What Girl Powered Means to Us

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Vex IQ Girl Powered online challenge By: 23272Z

When we hear the phrase, "Girl Powered" we think of robotic or engineering related jobs or activities. We also think of STEM, which means Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. We think of girls doing those things, a variety of those things could be building a robot, programming a robot, or working together with other people, which could be girls and boys, to complete a difficult task that requires teamwork. The phrase "Girl Powered" is reflected in our team's approach to robotics because our team is made up of only girls. This is reflected in our approach because at our very first practice we were given the opportunity to choose who we wanted on our team. So with this opportunity we could have easily had boys on our team, but we decided not to.



This is a picture of our team winning the "Think" award at a competition

Our team takes initiative to create a more inclusive environment by being nice to anyone who is new to robotics or is in robotics in general. If someone is new we are nice to them and explain how stuff works. We include them in anything we do to help them explore and figure out what they want to do and what not to do on our team. For example; We will let them try driving, programming, writing in the notebook, or building, since those are the main jobs on our team. We let them try all of these jobs and for example say they don't like driving or programming but they like building and notebooking. If that's the case we won't make them drive or program and we'll let them build and write in the notebook since that's what they're good at and enjoy. Our team attracts a diverse group of students to join robotics by encouraging them to join robotics. One of our team members, Xailee, was encouraged by another team member, Kirsten, to join robotics. Xailee did end up filling out an application and was accepted, even though she wasn't sure she was going to like it at first, she says that she does actually enjoy it a lot. That's how our team takes initiative to create a more inclusive environment that also attracts a diverse group of students.



These are pictures of me explaining to one of the elementary students how she can improve her program.

On our team members are encouraged to try various roles on the team. We encourage each other to drive, program, notebook, strategize, and even talk to other teams. We all try to watch other teams, because if we like their robot and think it's good and want to try building one like it. If everyone on the team likes to drive we will give everyone a chance to drive. Our team members learn what they enjoy doing in the team and what they don't enjoy doing. They also learn how to talk to other people/teams since we all try to strategize with other teams or talk to them.



These are pictures of Kirsten, Xailee, and Audrey driving with other teams. The one on the left is Kirsten and Audrey and the one on the right is Kirsten and Xailee.

We believe diversity of perspective changes your robot design because if you have a diverse group of students you all can have different ideas for a robot. With that you can all think on what could go wrong or why it would be better, then you can combine ideas and make a

robot that you all like and that also works well. We think it affects our team chemistry because we can all have new and different ideas, neither like the others. This can also work for strategizing and if one person's plan is much better and effective and works better it can help your team out a lot in the long run. We think it even affects your ability to succeed because with all the different ideas it can help make more effective plans, programs, or robots, or even other things. It can really help your team's ability to succeed by having such a diverse group of students in your team.



This is a picture of Kirsten and Audrey working on the robot together.

For our STEM role model we look up to Mr. Tocco, a 6th and 7th grade science teacher at our school. Why? We look up to him because he encourages us to do STEM projects and work with others. This also helps us to get along with other people better, because we have to put aside differences and work together to get the project done and working. Robotics includes STEM, and to work with STEM you have to work with other people, not only do you have to work with other people you're going to have to learn how to work well with them/other people. He also teaches us perseverance. He teaches us this because when our projects break, or don't work he teaches us to persevere and try something else, or try to fix it. That's why he's our STEM role model.