M. Elizabeth Magill: Nominated to Become Next President of the University of Pennsylvania

Scott Bok, Chair of the University of Pennsylvania Board of Trustees, today announced that M. Elizabeth Magill, who currently serves as Executive Vice President and Provost of the University of Virginia, has been nominated by the Executive Committee of the Trustees to serve as the ninth President of the University. The full Board of Trustees will vote on Magill’s nomination at its Stated Meeting on March 4.

Magill would assume the Penn Presidency on July 1, 2022. She would succeed Dr. Amy Gutmann, who announced last year that she would conclude her tenure as Penn’s President after serving in that role since 2004.

“The Penn presidency is one of the most complicated and demanding in higher education, and there are very few people anywhere in the world with the skills that this job demands,” said Bok. “But through a thorough search process informed by input from all university constituencies, we found exactly the right person. Liz Magill is an extraordinarily accomplished academic leader. She has held senior leadership positions at two of the most highly regarded academic institutions in the country, each with a breadth of activities that parallels the broad scope of Penn. In her leadership roles Liz gained valuable experience with the arts and sciences, with a broad range of professional schools and with an academic health system. Throughout her distinguished career she has demonstrated a passionate commitment to academic excellence, to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to student success at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Further, she truly understands and values the critical role of faculty in teaching and research, which is so important to Penn. She is a person who cares about others and has a long history of engaging with the communities in which her institutions have operated. We are extremely fortunate to have found someone with the unique vision, integrity, and compassion of Liz Magill to assume the leadership of our university.”

Magill was raised in Fargo, North Dakota and went on to receive a B.A. in History from Yale University and a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. She became EVP and Provost at UVA in 2019. Prior to her tenure at UVA, Magill served for seven years as the Richard E. Lang Professor of Law and Dean of the Stanford Law School. Before joining Stanford, she was on the faculty at the University of Virginia School of Law for 15 years, serving as vice dean, the Joseph Weintraub–Bank of America Distinguished Professor of Law, and Elizabeth D. and Richard A. Merrill Professor.

Penn Medicine: $14 Million NIH Grant, $8 Million Transplantation Research Grant, and $2 Million in CDC Grants

$14 Million NIH Grant

Penn Medicine has been awarded a prestigious seven-year, $14 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to promote organ transplantation for patients with end-stage renal disease who are currently on the waitlist for a kidney transplant. The team will launch a clinical trial harnessing synthetic chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cells—a form of which was developed at Penn Medicine and became the first personalized cellular therapy for cancer—for use in patients for whom a compatible kidney cannot be found due to pre-existing antibodies against potential donors.

There are currently 97,000 patients on the waiting list for a kidney transplant in the United States. A major barrier to successful transplantation in some of these patients is the existence of pre-formed antibodies against potential organ donors, which may arise when patients are exposed to other people’s cells or tissues such as through pregnancy, blood transfusion, or previous organ transplants. Patients who form high levels of donor-specific antibodies, termed “highly sensitized,” tend to wait longer on the transplant list and may never receive an organ.

“Engineering novel cellular immunotherapies to help improve access to kidney transplants is an exciting area of research for a unique patient population in great need of lifesaving organs,” said Ali Naji, the J. William White Professor of Surgical Research in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and principal investigator of the study. “We’re committed to discovering an approach to help these currently transplant-ineligible end-stage renal disease patients find a path forward to an organ match.”

The NIH-funded clinical trial led by Penn will use CAR T cells, a form of immunotherapy that has proven remarkably effective as an anti-cancer treatment. Two experimental CAR T cell therapies developed at Penn will be used to deplete immune B cells and plasma cells that make donor-specific antibodies with the hope of achieving a compatible kidney match.

“CAR T cells represent a powerful and specific therapy targeting immune cells that produce antibodies that preclude successful transplantation,” said Carl H. June, the Richard W. Vague Professor in Immunotherapy in the department of pathology and laboratory medicine and director of the Penn Medicine Penn First Plus Center.

Penn are the first in their families to attend college. Nearly 20% of undergraduate students benefit from the Penn First Plus program, and this academic year, one in seven first-year students at Penn are the first in their families to attend college.

