

# How STEM Changed Me

In this rise of gender equality, many frivolously use the term "girl-powered" while being unsure of exactly what the word means. Although girl-powered is based on the deeply entrenched gender inequalities of our society, it displays the revolutionary concept of women showing leadership, confidence, independence, and knowledge. Elsie Gregory MacGill, who broke through the shackles of gender stereotypes by expanding the frontier for women in aeronautics and electrical engineering, is an inspiration for women, even in the modern-day. She inspired women and embodied the true definition of girl-powered by joining the aviation industry and showing that all women are capable of being in the same playing field as males. Through my experience as a member of Overclock, I acquired the qualities that represent girl power in the modern world.

Initially, I had no interest in joining a robotics team. I was bound by my own shackles— doubts over my abilities and the preconceived notion that STEM is geared towards the male sex. I thought to myself: "Would I even be able to succeed?" After further researching about robotics, I decided to try out for the 16099 Overclock Robotics Team. Before becoming an official member, I joined their summer program, where I overcame my fears of interacting with new people and I overcame my overly



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perfectionist mindset. I took on the role of secretary during my first year of Overclock during the VEX Robotics Competition: Turning Point. It was my responsibility to manage my team's engineering notebook. Finding a balance between maintaining the engineering notebook and schoolwork was difficult and stressful, but the experience helped



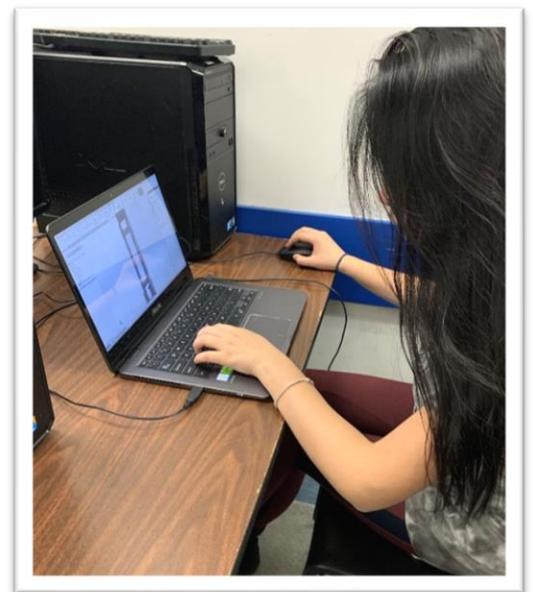
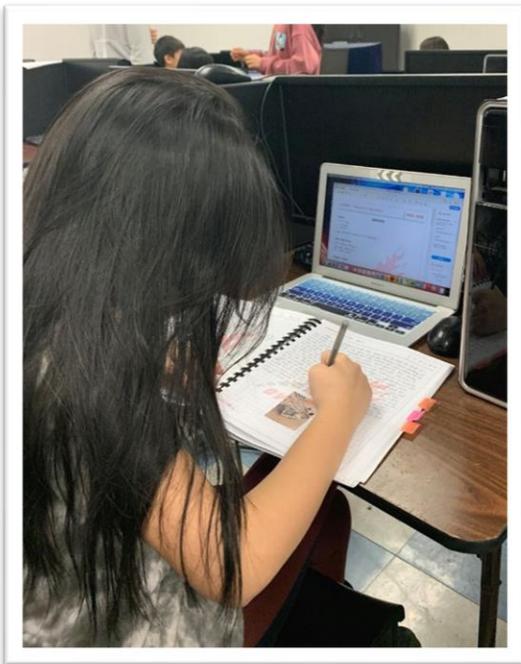
me grow as a

person while being part of the team, it taught me how to manage my time and made me prioritize what is really important to me.

Through the stress of all the competitions, we grew closer as a team and family that has each other's backs. At the end of the season, I experienced a great sense of accomplishment. The various trophies we had won, taking the Southern New York State Champions title, and competing in the VEX Worlds

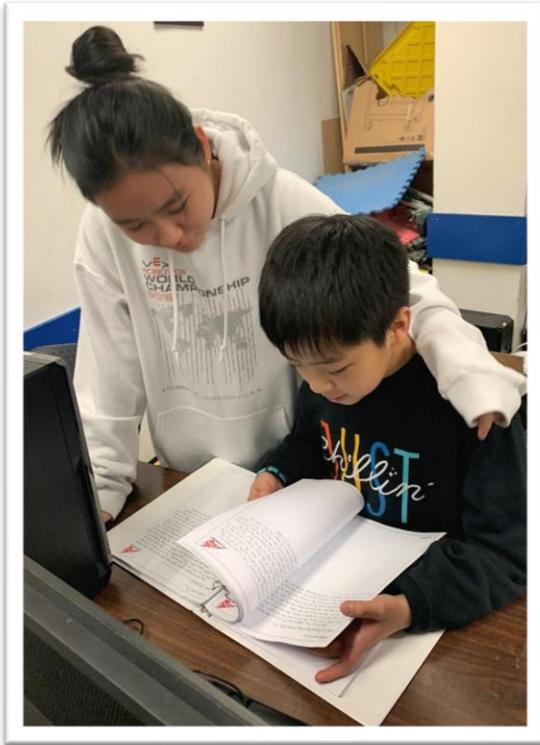
competition in April, I was proud to see the final

notebook that my team and I worked very hard on. This really showed me how even though I am in working in a predominantly male field, I, as a female, was able to contribute much to my team and became accepted in this field. The Tower Takeover season marks my second year on the robotics team, and I was honored to be selected as chief executive secretary.



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Furthermore, I have many diverse roles this year; I was inspired to sign up for driver tryouts, managed to become a back-up driver, and helped develop CAD drawings. With new members joining Overclock this year, I was looking forward to providing guidance and growing closer to them as a team while simultaneously expanding my knowledge and developing new skills.



Elsie Gregory MacGill has gone down into history as a woman who made strides for modern-day feminism. Although feminism today is far from faultless, with the combined effort of driven girls and equally capable boys, we can assemble a future in which females do not feel confined by society's gender norms and can stand the same platform as males. Girl power "is something, as microscopic in the unit as the individual, but as mighty in the sum total as an army" (MacGill). The innate collaborative aspect of Overclock and robotics in general fosters a supportive environment for everyone, even girls

to demonstrate their power. Girl power exists in me as much as it exists in everyone else, and I intend to fight for a better tomorrow through my love of robotics.

## Credits

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Girl Powered Essay