



GENUINELY FEMININE

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Editing by Gracie Hope and Madi Wilcox
2131F

WHEN I FIRST JOINED ROBOTICS,

I stayed pretty neutral between all things masculine and feminine. It wasn't hard to fit in with guys when the majority of my wardrobe was jeans and Robotics t-shirts. Besides, it seemed that life was focused on efficiency rather than aesthetic.





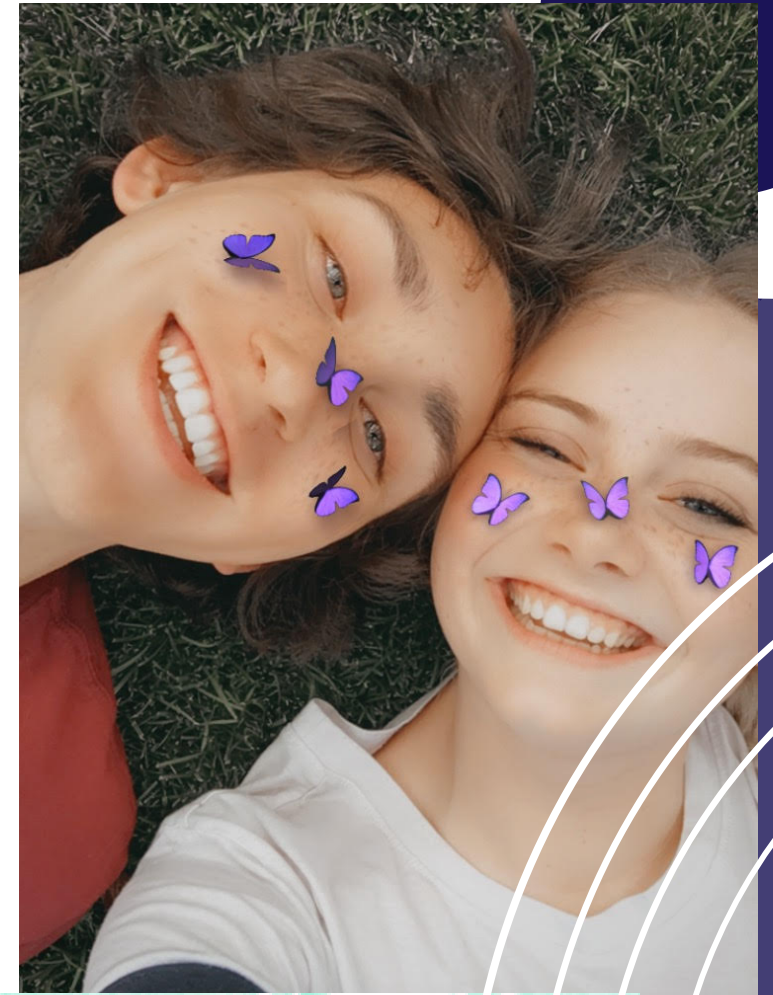
I STAYED IN MY COMFORT ZONE OF FITTING IN WITH THE MOSTLY MALE DOMINATED STEM FIELD I HAD CHOSEN.

Sooner or later, my bubble of safety was going to pop, but I didn't have any interest in confronting my inherent femininity.

**THEN CAME MY
SECOND YEAR.**

MY TEAM, AS TEAMS OFTEN DO, SHUFFLED, AND MY DRIVER SWITCHED TO A BOY NAMED TRAVIS.

We got along like a charm and it seemed I had mastered communication with him, coaching his driving early on. The only issue? Travis was well over 6'9.



I'm not particularly short, at around 5'7, but over the roar of matches, Travis had no hope of hearing my coaching unless I was looking up and yelling. Seeing as I wasn't trying to coach everyone at the competition, yelling wasn't going to work.



EITHER HE NEEDED TO SHRINK, OR I NEEDED TO GROW.



**I BOUGHT A PAIR OF
EXTREMELY TALL WEDGE
HEELS, AND ON LIFE WENT,
PRACTICING COACHING AND
DRIVING TOGETHER.**



To be honest, I didn't see what I was wearing
as any different than usual.

