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4255 A

VEX Robotics

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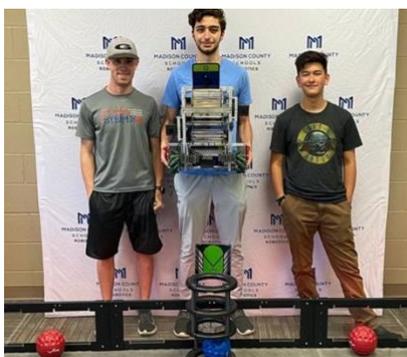
A Dream that Came True

Girl Power means so much to me. I have been a loner in many of the things I have done in my life. Starting with the mini-league basketball team when I was a small child, I was the only girl on the team, and I was always seen as the little or the weaker person. This caused me to become an introvert and I had a rough childhood because of it. Vex to me became an outlet because I love building and I also love robots.



First year team 1: This is the first 4255 team I participated in.

Starting into robotics in my first year, I discovered I had to be accountable. My team and I were newcomers who did not really know what we were doing. Shadowing our 2021 Worlds qualifying team, I was expected to become great, but I had to work to be great. I was challenged



First year team 2: Our World's qualifying team in 2020-2021 game

to accept diversity because I was so used to being the only one that was awkward and different. Overtime, I learned we are all so different which makes us so alike.



Previous teams 1: 2017-2018 team that also went to World's qualifying matches

I have a lot of outstanding and powerful role models in my community, but I want to highlight a particularly important one to me. Mr. Crawford popped into my life at the start of my sophomore year. As my coach and teacher, he has taught me to be competitive and passionate but also caring and embrace diversity. My community has changed a lot



Coach Crawford and his daughter

over the years of being in VEX. I met a lot of people who come from hugely divergent backgrounds. Mr. Crawford embraced me as the wild, passionate person I am, just like many of my peers in the program. He teaches all his students that we must take care of our community and the ones around us. He showed me this personally by holding our annual summer camp. I shadowed Mr. Crawford by being a camp guide and learning that the children younger than me love science and technology just as much as me.



One of our Summer Camp classes

Mr. Crawford shows me daily that robotics is not about winning and about the robot, but it is mostly about who is behind the scenes, who are the people who make this such a blessing, and the work worth it. My coach never makes anyone feel alone even when he may feel that way and that is something to look for in a friend, business partner, coworker, or in anybody. I always



First year team: Driving during my first year

feel welcomed at Madison Career and Technical Center even more than at my actual school. Overall, he encourages all his students to be kind, conscious, and responsible young adults and not just engineers but people who will strive for greatness and keep pushing. Hadi Obaji, a former Engineering student and a student at Ole Miss, told me in my first month of being in Mr. Crawford's

class, that there was no going back and that I would slowly but surely fall in love with robotics and building.

Coming into this year, I had a lot of pressure and expectations that I set upon myself. I wanted to win being the underdog, the first year after Covid. I want to show I was worthy of being Team A. I started the year being a researcher, a hard-worker, and a mentally ready engineer who would put their all into my experience. I wanted to be the best. I met my teammates, and we are all so diverse. 4255 A Team has jobs that we created to be able to win the



Our Team 1: Brent and one version of our robot

World competition. We started off brainstorming and we automatically saw Nathan Michael would be a great coder because of his experience with VEX in his previous year and his ability to see a great approach. We, then, built off this to become the team we are today.

Fred, Brent, Nathan, and I make each other accountable and motivate each other. We challenge each other to go past our boundaries. I can say proudly and true that Team A is not just

a team, but our “team” is more than four engineers who are trying to win. We are people who have classes, families, parents, and siblings. We are a family, and we are proud of our success if this is the only success, we have this year. Madison Career and Technical Center’s Team A are my brothers, and I am filled with pride and joy to be a part of such a beautiful, humane team.

My dream started when I was super young wanting to be included, but up until high school, I could never get the feeling of inclusion. I learned over these years of just being in Engineering and Robotics at Madison Career and Technical Center that my dreams can come true. With the help of my encouraging coach and my teammates, we made not only our dreams come true, but the people around us. I believe Girl Power has so much to offer to any young girl that felt like me. I almost let my past take me under, but with the help of my past and present teammates and our invigorating coach, I overcame and let myself have a family outside of my own family.