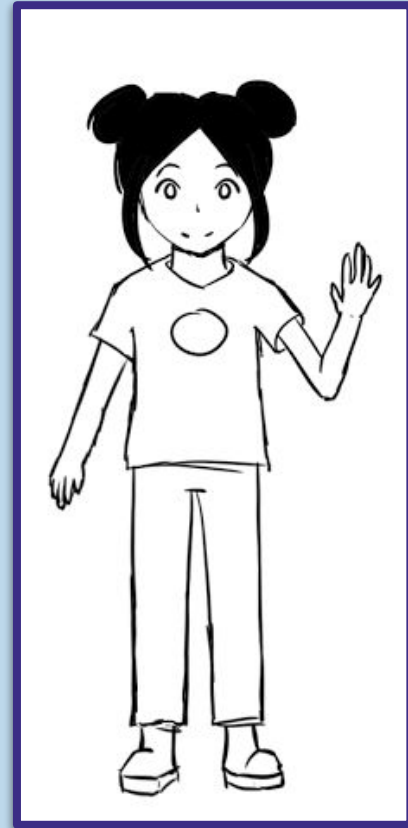




Girl Powered: A Door to
Endless Opportunities
Space Cookies VEX:
Team 1868N

Hi, my name is Lorraine, and this my story.

Ever since I was a little girl, I knew I wasn't like most of the other girls around me. While they were playing with dolls and dressing up in sparkly costumes, I was taking apart gadgets and figuring out how to put them back together. I loved to build things and try to understand how they worked. I was often seen as an oddball because of it and felt like I was on the outskirts, like I didn't quite belong.



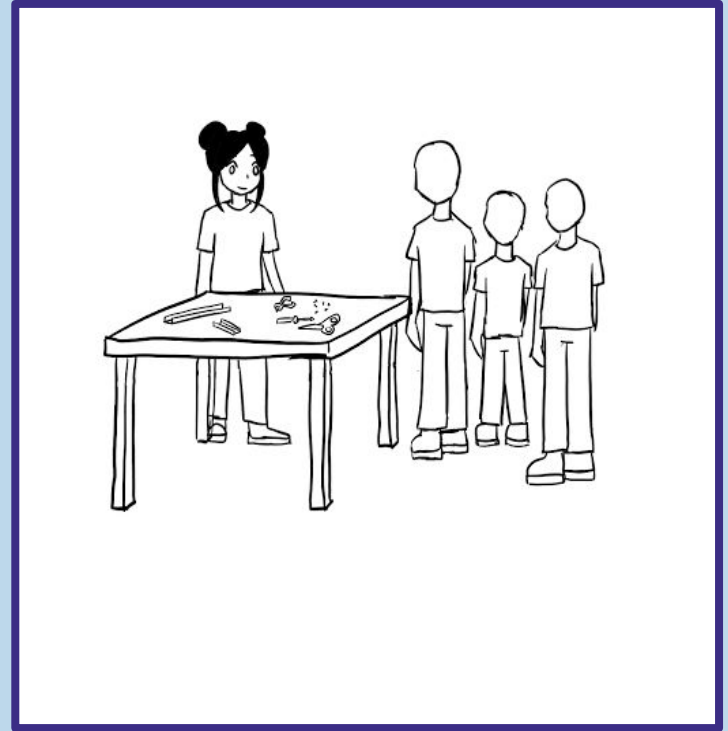
When I was in middle school, I learned about robotics and was immediately intrigued. According to everyone around me, it fit perfectly into what I already enjoyed. So, naturally, I joined my school's robotics club.

I learned about designing, building, coding, testing, and competing. It was fun! ...at first. I joined the robotics team hoping to to make friends who had the same interests as I did. It seemed that I'd had my hopes too high.



I was put onto a coed team after I joined the robotics club, but most of the other team members were boys. I didn't think this would matter since I was enjoying robotics just as much as they were.

However, even at the first few meetings I could tell the boys were purposely leaving me out of the conversation. When I offered my ideas, someone else would talk over me. I could never get my voice heard. Neither could the other girl in the club.



