

Transformative Experiences Through the Forum for Change

By Erin Silver

**How Havergal's Community Partnerships and Global Experiences
Connect Students with the World and Enable Them to Make an Impact**



Havergal College has a clear mission: preparing young women to make a difference. All of the school's programming, and everything the school's administration does, centres around this mission, which is illustrated by *A Havergal Difference Maker*. This focuses on the idea that graduates understand themselves and others, that they strive to continually learn and grow; and that they are inspired to act. Havergal graduates are globally-minded, confident and resilient decision makers who can adapt and thrive in complex and changing environments.



Much of this work is done in the Forum for Change (F4C), which is also known as "the global heartbeat of Havergal," as it enables students to learn, grow and contribute beyond the classroom by experiencing new perspectives and engaging with people and cultures from around the world. F4C accomplishes this in many ways by giving students opportunities to participate in a range of meaningful Community Partnerships, live abroad through global exchanges, take part in international service trips and enrol in our Global Learning & Leading Diploma.

"One of our proudest achievements is the relationship we've formed with our Community Partners," says Fatima Kaba, Interim Director of the Forum for Change. Havergal has developed long-standing partnerships with organizations such as Grenoble Public School, the North York Harvest Food Bank and New Circles (an organization that provides free clothing, employment training and settlement support to newcomers and low-income families).



“One of our proudest achievements is the relationship we've formed with our Community Partners.

- Ms. Fatima Kaba, Interim Director of the Forum for Change

There are opportunities for students of all ages (Grades 1 to 12) to engage with our Community Partners, whether it's by raising awareness of social issues and programs, providing care of services or helping to support those in need. “One must work with all of these

providing acts of service or giving in support to those in need. Our work with all of these organizations is a chance for our students to go beyond the classroom — to learn more about the communities we live in, take action and contribute as they continue to grow and develop as valuable members of society,” explains Kaba. There are also leadership-focused partnerships for students in Grades 9 to 12, such as Music for Every Child in which students help facilitate a music program for students who are on the spectrum or who have disabilities. With support from the Forum for Change, Upper School students can also participate in The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award, a global program that empowers young people to learn, grow and discover their potential by making a difference in their community.

Students in Grades 8 to 12 who are interested in travelling can sign up to work alongside students from partner schools from around the world through Havergal’s membership in Round Square, an international community of more than 280 schools in 50 countries that collaborate on character education. Round Square’s international learning service trips and regional conferences have taken Havergal students to places such as Kenya, Colombia, Dubai, United Kingdom, Kannaskis (in the Canadian Rockies), Argentina and Ottawa as a way to broaden their horizons and develop international competencies. Participants engage in meaningful activities, deepen their sense of self and come to better understand the lived experiences of others.

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- Ms. Lindsay Norberg, Deputy Principal



“I had the opportunity to travel to Oman and Dubai this September alongside eight fabulous Havergal students and my colleague, Fatima Kaba, who leads the Forum for Change,” says Deputy Principal Lindsay Norberg. “We were representing Havergal as a delegation at the Round Square International Conference, which explores the ‘ideals’ of internationalism, diversity, environmentalism, adventure and leadership. Over the course of two weeks, we travelled through Oman, getting to know the people and culture and exploring the deserts before spending a week alongside 1,200 youth from countries around the world at the international conference,” she says.

“It was an incredible trip, one that makes clear just how much global travel brings great opportunities and challenges. For me, travelling with students enabled me to see students being curious about people and places. I saw them learn to navigate differences, challenge their own assumptions, problem solve in ways that are different from when they are at home and push themselves physically as they travelled through different time zones, long flights and a dramatically different climate,” says Norberg.



“Even a decade after graduating, many of our students have maintained close friendships with their Exchange partners.

- Ms. Jennifer Russell, Director of Student Leadership

Another transformative F4C opportunity for Upper School students is the Global Exchange Program. This is a chance for students in Grade 8 to spend two weeks living in England or Scotland and to host their Exchange partners in Toronto for another two weeks. Meanwhile, students in Grade 10 have the chance to live with their host for three to four weeks in places as far away as Argentina, South Africa or Australia. “Our Exchange Program is a way for students to create their own immersive experience, get out of their comfort zone, build relationships with different people, develop resiliency and engage with new perspectives,” explains Jennifer Russell, Director of Student Leadership, who oversees Havergal’s Exchange Program. “Even a decade after graduating, many of our students have maintained close friendships with their Exchange partners.”

Building on these experiences, students in Grades 10 to 12 can engage in the Global Learning & Leading Diploma (GLLD), an additional component to the curriculum. Established in 2019, the GLLD helps students work with mentors to develop the global competencies they need to make a positive difference in society. It’s a great fit for applicants who are especially curious about the world and are engaged with the news globally or locally with a desire to explore trends, ideas and innovations in new ways. For example, while some students have explored cancer research through a racial lens for their Grade 12 thesis project, others have investigated how girls are exposed to beauty standards at an early age in different cultures. With students calling the program “engaging” and “relevant,” GLLD connects students to who they are. Those who complete the Global Learning & Leading Diploma can highlight this achievement on college and university applications, showcasing their commitment to global awareness and leadership.

City	Time	Flight	Class	Status
ARRIVAL				
FROM TORONTO				

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As a member of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network, the Independent Schools Experiential Educators Network (ISEEN) and Round Square, Havergal provides rewarding opportunities to challenge students in ways that support their academic learning with a disposition to action as a way to develop courage, confidence, care and authenticity. “They also shape themselves into citizens who are flexible, adaptable, empathetic and able to navigate the world,” says Norberg. “There is so much Havergal does within our walls, but when we get our students beyond them, we prepare them to succeed in a complex and changing world. We enable them to be leaders.”

With Kaba overseeing the Forum for Change and a team dedicated to Community Partnerships and Global Learning, they could not do it without the support, participation and mentorship of many faculty and staff members. This collaborative effort highlights how the Havergal community values the development of students who can create positive, meaningful and lasting change in the world.

Learn more about some of these experiences from students in our [Feature Story](#).



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