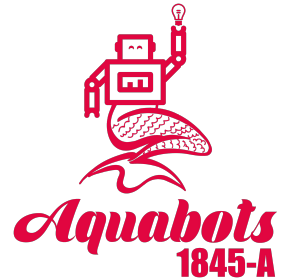


COLOR YOUR WORLD WITH GIRL POWER



By Aquabots 1845A:
a middle school Girl-Powered
team from Hattiesburg, MS





Once upon a time, there were two girls who realized how boring and dull the world could be. Until a group of engineers brought color to the world, by creating a league for younger engineers.





Once they heard about the league, now known as VEX, the two girls set off to explore what engineering really meant. As they did, they began to see a little more color.





After sitting in the darkness for a year, one of the girls joined the other girls who were involved in VEX. She added diversity to their team, because she had a different religious background and could also speak

Portuguese. As soon as she joined they saw things they didn't know were possible. Something called Girl Power was introduced to them. More color started being added to their world, little by little.

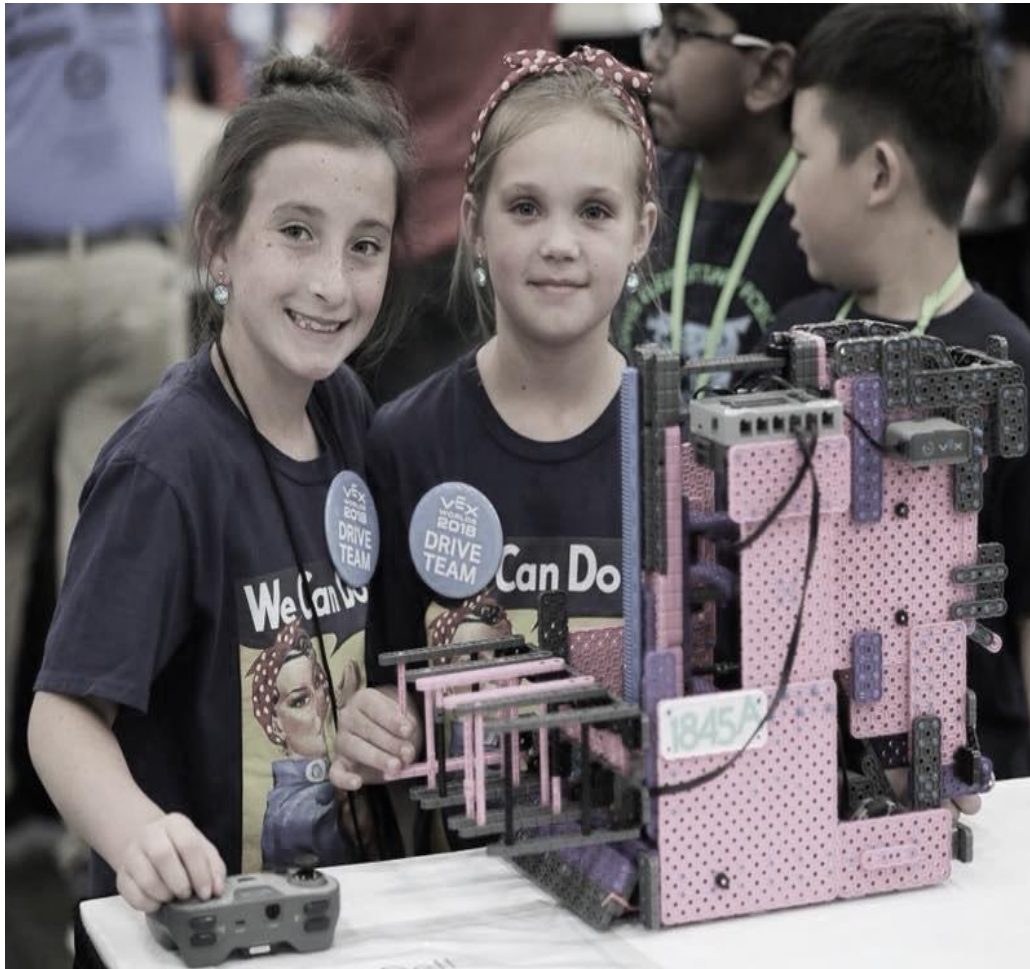


Slowly they made it further into their journey. The robot world was getting tougher and tougher to make it through, and something called the STEM competition part of robotics was introduced. The three girls admired and enjoyed it very much. The world was almost full of color . They eventually made it halfway through their journey and reached the world event, where they won the STEM Research Project Award for the Viking Division.





