

“The Cuban people are very friendly and outgoing. Interacting with the locals made me realize that everyone has a story. I didn’t realize how much fun I’d have talking with strangers, especially with the challenge of having to speak in their language. My time in Cuba made me realize that I’d like to see the world.”

– Benjamin Warden, Form V



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## Catalysts for Change: The Germination Project

The Germination Project was founded in 2015 by the Pamela and Ajay Raju Foundation, which aims to re-establish Philadelphia as a global force in policy, commerce, and culture. The Haverford School is one of 10 partner schools selected by The Germination Project to nominate young leaders who are poised to make an enduring mark on our city.

“The Germination Project takes the best young minds in Philadelphia and gets them civically engaged with the city’s current leaders on topics including healthcare and literacy,” says Director of

Leadership Programs Bill Brady. “These students are immersed in a lifelong journey of developing themselves as leaders within the community.”

Following a rigorous essay and interview process, the selected applicants, dubbed “Student Fellows,” enter a two-week summer boot camp to absorb the insights of Philadelphia leaders and change agents. During the boot camp, Student Fellows commence service projects to address some of the city’s most critical needs – committing not just for the year, but for a lifetime. Most

recently, Student Fellows developed an ambitious initiative with the American Heart Association (AHA) to train 10,000 Philadelphians in life-saving CPR techniques, and are lobbying Harrisburg to make CPR certification a high school graduation requirement throughout Pennsylvania.

“Not since 1776 has Philadelphia been so primed to embrace and deploy new ways of thinking,” states Ajay Raju. “More degrees are granted in this city than any other in the country, but too much of our invaluable intellectual capital is being outsourced to locales like Austin, Boston, and Silicon Valley. The race to the top is about which city can harness its most energetic minds. By forging partnerships and creating pathways for the best and brightest of our millennial generation to hone their talents in healthcare, the sciences, and economic development, The Germination Project is attempting not just to build a strong root system, but a lush and vibrant ecosystem where innovation can flourish.”

Nine Haverford School students have been accepted into the program, now in its third year.

“At the summer boot camp, our group took part in a mini-think tank where we pitched a social initiative with the goal of giving a voice to underprivileged Philadelphians,” recalls VI Former Dean Manko, a 2015 Student Fellow. “I think many issues in our city arise from the vast income divide, as well as from a lack of



Philadelphia’s CBS 3 interviewed VI Formers Dean Manko and Caleb Clothier on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Along with other Germination Project Fellows, they traveled to New York City for a private tour of the building and the trading floor. Following the closing bell, the Fellows discussed the importance of financial literacy in education. *Photo courtesy of The Germination Project.*