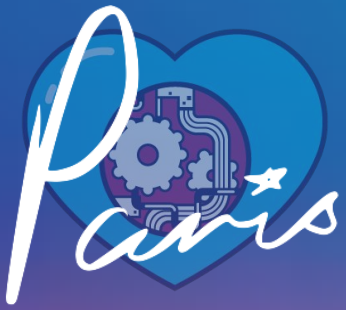
Girl Powered!



To take initiative and create a more inclusive environment that attracts a diverse group of students, our team has been to multiple local primary schools and presented to students from years 3-6. We told them what VEX is all about and encouraged them to participate. We also communicate and help teams that are having trouble during competitions.

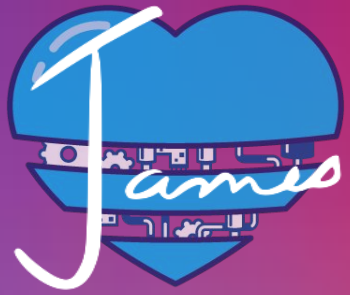
Our Teamwork

Each member of our team is extremely diverse and unique with our own experiences and interests. Our individual skills and roles help the team become better because we can all learn from each other. There are times our different perspectives can cause disagreements, especially when planning and coming up with solutions, but we all have a growth mindset which lets us make a decision based on what we think is best. When planning and coming up with solutions for anything, our different perspectives allow us to explore different outcomes which guarantees improvement with the robot and the team.

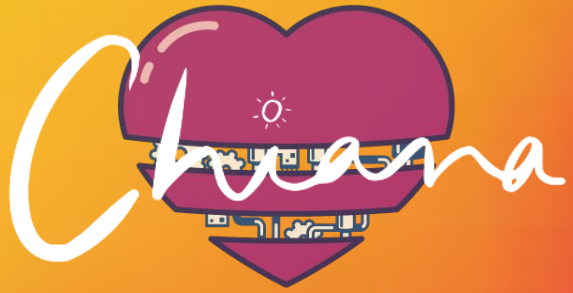


This is my first year of VEX robotics, and I didn't know a lot about robotics before I joined VEX but I joined with the intention of learning. At the beginning, I didn't really want to do programming because Jorja was doing it and I wasn't really good at it. Then I tried driving the robot and I liked it; James is the other driver. I also built a little bit at the start, because James is the main builder and driver.

This season was my first season. I started the season by trying out the different roles in VEX. First I tried designing the robot, I wasn't very good at this because I couldn't do neat, detailed designs. Then I tried building, I wasn't the best at this because I didn't have the ideas and knowledge to build a strong, stable robot. I also tried driving the robot but I nearly drove it off the field. After that I tried programming and found out that I was okay at it. To become better, I watched youtube videos since this year was the first time our VEX program had IQ teams.



When I was around 6 or 7 I saw mini robots playing soccer and the fastest walking robot on TV and ever since then I've had an interest in robots (I even want to become an engineer). That is why as soon as I saw a poster about VEX I wanted to join. This season, I mainly designed, built and drove the robot. I also tried coding for a bit but Jorja does nearly all of it. I think our team has great chemistry because we all like similar things.



I've lived in many countries and been to many schools which showed me that humans, without realising, use and need STEM on a daily basis. This (including the fact that I've had experience with Lego Mindstorms) made me interested in engineering, designing and math which is why I want to have a job in the STEM field in the future, so when James told me about VEX I immediately became interested and signed up even though I was nervous because I didn't know much. Starting VEX, I was most interested in designing and logbooking but I tried all the roles to see what I did best. During the first month I found out building and driving were not my 'thing' (but I am a backup driver) and Jorja does most of the programming so I sketch designs, organise the logbook, charge the batteries during competitions and help out anywhere else possible.

Our STEM role model is ***Madalynn Baumanis***, a Galen VEX mentor. She has always supported our team and given us advice on how to do better. She inspires us because of how passionate she is about everything that she does, including Girl Powered.

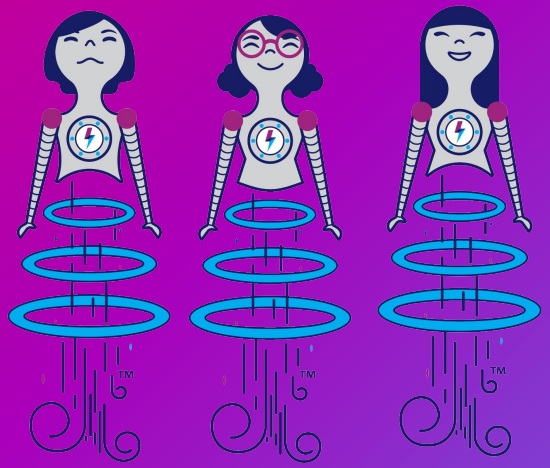
Maddy has mentored us throughout our first year, including helping us set up our logbook and helping us learn about trigonometry for our STEM project. She's also volunteered to be a judge in local scrimmages and was able to use her knowledge earned from these events to give us 'mock interviews' before Nationals. Maddy's always ready to help.

Maddy was the Captain of team **48327M** that went to Worlds in 2018. She connected with EDR teams from all over the world which helped lead the team to win the **Service Award** which is nominated by other teams.

She impressed VEX officials at Worlds that she was invited to represent Galen VEX at the World Skills in Sydney, the first time VEX had ever been to this event in Australia. She played a major role at the VEX exhibition, by being in charge of the demo field, introducing VEX to politicians, teachers, students and families, beng great female role model as well as promoting VEX.

When Maddy went to Worlds she was able to experience the Girl Powered event and really enjoyed it. Inspired, she wondered if there was a similar event at the Australian Nationals. There originally wasn't, but after Maddy's suggestion they planned an interview, stall and short program featuring Maddy and a few other girls in the STEM area.

We think Maddy is an amazing Girl Powered role model and she inspires us to be a more inclusive team. Our team wants there to be equal opportunities for everyone because if we were able to participate in STEM activities, so should everyone.



“For Equal Opportunities”

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