“I am thrilled and profoundly grateful to Scott and Elena Shleifer for their amazing commitment to support such an important University priority as Penn First Plus,” said President Gutmann. “As a scholarship recipient myself, I know how significantly student aid changes lives. I also know that tuition support alone is often not enough. This gift will enable our University to foster an even more welcoming and inclusive learning environment to prepare all Penn students for successful lives. We are proud to have the Penn First Plus Center bear the Shleifer Family name.”

Increasing access and bolstering student aid have been fundamental priorities for the University during President Gutmann’s tenure. The

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From the Senate Office

The following agenda is published in accordance with the Faculty Senate Rules. Any member of the standing faculty may attend SEC meetings and observe. Questions may be directed to Patrick Walsh, executive assistant to the Senate Office, either by telephone at (215) 898-6943 or by email at senate@pobox.upenn.edu.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Agenda
Wednesday, January 26, 2022
3–3:50 p.m. EST

1. Finalize the Minutes of December 8, 2021
2. Tri-Chairs’ Report
3. Update from the Office of the President
   Discussion with President Amy Gutmann
4. New Business
5. Faculty Senate Seminar, 4 p.m. EST: “Returning to In-Person Teaching (Spring 2022).”
   Open to all Penn faculty.
   Registration link: https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/registry/hwzzjkvf.

Penn Medicine: $14 Million NIH Grant, $8 Million Transplantation Research Grant, and $2 Million CDC Grants

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of the Center for Cellular Immunotherapies and the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy in Penn’s Abramson Cancer Center. “By combining two CAR T therapies targeting antigens that are found on B cell and plasma cells, we hope to achieve successful kidney transplantation in patients with pre-existing antibodies.”

The trial, which intends to begin enrolling patients by the end of 2022, will be offered at three sites, led by Penn and including the Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard University and New York University Langone Health.

“Based on previous success with proving that engineered T cell immunotherapies employing synthetic CARs can induce durable remission of B cell lineage and plasma cell malignancies, we are excited for the opportunity to explore this further,” said Alfred Garfall, an assistant professor of hematology at Penn. “With the favorable safety record we observed with this concept in the cellular approach, there is great anticipation for what Penn’s two experimental CAR T cell therapies could do for patients with cancer, and other conditions, who might benefit from innovative immunotherapies.”

“There is a very high degree of enthusiasm for this research and the impact it can have for patients in need with a treatment approach that could change clinical practice and expand access to transplantation for those with immunologic barriers that currently make them unlikely to receive a transplant,” added Vijay Garud Bhog, an assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at Penn. “The proposed research we are looking forward to conducting is based on strong preliminary data that suggest both safety and efficacy, which is highly innovative in the field of transplantation.”

$8 Million NIH Transplantation Research Grant

A $8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the next stage of the THINKER project—called THINKER-NEXT—will aim to provide a comprehensive view of the risks and benefits of transplanting HCV-infected kidneys into non-infected patients. The trial will take place for five years at eight institutions, led by Peter Reese, a professor of medicine and epidemiology in the Perelman School of Medicine, and David S. Goldberg, now a professor at the University of Miami, and Douglas E. Schauble, a professor of biostatistics at the Perelman School of Medicine.

“In the first stage of the trial, we found out that we could cure hepatitis C from the transplant patients. But now we want to know, how well do the organs function compared to others? Do the patients experience any unique complications? Are they susceptible to any other viruses?” Dr. Reese said. “Since this is a study that involves multiple centers, we hope to have enough data about the approach and its long-term implications. This information will be very important if we are to increase adoption of this practice across the country.”

Penn Medicine and the seven collaborating institutions will transplant 200 kidneys from HCV-positive donors into new patients during the trial. They will determine: whether pursuing a HCV-positive kidney transplant improves patient survival; the one-year kidney function of an HCV-positive kidney transplant recipients; whether the kidney transplant recipients have increased risks of cytomegalovirus infection; and if the prevalence of chronic kidney disease is similar in HCV-positive and HCV-negative kidney donors. The overarching goal is to determine the long-term clinical impact of transplanting kidneys from hepatitis C donors into HCV-negative patients with end-stage kidney disease.

Findings from the THINKER-NEXT project are urgently needed. Currently, the waiting list for a kidney transplant exceeds 94,000 people, with only 14,000 deceased donor kidneys available annually. For the elderly and some other patient groups, it is common to die waiting. Yet, hundreds of kidneys from donors infected with hepatitis C virus are discarded annually, and hundreds more kidneys are never procured because of the perception that that centers won’t accept them.