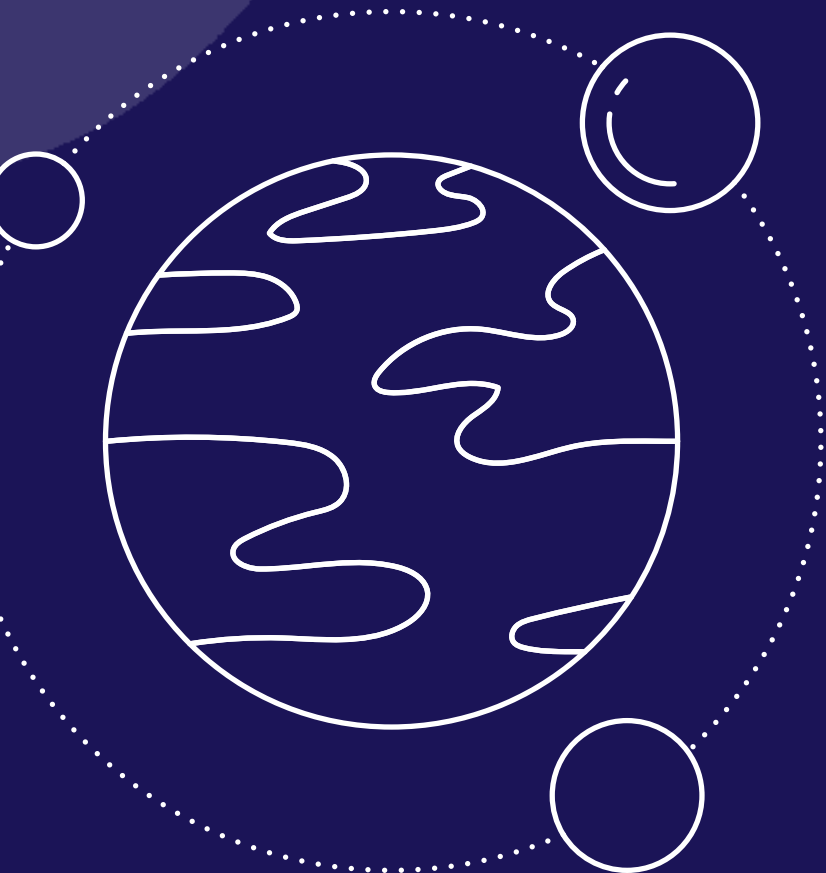
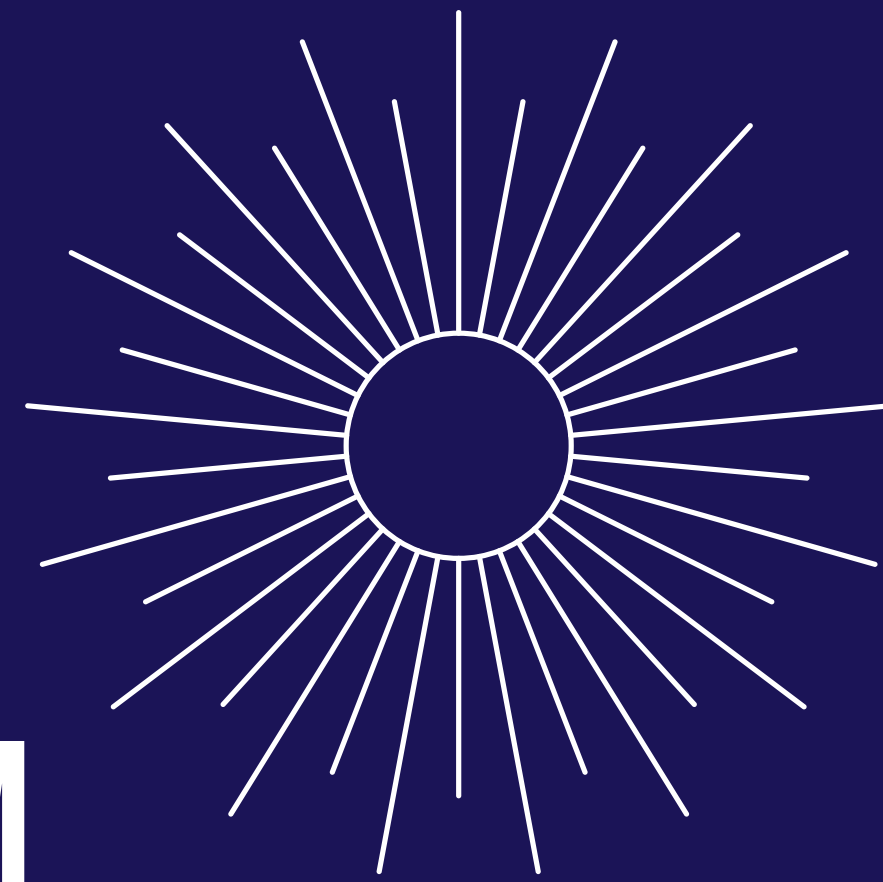
THE CULTURE IN ROBOTICS REVOLVED AROUND EFFICIENCY;

