

# LONDON CALLING

*Tajel Mehta, Class of 2010*



Tajel (left with flatmates) recently completed a prestigious internship with the English Parliament. She described her experience midway through the internship in the following interview with Debbie Marchione, Vice President for Philanthropy and Community Engagement.

## WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR ACADEMIC PATH TO THIS POINT?

I received my B.A. in international relations from University of San Diego. The focus was mainly political science, but what piqued my interest was the interdisciplinary nature of the degree; it delved into history, economics, religious studies, fine arts, and literature. Now, I am earning my masters' of science in global health and social justice from King's College London. My dissertation focuses on health policy in London regarding tuberculosis.

## WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO PURSUE THIS DEGREE?

Pursuing this degree has put me right in the heart of London, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. I wanted to meet people from all over the world whilst also earning a degree that emphasises social and global justice. This program has helped me develop critical skills for analysis, research, policy development, and the ethical assessment of health and disease inequalities. There is also a sentimental aspect to my choice to study here. Down the street from my campus is the Lloyd's Bank where my granddad used to work, and a little further on is the law office where my grandma used to work. It's the city where my granddad and all my aunts and uncles and cousins

live, and most importantly where my parents met and fell in love. When I walk along streets here, I feel very much at home.

## WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO DO AFTER YOU FINISH SCHOOL?

I love living over here. London is referred to as “the world in a city” and I truly see that every day. My professors, course-mates, and flatmates are from all over the globe. On any given day, I hear around three to four different languages. I would like to stay in London for a little while longer, so I am currently looking for a job, preferably at a small non-profit.

However, as much as I am enjoying every second of my time here, I do intend to come home to Seattle eventually. I'm a Pacific Northwest girl at heart, and I do miss the mountains and the evergreen trees. My dream is to eventually move back to Seattle and work for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

## DESCRIBE YOUR INTERNSHIP.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group was writing a report on the UK's role in developing the field of nursing globally and needed a research intern. It coincided with a class I would be taking on health policy, and I thought it would be relevant and a learning experience, so I applied. It was a very competitive process. After four meetings and an interview, I was chosen for the position which lasts from February through July. The pace will pick up significantly in the latter months as the report is launched in Parliament.

## WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF THE INTERNSHIP? WHAT IS MOST SURPRISING?

The best part of this internship has been taking notes at witness sessions in the Palace of Westminster. I had never been inside the Palace before this internship and had no idea how gorgeous it would be. On my first day, I wandered around after the conference just to take in all of the busts of important people from history that line the

corridors and the magnificent stained glass in the windows. It is stunning.

I was surprised to find that the barons and baronesses on the board in charge of this report are genuinely kind and approachable. I had this preconceived notion that the members of the House of Lords would be standoffish and severe, which turned out to be completely off the mark. They're lovely people; nurses and doctors who truly want to improve the state of nursing within the UK and abroad.

### **WHAT ASPECTS OF BEAR CREEK HELPED PREPARE YOU FOR COLLEGE AND THIS INTERNSHIP?**

I came away from my Bear Creek education with the ability to write a really good paper. This gave me a head start in a way, because during my freshman year many of my fellow students struggled to achieve a university-level standard of writing. Bear Creek also gave me confidence in my voice; acting on stage as Lady Macbeth and giving speeches in my rhetoric class gave me self-confidence which has become pervasive in my life. Believing that I actually had a shot at this internship and applying meant I had to have faith in my ability. The confidence to value myself and all I have to offer is a lesson I had to learn. Bear Creek played a big role in this process.

To this day, I value the investment our teachers put into not just our studies but also our personal development. It is not lost on me that this is not the norm across the country. Being an alumna means being part of a collection of people who know a little bit of Latin, have read the entirety of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Homer's *Odyssey*, and know what apologetics is. We're a unique little group of people that have a lot to offer to the world, and I am very proud to be one of them.

## **PARENTS OF ALUMNI CONTINUE TO CONNECT**



Parents and alumni display the Easter baskets they made for Olive Crest at the 2016 Spring Brunch and Service Project.

**ONCE A PART OF THE BEAR CREEK SCHOOL**, always a part of the Bear Creek community! The Parents of Alumni Committee volunteers Holly Alleva, Mary Matthews, Clare Mehta, Cindy McCahill, and Deb Perry worked hard this year to plan a variety of activities to bring parents of alumni together for fellowship, fun, and service. The committee also hosted a gathering of parents of the senior class to address issues and questions about launching a child to college. If you are interested in joining the committee, we welcome new members! Contact Debbie Marchione at [dmarchione@tbc.org](mailto:dmarchione@tbc.org) for more information.

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for our upcoming activities.

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30** – Wine tasting and fellowship at Woodhouse Wine Estates Tasting Room in Woodinville

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16** – Homecoming basketball games

**SATURDAY, MARCH 25** – Spring Brunch and Service Project