Emily Blumberg, a professor of infectious diseases; Roy Bloom, a professor of renal-electrolyte and hypertension; Stacey Prenner, an assistant professor of gastroenterology; and Peter Abi, a professor of surgery, provide expertise as co-investigators on the clinical trial.

$2 Million in CDC Grants

More than $2 million in grants from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will allow a Penn Medicine team to further develop infrastructure and clinical capacity to address antimicrobial resistance and infectious diseases in Botswana. The grant will support Penn’s work, in collaboration with Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, at multiple locations across the country through the Botswana-U Penn partnership, a 20-year collaboration between Penn’s Center for Global Health and the University of Botswana and the Botswana Ministry of Health and Wellness.

From the Senate Office

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Funding to Penn is part of a new $22 million, 50-plus-country, and 28-organization total investment from the CDC to tackle antimicrobial resistance, the result of virus, bacteria, and fungi changes that leave microbes tougher to kill and harder to treat in infected patients. In order to curb antimicrobial resistance, researchers need to track resistance mutations, monitor transmission, and better control infection spread in and out of healthcare settings.

“Thanks to the Penn Center for Global Health, Penn has an extremely well-established relationship on the ground in Botswana and with the University of Botswana,” said Jennifer Laubenbach, chief of infectious diseases at Penn and co-PI of the grant. “Botswana is a key place to continue developing strategies to address antimicrobial resistance. While there is a capable cohort of experts and researchers in Botswana experienced in managing and treating various infectious diseases, there remain considerable challenges to addressing healthcare-associated infection and antibiotic resistance. As such, developing and testing infection-control interventions are vital.”

Antimicrobial resistance, particularly antibiotic resistance, continues to be a growing problem worldwide in part due to the overuse of antibiotics. More responsible antibiotic stewardship and strategies to prevent healthcare infections are just some of many interventions that can be employed to prevent further emergence of resistance.

Penn is among several organizations receiving a CDC antimicrobial-resistance grant. Other institutions receiving grants include the University of Oxford, the World Health Organization, and Johns Hopkins University.
After graduating from Yale, Magill served as a senior legislative assistant for energy and natural resources for U.S. Senator Kent Conrad, a position she held for four years. She left the Hill to attend the University of Virginia School of Law. After graduating in 1995, Magill clerked for Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and then for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who Magill credits as having had a profound impact on shaping her career. Magill is the first woman to serve as provost at UVA.

“I am humbled and honored by the opportunity to lead the remarkable institution that is the University of Pennsylvania — and I am grateful to Dr. Amy Gutmann, who has been a visionary and innovative leader,” said Magill. “From its founding, Penn set its sights on making a difference, and 282 years later the Penn community continues to change the world every day through world-class research, teaching, patient care, and service. What is special about Penn is that it does this with an uncommon mix of pragmatism, creativity, and humanity. I look forward to working with the faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community members to build on this inspiring legacy and shape Penn’s next great chapter.”

Magill is a distinguished scholar and teacher of administrative and constitutional law. A fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the American Law Institute, she has been a visiting professor at Harvard Law School, held a fellowship in the Law and Public Affairs Program at Princeton University, and was the Thomas Jefferson visiting professor at Downing College, Cambridge University. Her scholarly articles have been published in leading law reviews, and she has won several awards for her scholarly contributions.

At Stanford, Magill established an innovative Law and Policy Lab, a program that teaches students policymaking by tackling real-life policy problems. She also launched the Global Initiative, which infused a global perspective into the curriculum, including classes taking students and faculty to China, Latin America, India and Europe. Magill was a successful fundraiser as dean, and the global program was funded by the Stanford Law School’s largest gift ever. Magill expanded and redesigned student life initiatives, with a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion; and oversaw the expansion of Stanford Law’s public service commitments in the local community and beyond. Magill also presided over the Law School through major capital campaigns and the Law School in decades, hiring nearly 30 percent of the faculty. A devoted teacher, Magill continued as dean to make time to teach required first-year constitutional law, hosted students at her home, and relished her connection to students.

