ALUM PROFILE

Giving What You Can, When You Can

AS ONE OF THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS OF THE DECADES CLUB, **SARAH ROSSTON '12** PROVES THAT INCREMENTAL GIVING CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT OVER TIME

When asked about a pivotal moment in high school that influenced their life's trajectory, Castilleja alums often launch into an animated story about their favorite classes or teachers. **Sarah Rosston '12** takes another approach. For her, the Bourn Lab and the Gatorbotics program have been formative, both personally and professionally. "I started at Castilleja as a quiet and shy person," Sarah remembers. "It was through my time in Gatorbotics that I learned to have the confidence to reach out and ask for opportunities."

Advocating for oneself and for others is woven into the fabric of Castilleja. Sarah recalls numerous times when mentors in the classroom and in the Bourn Lab were there for her. "During my senior year, I asked the Gatorbotics mentors to show me what code was," says Sarah, who particularly loved the real-world applications of probability and math modeling, taught by Dr. Lowell[HA].

LEARNING LEADERSHIP

While on the Gatorbotics team, Sarah led the build team with **Aneesha Gupta '13**. Together they learned a valuable leadership skill: mentorship. "When younger students joined the team, few had technical experience, so creating a comfortable environment to enable their growth was really important," explains Sarah.

These formative experiences led Sarah to pursue a career in computer science and software engineering after graduation. As she grew professionally, Sarah always made giving back a priority.

She continued working with high school students while in college, where she led programs through "Girls Teaching Girls Code." Supporting and mentoring members of her community is a skill that Sarah still utilizes daily in her professional life. "If you benefit from a place, think about how you can support that institution," she recommends. It's a philosophy passed down from her parents, who advised her that small



amounts of support, given consistently over time, can make an impact. Sarah realizes that giving back looks different for everyone, and it depends on what you're capable of giving at the time. "If your means improve over time, the gift can grow." This has been true for Sarah; after graduation her gifts were smaller and they have been growing ever since. She is one of the youngest members of the Decades Club, and she gives to tuition assistance every year, making this education that shaped her life possible for other students.

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> — SARAH ROSSTON '12

THE IMPACT OF GIVING

At Reunion in 2022, Sarah was delighted to discover that her favorite place on campus, the Bourn Lab, has grown since she graduated, in many ways thanks to the impact of thoughtful gifts from alums. "I felt inspired by what Castilleja students continue to imagine and create," says Sarah about the Bourn Lab and the way it builds student confidence, curiosity, and community from one grade to the next. "The impact is still there."