

Forever Feminine



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TEAM: 929D

Herford Middle

“An alarming 94.8 percent of the participants are men.”

“...females avoid robotics.”

“When it comes to gender ratio, engineering is one of the most highly imbalanced fields around.”

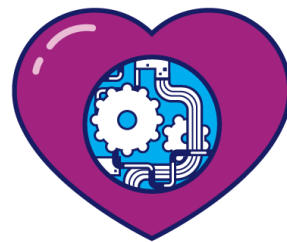
I’ve always had a dream. Equality. Between men and women. Boys and girls. All races, religions, colors. When looking at these alarming rates and hatred for women, that dream just stays a dream. The world keeps reminding me that it’s not real, it won’t ever be real. A dream will stay a dream. A figment of your hopeful imagination. Equality between men and women is my yearning dream. I wish there were no gender stereotypes and gender expectations. I wish there would be equality and unification. Nevertheless, every day the world has a way of obliging me to relinquish this absurd, improbable dream. Unfortunately, many still deem that we won’t work well in the robotics field. People will still think you’re vulnerable just because of your gender. When I joined robotics however, my world changed. We were determined to prove them wrong. I had an all-girls team. We

were all new, all determined to learn. The best part- we were a team, all in this together.

When I hear the phrase Girl-Powered I think female strength. The world is not just powered by men. We need to eradicate the idea that a woman is lesser than a man in the robotics field and in general. The phrase Girl Power motivates me to do my best and to never give up. It encourages and celebrates women empowerment, strength, and confidence. It will forever be an everlasting sign of solidarity and sisterhood. This feminist slogan however has another side to it. It also represents all the sacrifices and the constant struggle that every woman has to endure. It reminds me that not so long ago, males were deemed superior and dominant. I am disappointed by the struggle for equality between the two genders. There shouldn't even *be* a struggle for equality. Everyone should be equal. Equivalency is what I and several others long for. Girl power informs people that still today women are being discriminated. But it also supports and advocates for girls to participate in STEM. We must encourage and support girl power for our fight for egalitarianism. We must break down these flawed gender stereotypes and prove wrong. In the field of robotics, there is a big aperture between the ratio of boys to girls. (4:1) But together we can change that ratio. Ignoring the calculation, my team and I strive to change it. It has reflected my team's approach to robotics because it gives us hope. It also tells us we can do anything, and that girls can work well in the field of engineering. I remember that day where my teacher pointed at a poster in our robotics room. It showed three world champions, that learned here, just like us. They were all girls. They also had the same team name as us. From that day on I would gather my team and point at the poster. We would live up to our name. We will not go down without a fight. They inspired us to keep on going. And we did.



My team has taken to create a more inclusive environment that attracts a diverse group of students. My team and I recommend robotics to many of our friends, so that we could have more girls and more diverse people to join. In addition, we were one of the most diverse teams in robotics at our school. We were all from different schools, some of us had little experience, some of us knew nothing. When I first joined robotics, I only saw two girls from all the students there. Most had done robotics in grade school. Most were experienced, most were boys. There were so little girls. That's when I laid my eyes on a table with three other girls. Joining them, we became a team. We were new and were one of the few that assembled a new team. Having different strengths, different ideas- we combined our knowledge. We taught each other the things we knew, and in the process- learned even more. All the other teams would judge us, think we wouldn't win. After all we were just some "new girls". Little did they know we weren't just "new girls". We were persistent, shrewd, ready, new girls.



I absolutely cherish everything about robotics. Building, driving, designing, and more. Nonetheless, we all need to try different things. We all wanted specific roles. Roles that were perfect for us. Little did we know nothing can be utterly perfect! Instead of each having a role, we shared most of them. Robotics opened my eyes to talents I thought I never had inside of me. Strengths and abilities that were buried deep in me, locked away. Robotics had the key, and I was the only one who could open it. We all learned so much and got introduced to several new things. For example, I had always abominated programming. I then gave it a chance. Turns out it was one of the greatest things I've ever tried! Programming is very useful and I'm glad I gave it a chance. If it weren't for giving this all a shot, I wouldn't have wanted to pursue several career options. We each came in wanting a specific role.