“Liz is coming to Penn at an opportune moment,” said Bok. “With the completion of our recent $5.4 billion Power of Penn Campaign, the strong performance of our endowment, the contribution of our university to the creation of the life-saving mRNA vaccines and the ever-increasing interest among young people in a Penn education, Penn has the students, the faculty, and the funding necessary to scale ever greater heights in both teaching and research with the objective of translating knowledge and strengthening the local, national, and global communities in which we live.”

Jennifer Pinto-Martin, professor of nursing and epidemiology, who served on the search committee, joined Bok in praising Magill’s selection. Said Pinto-Martin: “Liz Magill is a superb choice to lead our university. She has a profound commitment to students and deeply respects the role of faculty governance. I couldn’t be more pleased to have her as Penn’s next President.”

Magill is married to Leon Szyptcycki, a professor of law at UVA who also serves as Associate Director of the UVA Environmental Resilience Institute. They have two children.

Shleifer’s gift is one of the most transformative investments Penn has received for this community of undergraduates. It provides stable funding for the program through endowment, as well as incentive for others to join them in this effort. Their gift includes the creation of a unique challenge fund to offer a match to donors who establish financial aid endowments for Penn First Plus initiatives.

At the Shleifer Family Penn First Plus Center, students in the Penn First Plus community can access comprehensive resources from across the University. They can also meet with Penn First Plus professional staff and experts in academic support, financial aid, wellness, and career services. The Penn First Plus office is led by executive director Marc Lo and faculty co-directors Camille Charles, the Walter H. and Leonore C. Annenberg Professor in the Social Sciences, and Robert Ghrist, the Andrea and Robert Z. Berg Professor and Director of the Applied and Computational Mathematics Program. These renowned Penn professors work with faculty to create an enhanced awareness of the attributes of Penn First Plus students. Their peer faculty trainings cover college transition, promoting academic success, and fostering a sense of belonging on campus. The faculty co-directors and Penn First Plus executive director also advise the Pre-Freshman Program, which prepares students for their undergraduate experience through a four-week summer immersion into Penn’s campus life.

“Our purpose is to ensure that any student, from any background, can make the most of a Penn education,” said Dr. Lo. “With this phenomenal gift, we expect to deepen our efforts to enhance student academic achievement, create more opportunities for students to find community and a sense of belonging, increase participation in extracurricular experiences, and, of course, provide more relief to the financial pressures of college. We thank the Shleifers for elevating our ability to provide these unique and holistic services for students.”

“Every student deserves the chance to have the best undergraduate experience possible,” said Dr. Charles. “This remarkable gift not only strengthens the foundation of this program, but raises the ceiling for what we can do to fulfill its vital mission.”

“Over the past few years, we have seen so many Penn First Plus students building a sense of confidence and belonging atPenn. These students earned their admittance at Penn and they, like all students, deserve the support that will propel them to success,” said Dr. Ghrist. “The best and brightest students are serving as role models for their peers and inspiring them to do well, which is a wonderful thing.”

An important component of the Shleifers’ gift will expand financial aid, which marks the cornerstone of Penn First Plus. Of Penn’s nearly 10,000 undergraduate students, approximately half receive need-based financial aid. Ten percent receive the University’s most generous and comprehensive financial aid packages for highly-aided students, covering needs such as laptops, holiday breaks, travel, emergency grants, and funds for summer internships, research, study abroad programs and academic courses.

“Funding can have an enormously positive impact on my life. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities this great University opened up to me, and it is my privilege to help provide the same opportunities to other students,” Scott Shleifer said. “Elena and I hope this gift enables many more bright young minds to benefit from a Penn education so they can create the best lives for themselves and their families for generations to come.”

Mr. Shleifer is a 1999 graduate of the Wharton School. He is a partner of the investment firm Tiger Global Management and a co-founder of its venture capital business. Scott and Elena Shleifer’s other gifts to Penn include several undergraduate scholarships, as well as support for the Graduate School of Education, the Wharton School, and other University-wide initiatives.

