

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/ditch-the-classroom-rivalry/>

Ernestine Fu, managing general partner of Brave Capital, observes that many successful companies have been founded by people who went to Stanford together. She encourages students to see their classmates as collaborators and shares her story of building an entrepreneurial community as an undergraduate.



Transcript

- The number one piece of advice I can give is 00:00:06,810 ditch the classroom rivalry.. Classmates today, collaborators tomorrow, their success could unlock yours.. And your friends, your classmates will go on to do amazing things.. One of my colleagues, Chuck Beasley, many of you probably know him or know of him, he has taught several entrepreneurship courses on campus and he did this Stanford Startup Assessment study a few years ago where it focused on the impact of the innovation economy.. And the slide here summarizes some of the results.. There's a news article that came out that summarizes some of the results, and basically it found that companies founded by Stanford University alum have created around 3 trillion in annual revenue, around 5 million plus jobs.. And there's been so many companies created since the 1930s that if you gathered all of these companies together, they would constitute the world's 10th largest economy.. That study was actually published in 2012, so you can just imagine 10 years since that study, those numbers have only grown.. And on the right side of the slide, you'll see a couple companies that have come outta Stanford, several founded by classmates together.. HP, Google, Yahoo, Instagram, like these are all just examples of two classmates getting together and starting a company..

So for me, when I was an undergrad student here, I focused a lot on building a community of founders, builders, innovators on campus.. And one of the things that I did when I was here was I started an entrepreneurship course and program that selected 20 students across the university every year.. Undergrad students, master's students, PhDs, GSB, law, med school, and here's a couple photos from that experience.. I think some of you in the room have actually been part of this or are currently part of this group.. And someone actually ended up founding DoorDash out of that first cohort.. But overall, like really what I wanted to share with this kind of lesson is Silicon Valley is this small, virtuous cycle.. It goes a long way when you just start by helping and collaborating with your classmates right now...