At Worlds the next year, they were introduced to two women they looked up to in the STEM and Girl Power world: Shaleen Smith and Makenzie Greunig. Both women work for Hexbug and VEX. Shalene, an engineer, gave them advice on how to improve their own STEM project: enrichment toys for dolphins. Shalene told them what it was like to be a female engineer. She inspired the girls and made the colors in their world more vivid by inspiring them to be more inclusive in all aspects of their lives. They continue to collaborate with boy teams too and to be accepting of everyone's ideas.



The three girls had been doing robotics for a few years. Another girl realized how colorful the world was on their side, so she started cheering them on, thinking she could never do something like that. She didn't think she had the confidence to see what robotics was all about.





Diversity and inclusivity isn't just for humans. They included the dolphins too by creating enrichment toys out of recycled robotics parts.

The robotics girls knew how powerful Girl Power was and told the girl, “Why sit back and watch us when you can join us?” They were seeing more and more **color** every day by realizing what engineering and Girl Power really meant. They wanted to fill **color** in someone else's world too.





The last girl realized what fun they were having and joined them.

There were only a few more

colors left to fill. They knew what Girl Power really meant. It meant not being afraid to ask questions, to show leadership towards younger girls, and not being afraid to speak up for what you believe. This was reflected in their team's approach to robotics. Realizing this was the key to the paintbrush tool they needed to fill

the remaining colors.





Now that all four girls have joined, they were trying to figure out how

to retrieve all **colors** of the rainbow. Then one of the girls figured it out by thinking back to one of their tournaments. When one of the Girl Powered teams was struggling with their robot, they told them, “It’s okay to struggle and we will help you.” Perseverance is the

rainbow of **colors** that paints Girl Power into the world.





Unlike many others, they DIDN'T believe that Girl Power meant that girls could do whatever boys could do. Girls and boys were designed differently for good reasons. By comparing girls to boys, this limited their capabilities. If they worked hard, the robotics girls knew they could have the potential to do some things better than boys. If they couldn't, they would encourage the boys and lift them up too. Two of the robotics girls have brothers on their brother team, the Meglabots. A part of Girl Power is lifting others up too and making everyone's **colors** shine.



Their programmer is Madelyn Courtney. Their head first driver is Mica Shemper and head second driver and strategizer is Elliot Walsh. Their head notebook editor is Ella Parish. They have tried “mixing the

colors” a little, by switching roles, but learned quickly what their strengths and weaknesses were.

They sometimes have different ideas on a robot design. When this happens they sometimes have disagreements. When this

happens, their **colors** become dull.

During a tournament, when they are under pressure, they have to find a way to work as a team in order to be successful. They have to come to an agreement and realize that without diversity and their own perspectives, the world would be boring and full of dull

colors.



They hosted their own tournament this year, as an independent organization. Instead of competing, the robotics girls decided to help other teams. They helped fix other robots. One team at the tournament was from a special needs school of diverse students. The girls noticed that the team did not complete in the skills part of the competition. The girls encouraged them to try and cheered them on. They set up a quiet room for this group so that this diverse team could have sensory tools and a not-so-stimulating environment. Diversity is the key to creating new

colors in the world.

That's our story about how we color our world with Girl Power. Don't be afraid to try new things and mix the colors a little. Now it's your turn to pick up the paint brush and color your world.





We are AquaBots 1845A and we are the wave
of the future!

Credits:

Title: **COLOR YOUR WORLD WITH GIRL POWER**

By AquaBots 1845A

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Parish, Madelyn Courtney

Photos by VEX, REC Foundation, Hexbug, and
parents of the AquaBots.

Special thanks to our friend Tyler from Hexbug, REC
Foundation, VEX Robotics, our local sponsors and to
our corporate sponsor,



and to all of the mentors and engineers
who have made the **colors** in our
world a little brighter.