

Girl Powered Essay

Kiran Johar, Michael Leung, Leo Dai

Team 62880A

Long Island, New York

On team 62880A, when we think of the phrase “Girl Powered” we think of a place where women are inspired to achieve the impossible and excel regardless of their gender, race, or physical appearance. We believe that these places—whether it be in the scientific, humanities, mathematical, musical, medical, or any other field—are and should be places that empower women, inspire them to conquer their fears, and abolish stereotypes. Nowadays, there are many stereotypes surrounding women in the STEM field.

Some say that women don't belong in the STEM field, or that they simply lack the brainpower to excel in it. These stereotypes have influenced our team's approach to robotics, by incorporating women into both our high school and middle school teams. Between both teams, we have three girls, Kiran (high school), Kayla (coach), and Samantha (middle school). While that may not seem like a lot, it is more than our team has had



in years past. Embracing the idea of women in STEM on our team helps us show other teams that women are the future, and that we should welcome them into robotics with open arms. On our team, Kiran is one of our lead drivers and is responsible for keeping our engineering notebook in tip-top

shape, along with our teammate Michael.

Additionally, Kiran is our head social media coordinator and is often seen snapping photos of memorable moments on our team. Kiran is a very good thinker, a quick and ready learner, helps build mechanisms for our robot, and always makes our practices a fun time. During the past few weeks, Kiran decided to learn



how to code, since she realized that was something she wasn't very good at and wanted to get better at. She also figured that the more of a well-rounded engineer she becomes, the more it

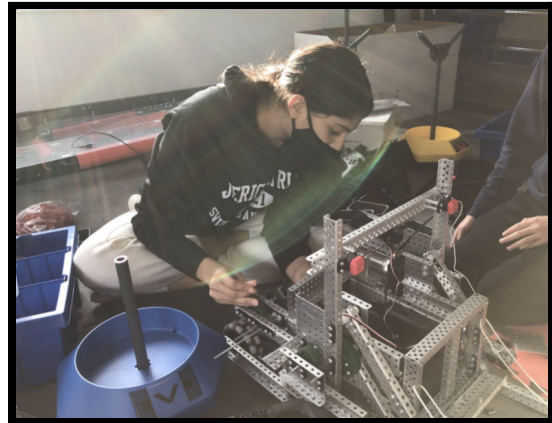


benefits the team. Over the past year, she has shown and proved even more that women belong in the STEM field, and should be treated that way. Kayla, our coach keeps us on track, and guides us using her years of robotics experience, to help us learn, problem solves, think on our feet, and brainstorm. Kayla plays a large role on our team because, without her, our team would

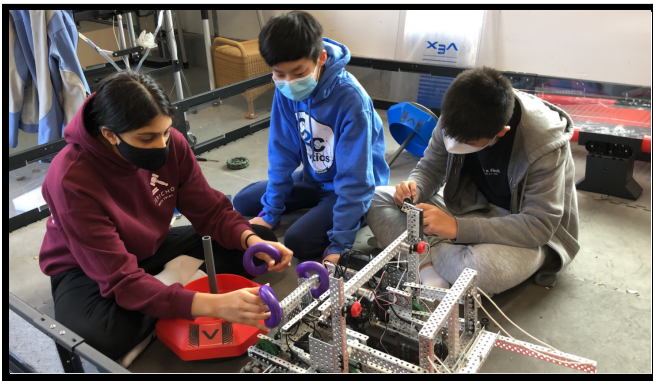
be a mess. Both Kiran and Kayla's contributions to our team have helped us succeed and bond with one another, and it has helped us to become a more inclusive and friendly group.

Our team takes initiative to create a more inclusive environment that attracts a diverse group of students by following our core values. We strive to follow our core values which are integrity, inclusivity, and fun. Integrity is very important to us as it acts as a glue that binds our

team together. If we aren't honest and open then there is no way we will be able to work coherently with each other. We are always honest with each other and we seek to create a safe place within our team. We each showcase a strong moral principle and we use it to interact better with ourselves as well as other teammates. In doing this, we've



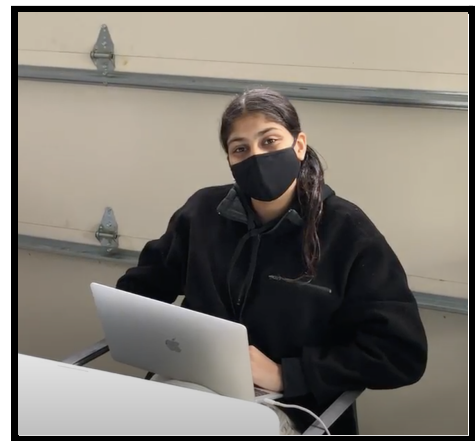
made so many friends over the years that also showcase a caring and kind attitude. Were able to



act as one whole group because of integrity and it creates an open and welcoming team that anyone could join. We also preach inclusivity within our group. No matter who you are regarding gender, size, location, sexuality, or age, we will always include you

because you are one of us. Our team is made up of a group of diverse people. Treating each other as equals is something that we like to praise ourselves for. Our team name is Coast To Coast