### Penn Dental Medicine Services Afghani Refugees with Pop-up Clinic

Responding to an immediate need for dental care in the Penn community, Penn Dental Medicine students and faculty recently created a pop-up clinic for more than 60 Afghani refugees awaiting permanent placement in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Many arrived in the U.S. in August and their resettlement is being managed by the Philadelphia-based Nationalities Service Center (NSC), which supports immigrant and refugee clients with health and wellness services, community integration, legal protections, opportunities to achieve English language proficiency, and more. The clinic’s location was set within the residential hotel where the refugees are currently living. Sixteen third- and fourth-year DMD students, along with Penn Dental faculty Olivia Sheridan and Leonard Jensen and hygienist Karline Genuyn, provided care to more than 60 patients, with future appointments made for another 35 patients and 100 hygiene kits dispensed. The major concern of the majority of the families was dental pain and disease. Along with dental exams, fluoride varnish was applied in the oral cavities of everyone seen and over 50 units of silver diamine fluoride were placed and several traumatized teeth were treated.

A number of emergent cases were referred to the school’s Vulnerable Populations Clinic for care. In addition to dental care, extensive hygiene and nutritional advice was provided. The major concern of the majority of the families was dental pain and disease. Along with dental exams, fluoride varnish was applied in the oral cavities of everyone seen and over 50 units of silver diamine fluoride were placed and several traumatized teeth were treated.

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Janet Ansert, Student Registration & Financial Services

Janet Marie Ansert, former deputy registrar and a longtime employee of Penn’s department of Student Registration & Financial Services (SRFS), passed away recently. She was 72.

Ms. Ansert joined Penn’s staff in 1970 as a scheduling assistant and ADP coordinator in the department of data processing. She continued to move upward at Penn, becoming the supervisor of scheduling in 1974. In 1978, she moved departmental units to Student Information Services, to serve as the assistant registrar for academic records. She was promoted to deputy registrar in 2009, a position she held until retiring in 2016. After retiring, Ms. Ansert continued to work in SRFS, consulting on the NGSS Student Records Project.

Around campus, Ms. Ansert served as vice-chair of the Penn Professional Staff Assembly in 1996 (and continued to serve on PPSA committees for the next two decades). The same year, she joined Penn’s 25-Year Club. In 2003, she joined the Board of Governors of Penn’s University Club, a role in which she served until 2015. In the 2000s, she also served as a point person for the annual Penn’s Way campaign.

“Janet was a mentor and a friend to multiple generations of School and Program based registrars,” said Adam Sherr, Senior Advisor/Analyst in SRFS. “From her leadership in running Penn’s Center for University of Pennsylvania ID (CU-PID), to the Fall New Student Orientation Center in Hutchinson Gym to her guidance with issues with student records and student systems, Janet was a steady influence and true Penn Citizen.”

Gwendolyn Gordon, Wharton and SAS

Gwendolyn Gordon, an assistant professor in the Wharton School’s department of legal studies and business ethics with a secondary appointment in the Wharton School’s department of legal studies and business ethics, died on January 25, 2023. She was 61.

Gwendolyn was born in New York City on May 21, 1962, and graduated third in her high school class of more than 1,400 students. She then attended Barnard College, a women’s college that has since merged with Harvard, and graduated in 1971. Then she earned a JD from Yale Law School in 1974. After a clerkship with U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Damon J. Keith (then chief judge of the Eastern District of Michigan), Ms. Guinier joined the Justice Department in 1977 during the Carter administration and worked in the Civil Rights Division. In 1981, Ms. Guinier joined the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, heading the voting rights litigation and legislative program. Among the cases she argued and won was a North Carolina case (Thornburg v. Gingles) that helped define the 1982 amendments to the Voting Rights Act. She also brought a case in 1983 naming Arkansas Governor Clinton as a defendant; it was settled out of court with a consent decree, liberalizing election laws. During the Voting Rights Act case, Ms. Guinier reportedly won 31 of the 32 cases she argued.

In 1988, Ms. Guinier joined Penn’s faculty as an associate professor of law, and four years later she was promoted to professor. She was an eminent faculty member at Penn, serving on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and earning Penn Law’s 1994 Harvey Levin Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence. In 1996, Ms. Guinier received an honorary degree from Swarthmore College (Almanac May 21/28, 1996). From 1996 to 1997, she served on Penn’s National Council of University Presidents, and on the American Bar Foundation and Community, which convened scholars from across the U.S. to compare notes on contemporary societal problems. In 1998, Ms. Guinier received Penn Law’s Robert E. Davies award for “...outstanding contributions to her profession, her university and her community for her special efforts to promote equal opportunities for women and for minority populations” (Almanac April 28, 1998). An affiliate of Penn’s Women’s Studies Program, Ms. Guinier became well known in women’s education for her studies of differences in the way women and men learn.