Entirely unaware we had a wonderful experience trying various roles.

**COMING TOGETHER
IS A BEGINNING.**

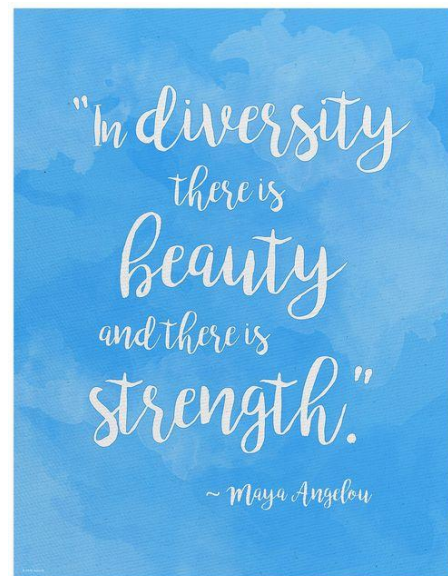
**KEEPING TOGETHER
IS PROGRESS.**

**WORKING TOGETHER IS
SUCCESS.**

I believe diversity of perspectives changes my robot designs, my team chemistry, and our ability to succeed. Diversity ensures that a team has the knowledge and abilities to successfully complete tasks. They are well organized and are very creative. Each person has different proficiencies, different minds, different comprehension. Each brain sees things from a different perspective. Imagine what a diverse team can do when combining their knowledge! Uniting their different strengths, all the while helping each other with their weaknesses. Having diverse teams means having different talents. Not just one talent that belongs to a specific ethnicity. On my team we each had our own vision, own robot designs. When we united our ideas, we came with an amazing design. Even though we were all different and all came from different places- we all had the same goal, the same name. We not only became a diverse team but a family. Without diversity our odds to succeed would be low. Strength lies in not only similarities but also our differences.



My STEM role model is Sally Ride. The first female American astronaut, a physicist, and an inspirer. She was passionate about ameliorating science education and would aid young girls. She inspired them to grow an interest in science. She worked so hard to ensure that women had the same opportunities as men. She once said, "If we want scientists and engineers in the future, we should be cultivating the girls as much as the boys." The amazing part was that she never gave up. One of her biggest struggles was gender discrimination. Many believed women were incapable of going to space. But she proved them wrong. She ignored the outrageous negativity. She shook her head no, raised her head high, and pursued her dream. By pursuing her dream, many other young women had done so too. She gave the world authentication that a woman could go to space. That a woman was not vulnerable. She was a man's equal. Multitudinous assumed that she couldn't do it. By going to space she altered those thoughts. Because of Sally Ride and several others, I believe that I could accomplish my dreams. That no matter how far the stars are, I would soon grow tall enough to reach them. Sally Ride inspires me to have a more inclusive team because by having a diverse team with different backgrounds, we will have a better chance to succeed. She showed me that we need more inclusive teams out there. More inclusive programs that don't leave any gender or race out. Sally Ride proved to everyone that a woman can do anything- anyone can do anything! She showed everyone that we need a more inclusive society. There must be equality in opportunity. No matter the gender, no matter the race, no matter the color. There is beauty in everyone.

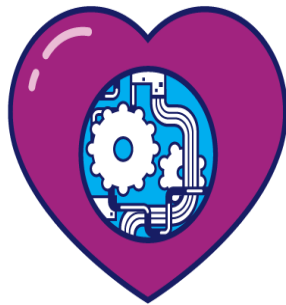


Girl⚡Powered

There will always be people who will think opposite. No matter what, don't give in. Patty Farmer once said, "Sometimes the wrong person will teach you the right lesson at the right time." Let them say what they say. But do not let them bring you down. Let it teach you a lesson that the world will sometimes be against you. But you must always get back up. Always keep persistence on your side, and never give up.



People may not see it yet. But together, we will make them see it. We can make dreams come true, together.



Citations:

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