

thinc Program 2011



August 8-12, 2011 - Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, PA



Thanks to your kindness and generosity sixteen students from Harrisburg and Philadelphia spent an amazing week together exploring the possibilities and thinking about the future.



Martha and I started the thinc Program to challenge students to discover their potential and pursue their dreams to make the world a better place. We want students to see (or “c”) themselves as extraordinary.

The students are selected by their teachers. We find incredible educators to work with and give them the following guidance in selecting students to attend the thinc Program - listen to your heart and pick students who will truly benefit from the program. Our teachers can select students who earn all A's or those who could really just use a week away from their neighborhood. All of the students come from underserved areas. This year our students came from Foose School in the Harrisburg City School District and Julia de Burgos Elementary in the School District of Philadelphia. The former is situated between two housing projects and frequently has lockdowns due to neighborhood violence while the latter is in an area termed the “Badlands” for its reputation as one of the most violent drug corridors in the Northeast.

This year’s attendees included a student who has a parole officer, a child who is selectively mute and a student who showed up without a single item of clothing except for those on his back.

The first student was the shining star of the program. The second student opened up and spoke during a green screen activity where he was asked to tell the camera what he wanted to be in the future. The third student might just be the scientist who discovers the cure for cancer (see green goggles to the left).

We truly believe, to our core, that the students who attended this year’s thinc Program have a new view of the world and themselves. Their lives have been changed forever. Their lives were changed by you.



Thank you for believing in us. Thank you for believing in and caring for children you have never met. The world is a better place because of your compassion.

Love,

Martha and Lance Rougeux



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What does it mean to thinc?



Monday

The first day is about getting students to know each other and themselves. To do this, students engage in a variety of icebreaker activities including a campus-wide geocaching challenge. We also prepare the students for the next day at Villanova University by completing a career interest survey with each child. The day ends with a bang as they have late night Einstein Hour followed by their daily journal writing activity. Day one is a reflection on *The Dot* by Peter Reynolds. Each student gets an autographed copy to take home. Oh yeah, they also start their hot air balloon project.



Tuesday

Students venture to Villanova University to see what a college classroom looks like. They experience a hands-on lab at the College of Nursing, tour the athletics facility, learn about the admissions process, eat lunch at the student center, and conduct research in the computer labs. And, the day has just begun. After their first college visit, students travel to Barnes and Noble for a mini-shopping spree. With reading materials in hand, we return to the Freedoms Foundation for a special presentation from George Washington himself.

We emphasize to the students that sometimes the people who have the greatest impact on our lives are people we never meet. The day wraps up with our journal writing reflection.



Wednesday

After two days of thinking about our own interests and goals, we step back and look at those who have helped us along the way. Students take a trolley tour of Valley Forge National Park followed by Einstein Hour in the park. Since it is mid-week, we figure it is the perfect time for some rest and relaxation at the pool.

The evening brings us an opportunity to show students that the “c” in thinc is about choices. Students create and construct their own game boards. And, don’t forget the journal writing reflection.



Thursday

Our second college visit takes us to Cabrini College. Students learn about what it takes to get into college and then tour the campus to see what all the “buzz” is about. We do have a project to complete so our next stop is at the computer lab where our students create glogs about their experience this week. That takes a lot out of them so pizza is ordered just in time for their interpretive poetry class.

Upon returning to the Freedoms Foundation we have Einstein Hour, a special green screen project and movie night to fit in before the week comes to an end. But, not before they write in their journals.

Friday

On our last day we launch the students’ hot air balloons, sign each other’s weekbooks (think yearbook, but only for a week) and conclude the program in grand fashion with a Diet Coke and Mentos fireworks display.

From the students...

I liked going to Villanova University because it showed us that we can do anything!

I liked the Barnes and Noble trip because I got to pick a new book for the summer.
I loved this week.

I wish we could make these five days into two weeks. And maybe go swimming twice.