Ms. Guinier made history in 1993 when she was nominated by President Bill Clinton to serve as assistant attorney general for civil rights (Almanac May 4, 1993). Conservative activists who opposed the nomination seized on Ms. Guinier’s articles in law journals, which dismissed winner-take-all voting as a system that discredited the needs of minorities and recommended proportional voting in its place and called for Black candidates to demonstrate a “cultural and psychological view of group solidarity.” Those conservatives tried to discredit Ms. Guinier as a radical reformer, and bowing to political pressure, President Clinton withdrew Ms. Guinier’s nomination, a move that outraged civil rights activists.

After these events, Ms. Guinier returned to teaching, and in 1998, she left Penn Law to become the first tenured Black female professor at Harvard Law School. There, she became one of the most respected civil rights scholars in the country. Sherrilyn Ifill, current president of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, called Ms. Guinier “easily the most intellectually powerful, towering figure I had ever met.” Ms. Guinier wrote several books detailing her research, including The Tyranny of the Majority: Fundamental Fairness in Representative Democracy (1994), Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback Into New Vision of Social Justice (1998); and The Tyranny of the Meritocracy: Democratizing Higher Education in America (1999). Thanks to her publications and her role in politics, she made many media appearances and was a highly-regarded public speaker.

Ms. Guinier is survived by her husband, lawyer and professor Nolan Bowie; their son, Nikolas Bowie; a stepdaughter, Dana Rice; three sisters; and a granddaughter.

Elihu Katz, Annenberg School

Elihu Katz, a foundational figure in the field of media studies and the distinguished trustee emeritus professor of communication in Penn’s Annenberg School for Communication, passed away on December 31. He was 95.

Born in 1926 in Brooklyn, Dr. Katz attended the Yeshiva of Flatbush, where he learned Hebrew at age 6. He graduated from Midwood High School in 1944 and began a BA at Columbia College in Manhattan. His studies were interrupted, however, by a stint in the United States Army from 1944-1946, during which he was trained as a Japanese interpreter and traveled across the U.S. to compare notes on contemporary societal problems. After the war, Dr. Katz returned to Columbia and completed his degree in 1948. He continued at Columbia as a graduate student in sociology, studying with prominent sociologists Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton.

Dr. Katz later attended Harvard University where he earned his PhD in sociology in 1954, and then taught at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Chicago, where he served as a professor at the Graduate School of Social Service and the Board of Trustees. He joined the faculty at Columbia University in 1957 and served as the director of the Annenberg School for Communication until his retirement in 1987.

Dr. Katz was a prolific writer and researcher, publishing more than 20 books and numerous articles in leading journals. He was a key figure in the development of the field of media studies, and his work has had a profound influence on the way we understand the role of the media in society.

Dr. Katz is survived by his wife, the former Helen Brown, to whom he was married for 66 years, and their three children: Andrew, David, and Aaron; cousins; godchildren; and many close friends.

(Dr. Katz is survived by his wife, the former Helen Brown, to whom he was married for 66 years, and their three children: Andrew, David, and Aaron; cousins; godchildren; and many close friends.)
In 1954, Dr. Katz left the Bureau for Applied Social Research, where he had begun working while at Columbia, to join the University of Chicago’s department of sociology. Soon after, in addition to Chicago, Dr. Katz took a post at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1956, where he co-founded the Communications Institute a decade later. He also assumed a role in the mid-1960s at the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research (IIASR). At Chicago, Dr. Katz continued to research personal influence, the interplay between groups of people and messages in media. He co-authored Medical Innovation: A Diffusion Study in 1966 and The Politics of Community Conflict: The Fluoridation Decision in 1969, both of which studied the influence of medical advertising. Meanwhile, in Israel, he studied the interactions of immigrants with officials like customs workers and bus drivers, co-authoring Bureaucracy and the Public: A Reader in Official-Client Relations in 1973. From 1967 to 1969, in the midst of the Six-Day War, Dr. Katz headed Israel’s nascent television service. This work later led to Dr. Katz working with and studying the BBC in England. In 1978, Dr. Katz began teaching at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California. His research shifted in the same decade to individual empowerment in relation to mass media, studying the responses of culturally diverse individuals to prime-time soap opera (work that was published in 1990 as The Media and Meaning). He continued to research the media implications of events on the world stage, writing Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History about Egyptian president Anwar Sadat’s 1977 visit to Jerusalem. In the 1990s, Dr. Katz headed the Guttman Institute, which further studied Israelis’ responses to social and political events. Also in the early 1990s, Dr. Katz retired from USC and the Hebrew University, and in 1993, he joined the faculty of the Annenberg School at Penn, where he established the post-doctoral Annenberg Scholars Program. While at Penn, Dr. Katz studied diffusion and co-authored Echoes of Gabriel Tardé: What We Know Better or Different 100 Years Later in 2014, which built upon a late-19th-century essay by a French sociologist. Dr. Katz retired from Penn the same year and settled in Jerusalem.