Robotics and in this sense, the name is very literal. We have one team member that is actually on the other coast of America. Even though they are so far away, we have still found ways to include this person in our work and fun through online methods as well as in person. Sometimes they will even fly in for our special events which is always a good time. Regardless of this, we always include



them. Our team also consists of different genders. Since this essay is all about girl power and the strength that comes with gender, it is important to showcase all that girls bring to a team. Our coach and Kiran are both women and are integral parts of our team. We would obviously not be able to function without the great and amazing couch we have. We would also be lost without Kiran. She always brings funny jokes and a happy attitude to class but can really bring it when it comes to working.



She's a powerful writer and one of the main builders of our team. She always pulls her weight and is a beacon of our success. The final core value that we follow is fun. Everyone on our team seeks to bring joy to each of our meetings through our fun attitudes. We want to have fun no matter the place, whether it be a practice or a competition. We always have fun and we create a positive environment that has led us to make

many friends over time. We always strive to exemplify fun as is important to find a spark of joy in everything you do. Overall, following our core values has created an overall more welcoming

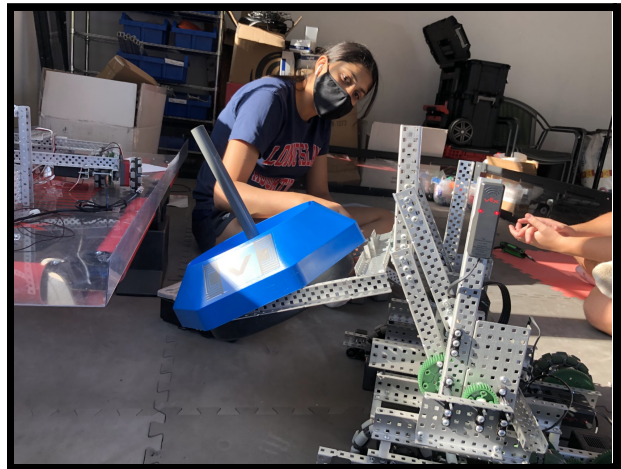


environment that preaches inclusivity, acceptance, and fun.



Each member of our team has some experience and knowledge with every aspect of robotics, although we specialize in one or two main roles in a couple of months. Specifically, we can all CAD, research, design, build, and program a robot. On top of that, we have a rotation of who

documents our progress in the engineering notebook. This means that our team members get to work on whatever field they like most and are most competent in, and their general knowledge means that anyone can apply stopgap measures if the designated member isn't available. This makes our teamwork far more efficient since everyone mostly enjoys what they do, and we can be much more resilient even if our manpower is reduced, something that has become more relevant as COVID restrictions have lowered. This also means that some of our team members take on multiple roles as the season progresses, as a design/CAD-oriented teammate could switch focus to driver or builder as those roles become more relevant.





I believe that our team's diversity in perspective has allowed us to think of many different ideas at the same time which allows us to work well as a team. We were able to create a robot design quickly and effectively due to the fact that we had so many different strong minds working on it. We each had very different ideas on what to build which allowed us to find ideas that worked well with each other and were effective. We designed and built a robot within the span of a few weeks because we were able to work so well together. This was a huge accomplishment as we had never planned and executed that plan like this before. Our team was able to work even better together because of how diverse we were in our perspectives about our robot designs, team chemistry, and ability to succeed.

My STEM role model is Brittany Wenger. Brittany is the founder of the app, Cloud4Cancer. She developed this app after her cousin was diagnosed with breast cancer, and designed it to help diagnose breast cancer. She is our role model because she is a self-taught coder, who in a time of despair created an app to help so many people. This app went on to win the 2012 Google Science Fair and is now undergoing tests with research centers. She inspires us to have a more inclusive program by bringing us all together. Technology is



something that we all adore, utilize, and something we bond over. Her app helped show us that technology and our love for technology can help bring people together and create a more inclusive environment for people with, and without cancer. She also helps us create a more inclusive environment because she was a self-taught coder, who went on to win a Google Science Fair, and for a group of high schoolers, that inspires us to include others' ideas and insights, to help achieve the greatest.

Works Cited:

Brittany Wenger Image: <https://ideas.ted.com/brittany-wenger-cancer-research/>