heels were situationally the most efficient
solution to the height difference. People in the
club seemed to understand the purpose of my
shoes and nobody mentioned it.

I got to my first competition with my new team setup, and suddenly people started to take notice of my shoes. People didn't always assume I was wearing heels because of the height difference between my driver and I.

I GOT COMMENTS RANGING FROM APPROVAL AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO PEOPLE TRYING TO SHAME ME FOR BEING SO OPENLY FEMININE.

Some people wouldn't take me seriously.



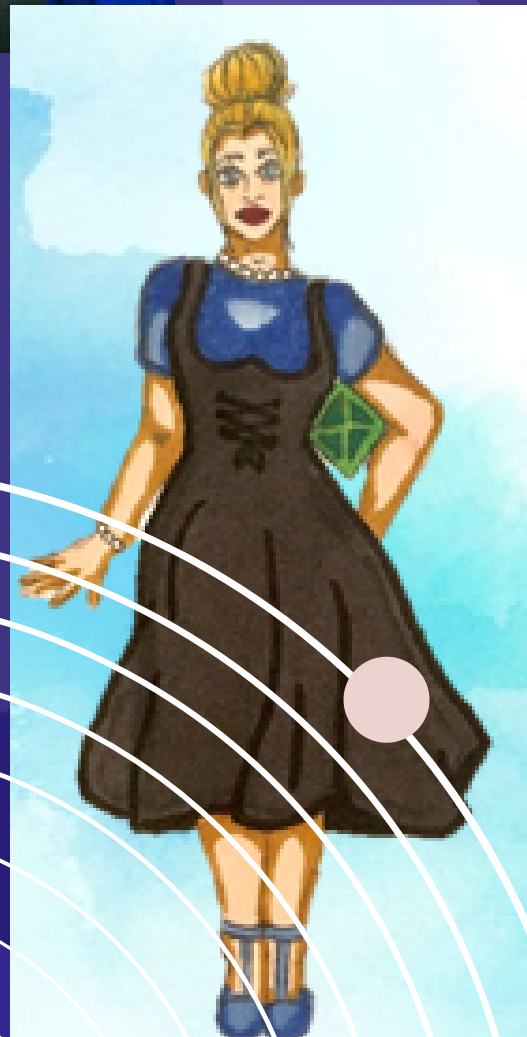
I DECIDED TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES.



- The next competition fell on the same day as the winter dance, to which I had asked my team captain.

- Given the tight timing, I would have to go straight from the competition to the dance.

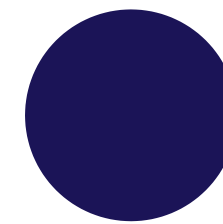
- The easiest timing was to change into my dress and put on my dance makeup before going to the competition.



MY HEELS WERE HIGH AS SKYSCRAPERS, MY LIPSTICK WAS CHERRY RED, AND MY DRESS TWIRLED FROM FIELD TO FIELD THROUGH FINALS, EARNING ME SOME STRANGE LOOKS.

**I GOT SOME OF THE SAME
COMMENTS ABOUT
WEARING SUCH FEMININE
CLOTHING AS I HAD
EXPECTED.**

This time, though, I took them with pride.



The background features a dark blue field with several concentric, light blue circles. Three light orange dots are positioned on the right side of the image, aligned vertically. The main text is centered in the upper half.

**I AM A GIRL;
I AM CAPABLE.**

The two are not, and never will be, mutually exclusive.

I will forever be grateful that I was able to reach outside of my comfort zone for one of my last competitions with Travis.

BECAUSE OF MY EXPERIENCES, MY STEM HERO IS HEDY LAMAR.



