

Dear Senator,

"I can think of no better focused and strategic investment in the future of Pennsylvania, and indeed the United States, than to re-establish the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Sciences at the same level and intensity as the program I attended and to ensure the continued funding of similar schools in every state of the Union."

"I can think of no other event in my life that had more of an impact on my intellectual or social development than the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Sciences."

"To say that I would not be where I am today without PGSS is a profound understatement. It is the single most exceptional and enriching program in science education that I've ever encountered"

The PGSS Campaign has received countless testimonials like these. The fact that a summer program lasting only five weeks could have such an impact on people like me years after attending is a testament to what PGSS was and will be again. My participation in the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Sciences on the Carnegie Mellon University campus was a truly life-changing event. Having access to outstanding facilities, such as the Mellon Institute and the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center, as well as a distinguished faculty, and working in close collaboration with other equally capable and motivated students from across the Commonwealth provided a unique and unforgettable experience.

Unfortunately, the state-funded program was shut down in 2009 after 25 incredibly successful years, due to budget cuts. Since that time, alumni and parent volunteers have worked endless hours and donated over \$130,000 to bring the program back. It is our hope that our legislature will remember the merits of the program and bring back partial funding to be matched by alumni donations and grants.

Many believe that the smart kids will "get it" no matter what. The truth is that without this kind of stimulating academic environment and a socially-welcoming peer group, they may never reach their potential. As an alum of this program, I can attest to its transformative power. I attended with students from rural, suburban and urban areas and from every socioeconomic level. What united us was a love for the sciences and a will to learn. Gifted students are often not given the support they need from their home districts, who either cannot or will not invest the time and money that is necessary. This is one small investment we can make with a 93% rate of alumni who go into STEM careers. What other investment gives that kind of return?

As we continue our efforts to restore PGSS beyond the \$130,000 we have already raised from alumni, we urge you to support restoring partial funding for a private-public partnership. Senator Corman has indicated that the \$200,000 needed to ensure operation of this stellar program is completely within reason. Senator, please contact Senator Corman and let him know that you believe this modest amount of funding is a priority for this budget.

Thank you so much for your support.

Sincerely,