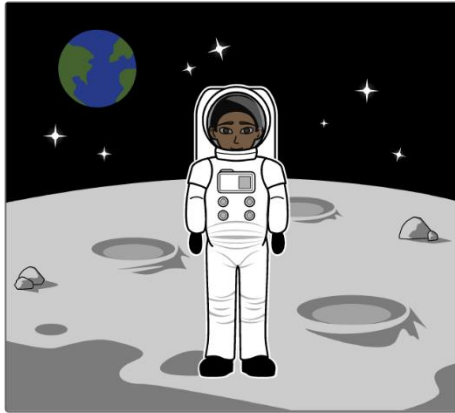


I started to be interested in science when I was about 5 or 6 years old, when my parents bought me a book about outer space.



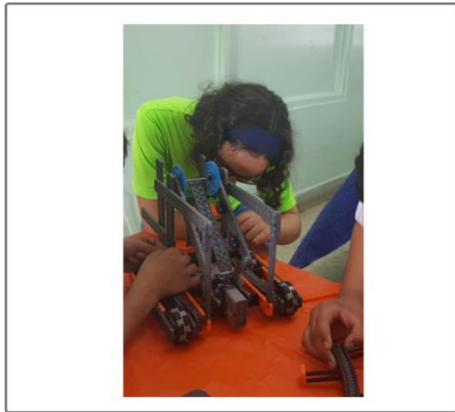
Reading this book, I learned about the different planets and constellations. Learning more about outer space and spacetravel led me to think of becoming an astronaut.



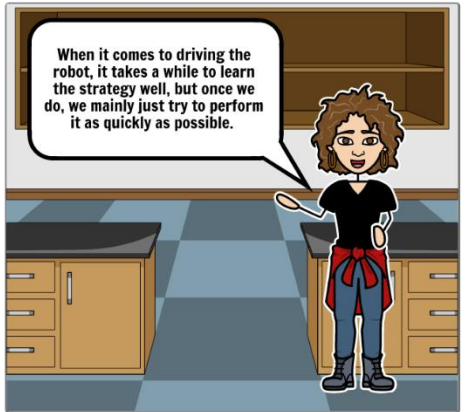
When I found out about the robotics team at my school, I got excited and decided that I wanted to join the team because I had seen a demonstration of robotics a year before at school, and I wanted to try it myself.



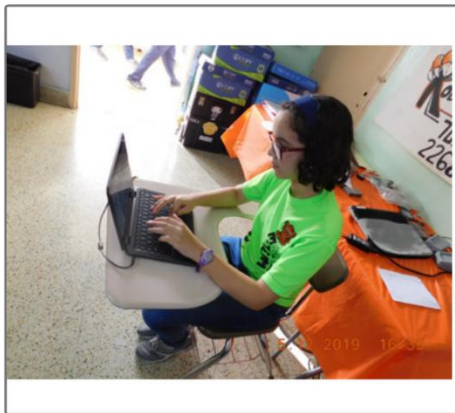
My favorite part of robotics is building and driving the robot.



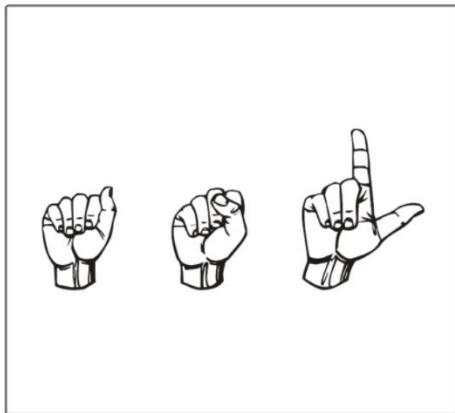
I like building the robot because building it is fun for me.



This year, for example, we are trying to perform the strategy as quickly as possible so we can try to score more points during the match.



I am also one of the official programmers of the team.



Ever since I started learning ASL (American Sign Language) last year, I have decided that I would also like to become an interpreter in the future.



I have been thinking about good ways to combine being an astronaut and being an interpreter at the same time, and maybe the experiences I learn through robotics will help me see how it is possible to do so.

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**I know about the female scientist Eileen Collins, who was the first woman to command a shuttle mission who is an inspiration for me.**

**I think that it is important to have girls involved in scientific discoveries because they can have a different point of view on certain subjects or provide different abilities or assets to the team, even though my team and we usually think up the same strategy and/or design for the robot.**

**I am the only girl in my robotics team this year. Even though I am the only girl in the team, I feel perfectly normal, since I always hang out with boys. Eric and Jan say that they feel normal, too. Ian says that he feels normal, but that he also thinks that it's good to have this kind of variety in the team, as it offers certain advantages. For example, it is easier for a girl to reach certain parts of the robot that are slightly harder for the boys to reach, since a girl's hand is usually smaller than a boy's hand. At least this is true for our team, since we measured our hands against each other and were able to see the difference.**

**I feel happy and lucky that I have the chance to be in this robotics team, where I am valued as I am. It has given me the opportunity to learn skills that I know will help me in my future.**

**Credits:**

**Arelis M. Oliveras Méndez**

**7035 A**

**Girl Powered 7035 A**