

Girls Towards The Future

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Team #: 2420C (CosmoBot)

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Girl power is a phrase used in reference to an attitude of independence in young women, but in our eyes, it is so much more. As the first all girls team at our robotics center, we define girl power as the ability to defy old methods and misogynistic views and to pursue our dreams. 2420C is proud of being an all-girls team.

We try to build each other up and use positive feedback. When one person has an idea, we take the time to listen to her idea. We try to work together on everything, including driving, building, and programming. By showing up as an all girls team at tournaments, we show the world that girls accomplish the same goals as our male peers. The last three years, I have been on teams that were mostly male, and they treated me as though I was not essential. Now that I'm on an all girls team, I encourage my teammates to treat each other as equals, making sure that everyone is heard and respected.

At the beginning of this season, everyone tried all the team roles. I, Olivia, have experienced coding, so I anticipated being a programmer. Sawyer, who's in her second year in robotics, really enjoys organizing, so she ultimately chose being the main writer for our engineering notebook and our stem project. Samantha, who's also in her second year in robotics, tried programming, building, and driving. She preferred driving, but still helps with the building, and both Samantha and I became the main drivers of the team. Emily, with this being her first year, tried all the roles. She landed on her final decision, and became the main builder on the team. We all learned our strengths and weaknesses and took on roles we thought were fit for each one of our personalities.

My personal STEM role model is Katherine Johnson- the first black woman mathematician to work in NASA. Her calculations were critical to the success of the first

U.S. crewed spaceflight, the flight with John Glenn. She's inspired me to be the best leader I can, and to stand up for myself for what I believe. She worked hard even though she was treated poorly, and I hope I can lead even if my teammates do not appreciate some things that I might do.

We all go to the same coding/ learning center, but we all attend different schools. I am homeschooled, but all my teammates go to public and private school. Samantha loves math, so she is our go-to person when anything needs mathematical help. Both Sawyer and I have experience with interviews, and we feel confident talking with judges and adults. Emily has a mind for building; she comes up with creative ways to tackle problems and creates alternatives to some of the field and game elements.

One time, while Emily was working on a drivetrain for a new robot, she called me over and told me that our mechanism wouldn't fit, and that the new drivetrain was too small. We scrapped the design, and everyone was devastated. We needed the new robot, but we were running out of time. Samantha and I practiced with the original robot until we scored consistently. Although we were scoring well, without a new and improved bot, we wouldn't be able to score much more until the new robot was finished. We've now started another new robot, and we so far have a double shooter and the start of a drivetrain. We hope that by the state championship, we will have the robot ready to compete.

Being a part of this team has made me proud to show that as an all girl team, we can plan, build and take our robot to the world championship.