In 2018, Dr. Katz received an honorary doctor of humane letters from Penn (Almanac February 6, 2018), and a colloquium was launched in his honor at the Annenberg School. Also in 2018, Dr. Katz received the prestigious Steven H. Chaffee Career Achievement Award from the International Communication Association. He also received the Israel Prize for social sciences in 1998, and in 2013, an honorary degree from Northwestern University. “He was very much responsible for positioning the field of communication as something that could be studied in the university arena,” said Barbie Zelizer, Penn’s Raymond Williams Professor of Communication. Dr. Katz is survived by his wife, Ruth Katz, a musicologist and professor emerita at Hebrew University; and two sons.

Alan Laties, Ophthalmology

Alan M. Laties, an emeritus professor of ophthalmology in Penn’s Perelman School of Medicine, passed away on December 26, 2021. He was 90.

Born in Massachusetts, Dr. Laties graduated from Harvard College in 1954 and Baylor College of Medicine in 1959. Following graduation, he interned at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City and completed his residency in ophthalmology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. He then served as a postdoctoral fellow in the Institute’s Neurological Science before joining Penn’s faculty in 1960 in the department of ophthalmology. Eight years later, he was promoted to associate professor. During the late 1960s, Dr. Laties conducted influential research on the distribution of the chemical noradrenaline in the structure of the eye, which helped to diagnose eye abnormalities (Almanac December 1968).

In 1972, he was awarded the Jonas Friedenwald Award for his contributions to visual sciences, and the next year, he served on a Penn committee to select the new Vice Provost for Research. Dr. Laties also served on University Council committees in the early 1970s and throughout his career. Dr. Laties was named Honorary Member of Penn’s prestigious Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching in 1970 and the National Retinitis Pigmentosa Foundation Humanitarian Award in 1978. In the early 1980s, Dr. Laties was named the chair of research at the Schiefe Eye Institute, and in 1984, he was awarded the Harold G. Scheie Research Professorship in Ophthalmology at Penn’s School of Medicine (Almanac February 21, 1984). Eight years later, he was named the Harold G. Scheie/Nina C. Mackall Research Professor in Ophthalmology. In 1994, he won the Paul Kayser International Award of Merit in Retina Research of the International Congress of Eye Research, which recognized his influential advances in the localization of neupeptides in the retina. Beginning in 2004, Dr. Laties sat for several years on the board of Penn’s University Club. In 2020, Dr. Laties retired, taking emeritus status.

Outside of his academic duties, Dr. Laties served as editor-in-chief of Investigative Ophthalmologist and Visual Science and chaired the Scientific Advisory Board of the National Retinitis Pigmentosa Foundation-Fighting Blindness. He focused his research on the hereditary disease retinitis pigmentosa and made many advances in diagnosis and treatment of this disorder and other afflictions of the eye, like diabetes and glaucoma; he published this research widely in scientific journals. In the early 1980s, he was part of a two-physician team sent to the USSR by the U.S. government to evaluate a proposed treatment for retinitis pigmentosa.

Dr. Laties is survived by his wife, Deena Gu, a distinguished artist; his children, Jane, Alex, and Nicholas Robinson; and a brother, David.

William Schilling, Student Financial Services

William (Bill) Schilling, C’66, L’69, who served as director of Student Financial Aid (later Student Financial Services, or SFS) from 1981 to 2021, passed away on December 9, 2021 after a brief and sudden struggle with cancer. He was 76.

