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The Roanoke Valley Governor's School For Science and Technology



Roanoke Valley Governors School Alumni,

As part of the RVGS family, we want to be able to share all the exciting events happening at RVGS. Unfortunately, the Alumni network has been less than robust in the last few years. In hopes of reconnecting with our fellow Lab Rats, we now have RVGS Alumni Instagram and Facebook pages. (<https://www.facebook.com/rvgsalumni/> and https://www.instagram.com/rvgs_alumni/) The school's primary social media accounts can be found at "RVGSLabRats" on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook . Please follow us and share these links with fellow Alumni. In addition, we are sending out a survey form to determine the best way to contact Alumni in the future. **A link to complete the survey can be found below and on our Facebook and Instagram pages. Please help us spread the word by passing this letter on to any Alumni with whom you are in communication.**

[RVGS Alumni Contact Form](#)

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=RCi4CQkh80yD_BW9RaoixsQyhgnTYkhBv_tTA-rv94ZUOVg0RjIwTVBGVVRHTk9YU1M0V0gwUTI5Ri4u

We would also like to appeal to you for help with a new program at RVGS. As you know, RVGS students have a wide range of diverse interests outside of the typical classroom. We would like to encourage those interests with the development of a new program at RVGS that would support and fund students to pursue work they are passionate about outside of common structures like science fair. Sachitich Gullapalli (RVGS 2013) has generously offered to donate a substantial sum to help us get this program started. His donation will match any Alumni donations to allow your donation to support the RVGS Foundation and assist with the establishment of this exciting new opportunity. Enclosed on the following page is a letter from Sachitich that explains his motivation for supporting RVGS and why he hopes that you will also. If you are able to donate, please visit <https://www.rvgs.k12.va.us/domain/89> and click the green "RVGS Alumni Donations" banner.

We are wrapping up this year's modified Intersession, with virtual Project Forum coming up on March 6. If you have time, stop by the virtual 'open house' on the RVGS website that day from 1:00-3:30 PM, featuring recordings of student presentations.

Thank you so much for your support of Roanoke Valley Governors School and we look forward to growing our Alumni network. If you have any questions, you can contact our Community Outreach Coordinator, Terri Janiga, at tjaniga@rvgs.k12.va.us or reach out to me directly.

Thanks,

Mark Levy (RVGS 2000)
Director, Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology
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To my fellow Govies:

I think it's safe to say that most of us look back at our time at Gov School with a mix of fondness, nostalgia, and gratitude. To have spent three or four years surrounded by some of the smartest, driven, and kindest students to be found anywhere in the country, and supported and nurtured by incredible teachers who pushed us to see education as far more than a set of qualifications to be attained, is a rare privilege that we are blessed to share. I can confidently say that the people I met at RVGS had a defining effect on my worldview and that the opportunities this school afforded me changed the trajectory of my entire life; I know that many of you would say the same. Given all that we've received, I believe that we have a duty to ensure not only that Gov School continues to endure, but that the impact it has on its students and the broader community it serves grows with every generation that passes through.

Those of us who attended RVGS in the aftermath of the financial crisis remember the perennial debates around funding that underscored just how precious the gift we were being given was, and how easily it could disappear. The kind of world-class education that the Governor's School provides, with its strong emphasis on research and student learning outside the classroom, is certainly not free to provide, and in the broader context of a chronically underfunded public education system, it can even seem wasteful. During my senior year, I remember a local school board member voting to withdraw funding from the Governor's School, arguing that "Governor's school students are going to be successful, no matter what." From the outside looking in, it can be hard to understand the magnitude of the impact this school has on its students, and in the longer term, the impact its students go on to have in the world. Having attended Gov School, we have a unique perspective to share on this, and a concomitant responsibility to address the very real and important issues of equity and access that plague our education system and society at large. We can continue to provide students with hands-on learning experiences and scientific exposure that most don't get until graduate school and simultaneously break down the barriers presented by circumstances of background, but accomplishing this will take more resources, not fewer. As alumni, I believe that we can best fulfill our responsibility to the communities that supported us by using our voices and our wallets to in turn support the hard work that the dedicated, talented Governor's School teachers and administrators put in every day towards these ends. If you feel as I do, I sincerely hope you'll join me in contributing to the RVGS Foundation so that they can not only maintain the distinctive educational experiences like Project Forum that were so meaningful to us — but make the institution as a whole even better!

My best,

Sachith Gullapalli, RVGS 2013