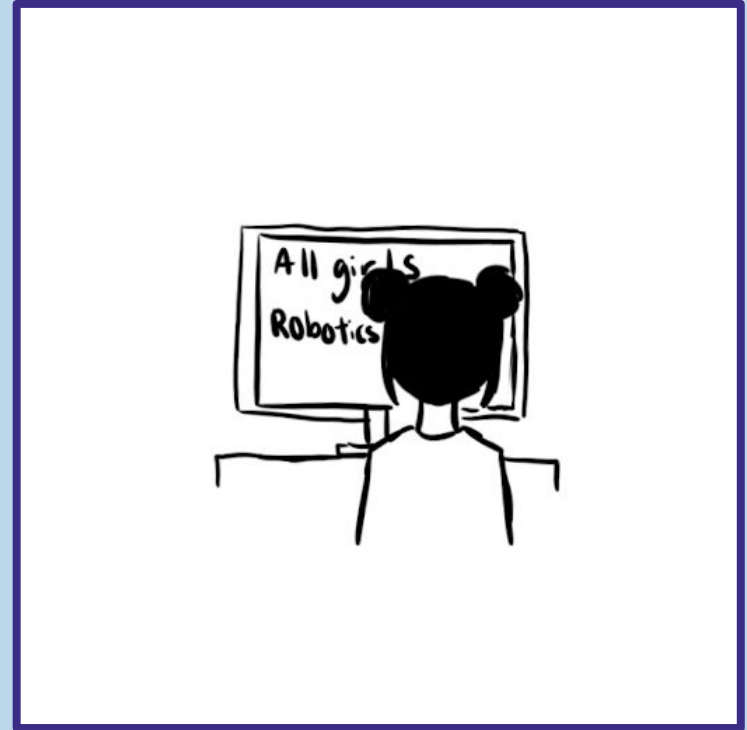
We were both very smart, having higher grades in our classes than the rest of the club members. But no matter how smart we were, our place became clear. We were expected to be followers, not leaders. If we were told to do something we would have to do it, otherwise we would be yelled at.

My desires to create, construct, and contribute were being crushed. I felt pushed to the outskirts, once again.



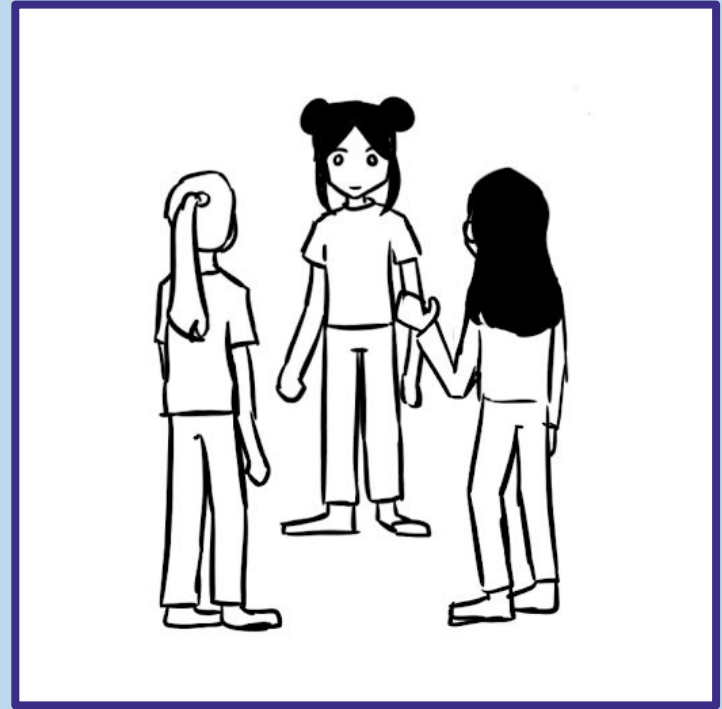
After a year of being stuck in this endless cycle, I decided it was time to move on. As a result of copious amounts of research, I came across an all-girls robotics group, Space Cookies.

I had never heard of an all-girls robotics group before, so I didn't know what to expect. Looking into it further, this team seemed to be more about supporting each other, and less about winning.



To my surprise, the experience of being on an all-girls team was completely different from my previous one. The other girls never shut down any of my ideas, and the entire environment was so positive.

They saw potential in me I never knew I had. Regardless of my lack of leadership experience, they still wanted me in the room. I was able to fully participate in making decisions and doing the work.



