

THE HAVERFORD SCHOOL

Classroom to community: students gain finance experience

What did you learn from the world of investment banking?

I learned that success in investment banking isn't one dimensional. I arrived in the field, expecting that most of my job would be financial analysis rooted in spreadsheets and numbers, but I quickly learned that was not the case. While excelling in financial analysis was undoubtedly a baseline expectation, I needed to communicate and write professionally for a variety of audiences. The most successful analysts are able to communicate complex financial data in clear, accessible, and direct language while exhibiting soft skills like time-management and attention to detail.

How do you apply those lessons to your teaching at The Haverford School?

My finance curriculum challenges students in a variety of different ways across multiple disciplines. Students must use the historical thinking and research skills they practice in their history courses. They use written and oral communication skills from their English courses. Additionally, they need to apply algebraic and analytical concepts from their mathematics courses.

Portfolio Analysis aims to teach students how to evaluate and make sound investments. They study financial statements, various securities, the markets and related indices, and diversification. Students evaluate current events and examine the positive or negative results on stock price and the overall economy. Throughout the course, the students manage a hypothetical U.S. growth fund, where each student inherits the responsibility of becoming an expert in one of the underlying portfolio holdings. Students must then follow the company, writing about current events that drive the performance, and presenting on the company's position to the class where he can propose an increase or decrease in our overall allocation.

In Theory of Interest, students learn the theories and applications of simple and compound interest, bonds and equity instruments, and personal budgeting. Utilizing the time value of money as a foundation, students calculate retirement scenarios and budget for what their lives might look like in the future. Some weeks this requires students to read about current events and write about their financial impact, while in other weeks they deliver 15-minute presentations to the class.

What life skills does finance teach?

Regardless of the university or life path my students take, they will undoubtedly encounter the financial world - whether in the form of budgeting, investing, retirement planning, or simply managing life events. In our second semester, students write resumes and we discuss interview strategies. All of these topics layer into the current events that drive the markets up and down each week.

We know that the 21st-century workplace demands professionals who can clearly articulate their ideas,



A group of finance students at The Haverford School visited the New York Stock Exchange to speak with professionals on the trading floor.

communicate succinctly, be active listeners, and be able to function within groups of diverse skill sets and perspectives. Good education demands that students practice those skills in the classroom.

How does your program foster connections?

I try to bring the financial world into the classroom and take my students out into the marketplace. The chairman of the board at Vanguard taught a class and toured us through the company's facilities. We've also visited the New York Stock Exchange and spoke with professionals on the trading floor. In addition to gaining an inside look at the industry, I try to create an opportunity for our alumni to network within the industry, connecting current and former students as they seek career opportunities, insight on financial trends, or simply a friendly face. As seniors look for summer opportunities to intern or shadow professionals, they can reach out to other Haverford alums for feedback, advice, or networking.

How can parents support their children in learning life skills, at any age?

I find that students are increasingly eager for real-world information. Parents can support their children's learning by allowing them to engage with the markets and participate in conversations about their financial futures. Ask your children what their financial goals are, and don't be afraid of sharing details about your financial history. What financial decisions do you regret? What do you wish you knew about personal finance when you were 18? What was the most important financial decision you made as a young adult, and would you have done anything differently?

Even if our children are exposed to finance at the high school level, an open dialogue at home is imperative. Share your experience so they can apply the lessons you learned. These discussions will enrich their collegiate experience and help prepare them to enter adulthood.

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David Gold, CFO at The Haverford School and George B. Lemmon Jr. '79, President & CEO of Brynavoron Group, talk to Brian Long's finance class.