

VEX IQ Team 4270C  
The Crusaders  
Saint Louis School, Honolulu, Hawaii

“Do The Math, Save The World.”

The late Mark Leon, a NASA Civil Servant, helped introduce robotics to Hawai'i. He is an inspiration to us and many. Hello, my name is Sully and we are Team 4270, located in Honolulu, Hawaii, and our goal is to use robotics to help our community. We are a Catholic all-boys' school, Saint Louis School. Including being an all-boys' team, we are also a Marianist school. We profoundly believe in God and his Mother, Mary. We strive to keep Mother Mary, the ultimate example of Girl Powered, at the forefront of our team's mission. Mary has shown me, personally, to be kind to others as we are all different and unique. Mary showed determination when she accepted Jesus as her son. The Angel Gabriel came to Mary and said that she would have the son of God. Back then, she would have been ridiculed for having a kid before marriage but she was brave and believed in her faith. In our eyes, we believe Mary has represented determination and continues to empower our team to give back to our community when we can. Mary is full of grace and teaches us to have faith in one another.

On our robotics team, we all have different roles on the team and our team is proud to have diverse perspectives in order to solve problems. Diversity of perspectives is important to have because we aim to have different opinions. Throughout the season, we have different ideas to evolve our robots. We always start off the season with different ideas, but we never choose just one to begin with. We collaborate to join two ideas or make one better. We cannot be the team we are, without diversity. Sometimes we will argue, but we always come together to get it done. When I first joined this team, I started on the logistics team. My first job on this team was to learn the game and begin to design a new robot. I was very new at robotics and soon discovered the robot you started with will never look like your finished product. I built my robot and competed at my first competition. We did not come first, but it taught me that winning is not everything. My Mentor / Coach thought that working on the STEM research would be a better fit for me and, immediately I fell in love. I love to give back to the community and that is what STEM Research is to me. I just started out by helping but I began to have a more intimate role in robotics. As I started making my first video, we chose a topic on helping our elementary brothers specifically kindergarten. We created a workshop with them to help with their addition and counting skills. They used pushbots to complete simple mazes. In our second revision, we helped our first graders. This revision led to us winning at the Hawaii State Championships. Unfortunately we did not win at the World Championship level but it showed me that winning is not everything and that without a team, you cannot do our best. We could not have gone to Worlds without each of our individual roles.

Here in Hawaii, an isolated island, we work to use robotics to bridge the gap between us and the world. Through robotics, we have traveled all over the world, including the World robotics Summit in Japan. We even scrimmaged with another all-boys school called Saint Mary's International School in Tokyo. We collaborated and shared robot ideas. We eventually met up at the World Championships. We found new brothers in Japan all because of robotics. We plan to return to Japan and hope to scrimmage and collaborate with them again. This past summer, we hosted and competed at a Signature Event tournament honoring Mark Leon called the Mark Leon Invitational. We invited teams from around the world in hopes of continuing Mark Leon's legacy. Mark Leon was a huge help in starting and sustaining robotics in Hawai'i. He was widely cited as an inspiration to many high school students to build robots and impacted many career choices of many students. We bridged a gap to many teams around the country and have traveled to the Asia-Pacific VEX IQ Championships in Seoul, South Korea for the first time. Through social media, we also met a few teams in Korea while competing. It was fun and interesting trying to communicate with them and brought a new perspective of robotics to our team. This is very important to us because of our mission, to bridge the gap between us and the world.

Robotics has bonded us all together as a team, gave us a home, and made us feel welcomed in school. If I did not join robotics, I would not have met many of my best friends. I would be playing basketball, a sport that made me stressed and worried. Because of robotics, I had the courage to express to my parents that I wanted to pursue robotics instead of basketball. Even our coach found home in robotics. She said "I would be lost without robotics," she would not know what to do. When we compete, we compete with girls and boys as well and are able to collaborate in order to get the best score. So it does not matter where people are from or who they are, we just have to be able to take the strengths from each robot and team and find a way so we can all work together to get the job done.

When I hear Girl Powered, I think of a team, a group of people working together. How we are equal in robotics, and we work together to make a great product. In our team, we show Girl Powered every day. We display it as we work and we all have different skill sets. Not one of us can do it alone; we have come this far because we work together as a team. Some people can build, program, or drive, but without everyone, we will fall. When I hear the phrase, Girl Powered, I think of a bridge between different people from different backgrounds. Nobody is alone and as a team and program we have started to bridge the gap between us and people of different places like Asia. We will continue to go to competitions, locally, nationally, and internationally, and continue to help our community to spread the message of Girl Powered. Girl Powered makes me think of how robotics is used to interact with the world. When I hear the

phrase, Girl Powered, I think of power in a community in a diverse world. No matter who we are, we are all different people and that robotics will bring us all together.