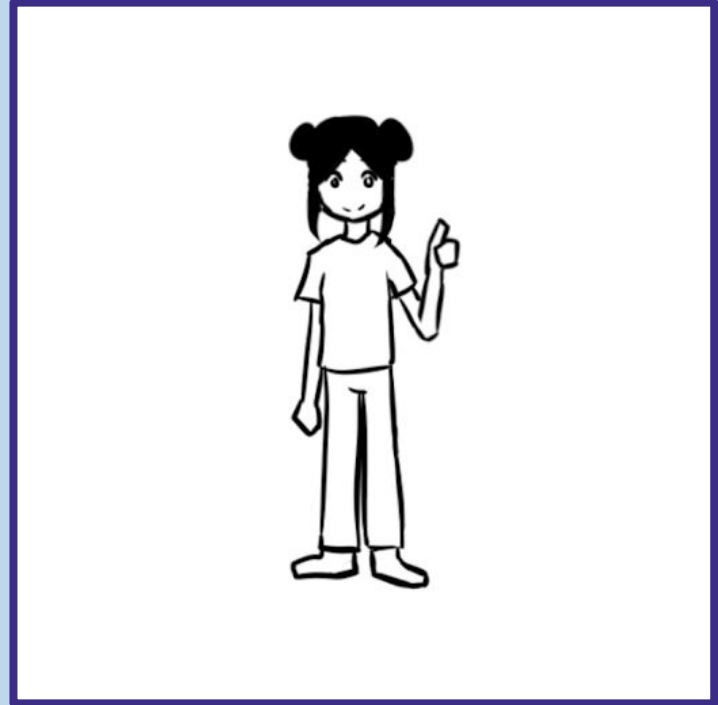
I had been constantly told that competitive robotics was for boys. They were supposed to be the ones to use all the parts, tools, computers, and joysticks, not a girl like me. However, these girls proved all of that wrong every single day.

Space Cookies made me realize how much I had lost on the coed team. I finally found a spotlight for me in the STEM world. The team I had joined was a fantastic outlook into the world of STEM for girls.



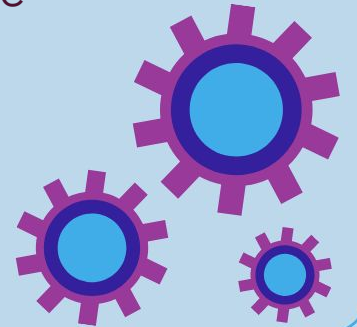
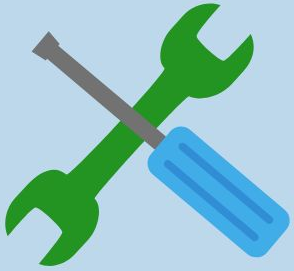
My experience as a Space Cookie has opened a door for me. I have learned so many methods and strategies, and I now believe in my potential. I don't know if I would have continued to pursue my interest in STEM without it.

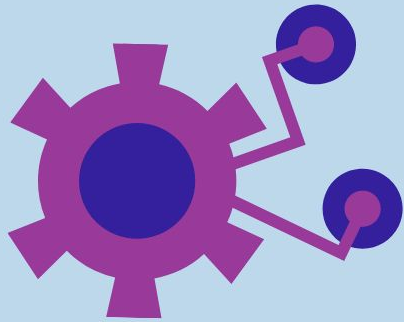
The environment of my school team made me feel nearly worthless. Here, I know I belong, and it has led me to become an intelligent, confident, and empowered girl in STEM who sees endless opportunities.



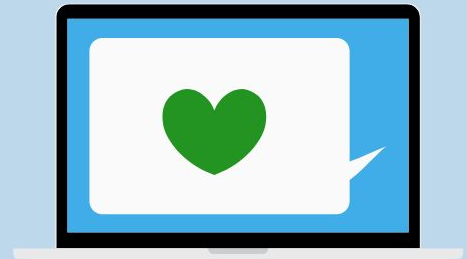
What is Girl Power?

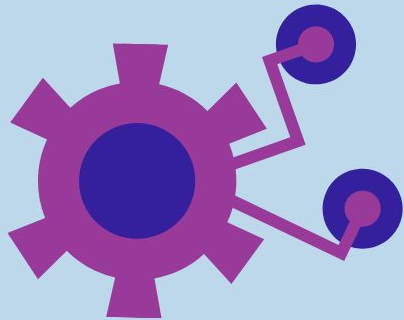
Girl Power is where we, together, take a stand to eliminate gender stereotypes and empower all of the girls and young women working and living beside us to do what they want to do, free of society's expectations and restrictions. Where we are the change that we need to see so that people of all genders and ethnicities are given equal opportunities to discover their full potential.





Thank You!





Girl Powered: A Door to Endless Opportunities

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