Diversity in STEM

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Girl Power is a phrase that represents the call for more women to join and bring their many individual strengths to STEM fields. It impacts our approach to robotics as we strive to increase the diversity of our team and the club as a whole in order to bring a more well-rounded group of people as we believe in the importance of a diverse team. We bring this to mind throughout the experience of robotics to help bring a more welcoming, diverse, influenced, and goal-oriented team.

We give students who are looking for a team an offer to join and welcome them. We offer an inclusive environment that is open to a diverse range of talents including people who are new to the club and those who may have years of experience under their belt.

Throughout the season, everybody in our team is allowed to try any role they would like to. In our opinion, this is the best way to encourage others to try everything at least once before settling with their duties. Even after trying to specialize in different aspects of the robotics process, we still help each other in order to work better as a team. Ultimately, individuality is a valued trait for us.

Diversity heavily influences every part of our team as it is necessary for contrasting perspectives between peers. One striking example of the lack of diverse viewpoints was in the field of engineering. In the 1970s, when car manufacturers began to first implement airbags in cars, the male-designed airbags caused harm to many women and children which the product was not designed for. The design team had good intentions but failed to consider alternate needs because of the limiting perspectives on the team, As such, we think it is paramount that alternate perspectives are not overlooked and this notion is exemplified in our day to day meetings and discussions from building to coding.

A STEM role model we look up to is Karenann Terrell, who we learned about when we visited Kettering. We learned about her during our visit to the college, as she received her education there. Afterwards, during her work in Walmart as Chief Information Center, she drastically changed the company’s use of data. Now, at her current occupation in GSK as the Chief Digital and Technology Officer, she has brought new technology to various areas (for example, clinical studies). Mrs. Terrell has inspired us to create a much more inclusive team since she often encourages young children to learn the value of diversity. Additionally, she promotes women to join the STEM work field as she says that “When we increase the numbers of women in STEM, we are going to change the world”. Her emotional message to change the STEM work field diversity has inspired us to speak up and take charge in our robotics team, and outside as well

Work Cited

“Karenann Kat Terrell.” *College of Engineering* , Purdue University,

https://engineering.purdue.edu/Engr/People/Awards/Institutional/DEA/DEA\_2015/Terrell.