

Open Circuits 5271 ~ FEI FI FO FUM Grant Summary

Gender Ally Advocacy Project 2024

The goal of this project was to acknowledge and promote students in the FIRST Robotics community that are Gender Allies. Gender Allies are people who encourage, promote, and respect women and non-binary people in the STEM environment. Members of the OWL Open Circuits Team 5271 went around at the Minneapolis 10K Lakes tournament and handed all of the teams a flier informing them of this project and asked them to think of a member of their team who fits the requirements that were listed. The following day, Open Circuits team members went around to the teams and gave them a Gender Ally button for their chosen Gender Ally. With this process, we had hoped that each team would have a member wearing the Gender Ally button that showed people they were a Gender Ally.

With the funds from this grant, we were able to buy a VEVOR Button Maker Machine for 3 inch buttons for \$108.38 and a Saladulce 3 Inch Button Paper Cutter for \$119.69. The total for this was \$228.07. The money from the FEI FI FO FUM Grant was able to cover almost the entire cost of this purchase.

At the competition, we were able to give every team the informational flier about the Gender Ally Advocacy Project. There were some mixed reactions to this information, some teams didn't seem that interested, but a lot of the teams seemed very interested. There were even a couple teams that told us that they knew who their Gender Ally was right away. This made our team feel very happy about this project and the impact it would have on many of the teams.

The following day, we went around to all the teams and offered them their buttons. We were able to give most of the teams a button. There were some mixed reactions to this as well, similar to how they reacted to the flier, but the majority of the teams accepted the button graciously. Throughout the day, we saw a couple of people wearing the buttons, which was enough to know that our project had at least some impact.

Next year, we hope to do this project again throughout the season, hopefully at all of the tournaments that we go to instead of just the one. From this year, we learned that the button supplies were very expensive for our team and that is one of the reasons we only did it at one tournament.



Photo of Open Circuits Team members making the Gender Ally buttons before a tournament.



Photo of an Open Circuits Team member holding the Gender Ally Advocacy Project flier at the Minneapolis 10K Lakes Tournament.