She proved to me that I can embrace femininity without losing intelligence. She made waves in the scientific community with her discoveries surrounding radio waves, yet she was a stunning and talented actress. Even today, she defies the stereotype of being "Dumb but Pretty" that girls often have to challenge when entering a stem field.

I've learned that mascara doesn't blind me to mathematic formulas,

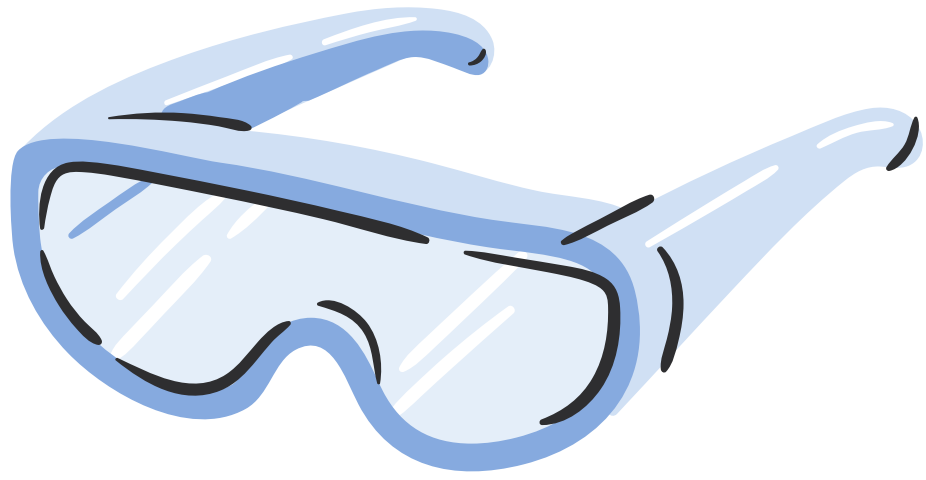
lipstick doesn't prevent me from entering scientific discussions,

and my femininity doesn't equate to inferiority.

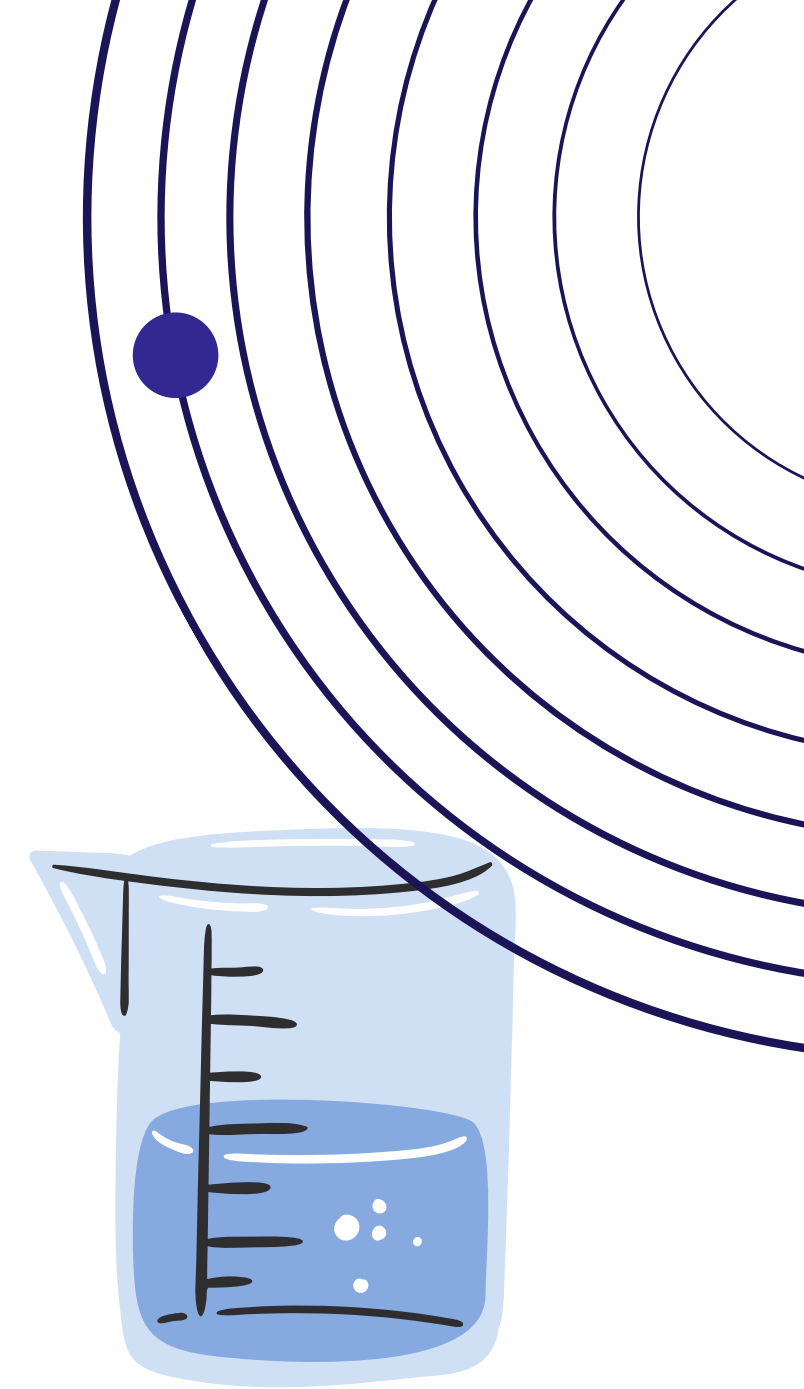
**AS TIME HAS GONE ON, I'VE NOTICED MORE GIRLS
BEING OPENLY FEMININE IN ROBOTICS, AND
NOTHING MAKES ME HAPPIER.**

