

My name is Jennifer Wright, and I'm a girl in robotics." The statement sounds pretty straightforward, but it carries power with it. Competitive robotics is often looked at as a "boy's sport." I feel like I, and the members of my team, have changed that in the school of Delhi Charter.



Back when I started robotics in 2016, it was a newborn program. There had been a high school program for several years, but there had been no middle school program. At the time, I was in sixth grade. I knew nothing of robotics, but I decided to try. I still remember my first meeting, and my first team. It was me and four other girls when it started out, but that changed as the year went on. Before our first tournament, three people on my team quit. That left me and another girl with a weight meant for a full team on our shoulders. It was rough on both of us, but it taught us something. It taught us to work hard without complaining, to push through to the end, and to find the good in our situation.

Flash forward to my third year of robotics. I was an eighth grader then; a veteran in the middle school robotics program. Our sponsor had decided to start assigning team captains that year, and I became the only female captain in both of the programs, middle school *and* high school. It was a title I wore proudly, even if I was unsure of how to approach being the leader of my team. I grew into my role after time, and that year my team was among those to win their place to Worlds. There was actually a picture of my team in the local newspaper, the five of us all crying because we were so happy.



I remember one summer; I made a speech at a Girl Powered camp that our school hosted. The speech wasn't very fluid or well spoken, but I got my message across to the girls there. I spoke about how it doesn't matter if you're a girl in robotics. Girls can do just as well as boys, and possibly even better. We don't have to sit on

the sidelines, watching the boys take the lead. After my speech, after the camp, many of those young girls left wanting to join robotics at their own schools. I'm proud to say that we made an impact in our community, showing people that this was no longer a boy's sport. There are more and more girls joining Vex Robotics everyday, and soon we'll outnumber the boys. My name is Jennifer Wright, and yes, I am a girl in robotics. What do you think of me now?

