

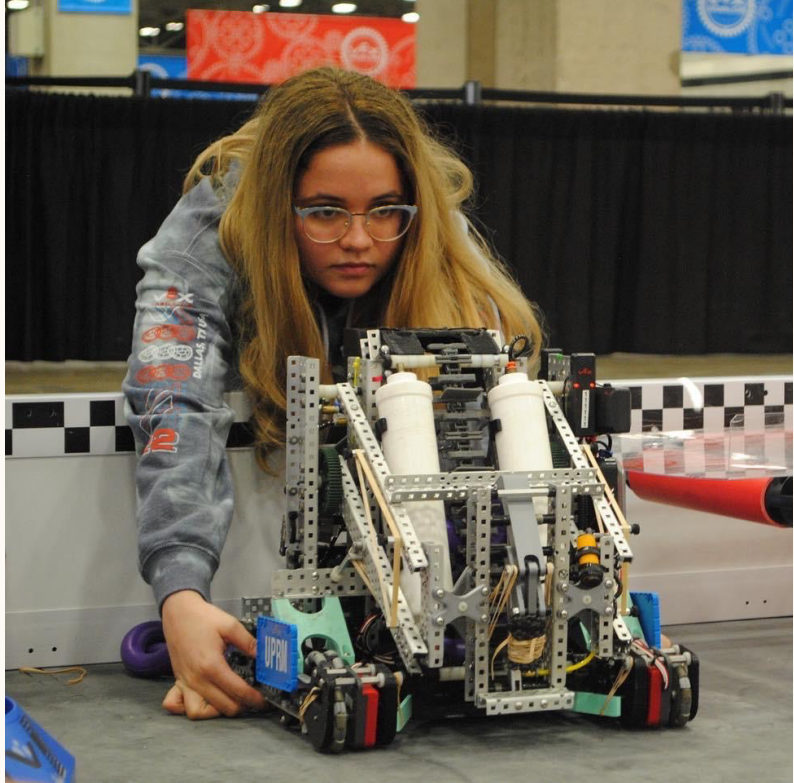


FUELED BY WOMEN

By Nina Velázquez of Team UPRM, Puerto Rico

“GIRL POWER”

- For me, girls being empowered to achieve their dreams without worrying about being treated differently for their gender represents the phrase “girl power”. Women are indispensable team members and should be encouraged to accomplish their goals without worrying about unfair criticism.





INCLUSIVITY IN STEM

At University of Puerto Rico - Mayagüez, girls are a minority in most engineering majors. Despite this, our VEX U team makes a significant effort to break down gender stereotypes and create a more inclusive environment. Active members reach out to their friends, in hopes of sparking interest in joining the teams and encouraging success regardless of gender.

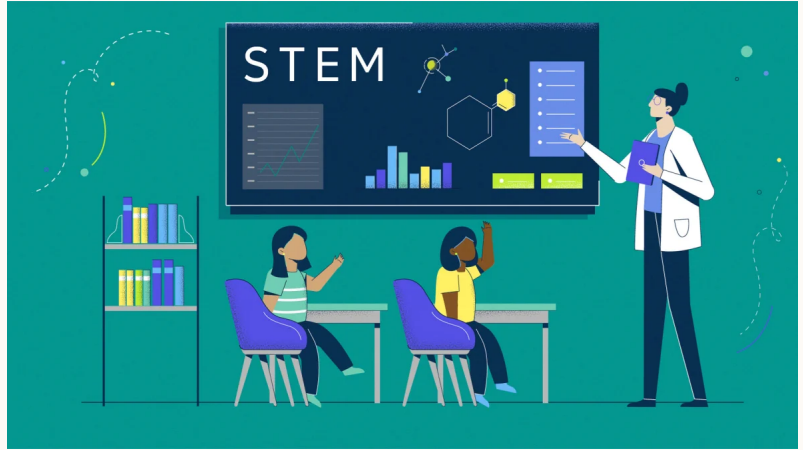
INCLUSIVITY IN STEM

After my freshman year, I took a Calculus 2 course over the summer, and ended up making a friend who happened to apply for one of UPRM's VEX teams. Shortly after, she got accepted as part of their programming department. Having always been interested in robotics, I took this as inspiration and decided to apply to my current team for the new semester.



INCLUSIVITY IN STEM

To my surprise, despite my lack of experience and technical skills, since I was barely starting my second year, I was accepted to be a part of the mechanical department of UPRM's VEX U team, AON Robotics.



TEAM DYNAMIC

- Upon my arrival to my first team meeting, the members were very welcoming and quickly made me feel like a part of the team. Although girls made up only a small percentage of the team, diversity and voicing everybody's opinion, regardless of gender was always encouraged.
- We have been able to incorporate a variety of thoughts and viewpoints into our robot design by having a varied team made up of people of all genders. This has helped us develop great team chemistry and a healthy work environment. We regularly learn new things about robots and each other, making our meetings entertaining and educational. A collaborative and enjoyable environment encourages members to boldly and comfortably provide new ideas, without fear of judgement.



DIVERSITY ON OUR TEAM

- Dayanyadí Trabal – Business Department / Industrial Engineering Major
- Idaliz Avilés – Programming Department / Computer Engineering Major
- Mariana Pérez – Programming Department / Computer Engineering Major
- Nina Velázquez – Mechanical Department / Mechanical Engineering Major

ROLE MODEL

Our team, especially us girls, look up to former member of AON robotics Jaimetted Olivieri. A Computer Science major, she was the first woman to join our team's Programming Department. An example to many, she reminded us that success is indeed possible for women in a male-dominated industry and to not let that stop you from pursuing your dreams. Hopefully, my fellow teammates and I can also serve as role models to younger girls who want to pursue careers in STEM but sometimes lack the confidence due to societal standards to pursue the career of their dreams.

JAIMETTED OLIVIERI

Presentation title



GOALS

- Although our team has people of all genders, there is still a much smaller percentage of women in comparison to men. We wish to further diversify our team and encourage more girls to join!
- We will do this by visiting middle and high schools across the island and encouraging students, especially girls, to consider majoring in STEM fields and sparking their interest in robotics.
- Our business/publicity team will also be handing out flyers across campus, and will be promoting the team through social media.
- Fundraisers such as pizza sales will be held, attracting attention from students all across campus and hopefully sparking their interest in joining our team.



CREDITS

Presentation by: Nina Velázquez

Team: UPRM

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