THAT, TO ME, IS GIRL POWER.





WHEN MORE GIRLS ARE WILLING TO BE DIFFERENT, DIVERSITY IN IDEAS INCREASES.



By trying many different roles, girls in the Davis High Robotics club have improved the club overall. Girls often want to try more than one role, bringing new perspective to each role rather than perfecting one. This flexibility can make things like wiring and motor placement be more conducive to programming, which changes the entire dynamic of the team.



NOW, THE TEAM HAS GROWN INTO INCLUSIVITY.

● This year, F team is comprised of three girls and two boys. The diversity doesn't end with gender, though.

● Gracie, one of the members, brings a side of shyness and femininity to interviews, which perfectly balances Brad's more outgoing tone.

● Because of each member contributing their different interests and qualities, they are able to have incredibly well rounded judged interviews at competitions.

GRACIE



Gracie started by helping Brad build, but once the robot was done, she found that she was actually passionate about code! Now, she's the head coder for F team and is known for making fast autonomous routines!

CODY



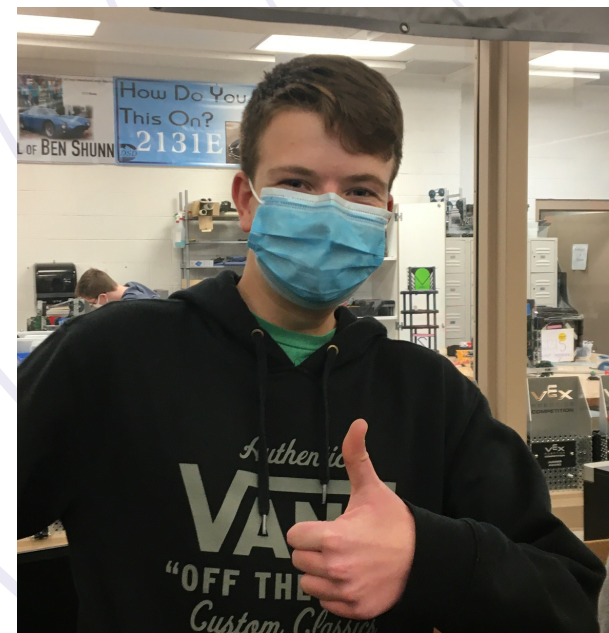
Cody and Brad were on an IQ team with Madi last year, and Cody found his niche in building! He's been able to embrace the difference between VRC and IQ, and is beginning to meet his full potential!

MADI



Originally, Madi wanted to focus on code. Because of her new team dynamic, though, she discovered that she was excellent at writing the engineering notebook, so that's her main focus!

BRAD



Despite never having driven similar machines before, Brad has practiced furiously to be the best driver he can. The passion that the team has for their roles increases team productivity to make time for his practice. By working together, we all succeed.



CREDITS

Title of submission: Genuinely Feminine
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Team 2131F