Born in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, Mr. Schilling graduated from Upper Darby High School and then came to Penn’s College of Arts and Sciences, where he graduated in 1966. Three years later, Mr. Schilling received a law degree from Penn Law. In 1970, he joined Penn’s staff as an upper class aid officer in the department of Student Financial Aid. From there, Mr. Schilling rose through the ranks, becoming the assistant director of the department, then the associate director, acting director, and, in 1981, director.

During his tenure at Penn, Mr. Schilling committed himself to making an Ivy League education possible for students of all backgrounds and means. He oversaw the manifold expansion of Penn’s undergraduate financial aid program and pioneered a no-loan aid policy, ensuring that students in need receive only grants, not loans, in support of their education. In 1997, he led an initiative to improve Penn’s graduation rates by alleviating financial difficulties that had compelled students to drop out (Almanac October 28, 1997). He supplemented this work for educational equity by volunteering with the College Board and the Mendenhall-Tyson Scholarship Foundation.

Mr. Schilling was active in Penn life, serving on several Faculty Senate and University Council committees (as well as several ad-hoc committees that focused on financial aid) and presenting to them frequently about the state of financial aid at Penn. In 1996, he joined Penn’s 25-Year Club. He continued to find innovative ways to make Penn more accessible for students, including partnerships with scholarship organizations and advocating for a generous amount of the money raised in the Making History fundraising campaign to support undergraduate aid. Mr. Schilling retired from Penn in 2012 but stayed at SFS until 2016 as a temporary worker. After his retirement, Penn’s Trustees passed a resolution of appreciation for Mr. Schilling for “significantly and positively impact[ing] the lives of thousands of Penn students” (Almanac July 17, 2012).

Mr. Schilling is survived by his wife, Patricia; children, Amy (Lenny) Liberatore, Donny (Bonnie) Charlewost, Gail (Lawrence) Harning, and William “Drew” Schilling; and seven grandchildren. A memorial service was held on December 18, 2021. Donations in Mr. Schilling’s name can be made to the Church of the Holy Comforter in Drexel Hill, PA.
Spotlight on University City: University City is the region’s leader in education, science, and innovation. The 2.4 square mile neighborhood boasts worldclass institutions that have catalyzed over 85,000 jobs in fields including medicine, higher education, technology, real estate, and hospitality, and is a national leader in the life sciences sector. University City is a destination for culture seekers and food lovers, a transportation hub with some of the most bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streets in the city, and is home to the most significant development projects in the region. With diverse demographics, a blend of housing and rental options, topnotch schools and hospitals, and amenities galore, University City is one of Philadelphia’s neighborhoods of choice.

Real Estate Development: Accelerated growth, rapid transformation, and continued investment remain the story in University City’s real estate sector, which continues to thrive despite disruptions due to COVID-19. Progress on major residential, institutional, public space, and mixed-use projects marked another busy year of groundbreakings, topping outs, and ribbon cuttings in the neighborhood. In the past year, significant progress has been made on three major long-term projects: uCity Square, Schuylkill Yards, and Amtrak’s 30th Street Master Plan. Other key developments, including the newly opened Pavilion at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, 3.0 and 4.0 University Place, and new buildings on the campus of Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, have made major strides toward completion, and plans for multiple large-scale projects aim to transform several blocks of Chestnut Street west of 40th. All told, these investments, totaling over 11.1 million square feet of development in the pipeline, continue to set University City apart as a major regional hub for employment, research, and places to live.

Employment: New development and institutional expansions contribute to University City’s continued status as a top regional employment hub. In 2021, over 25,000 jobs at anchor employers were posted, smashing previous records. Nearly 75% of jobs in University City pay over $40,000 a year, as compared to just over 50% for Philadelphia as a whole. University City accounts for just under 12% of all jobs within Philadelphia, despite representing only 1.69% of the city’s total footprint. A large percentage of jobs are found at the local hospitals and universities, including 600 positions at Penn’s newly opened Pavilion hospital, but growth associated with nascent technology firms and commercialization of research is also creating more employment opportunities at every rung of the career ladder.

Office: University City is home to nearly 5 million square feet of office space, with another 770,000 square feet currently under construction, and was recently ranked 3rd on a list of top growing tech submarkets in North America according to CBRE. Major long-term projects including Schuylkill Yards, 3.0 and 4.0 University Place, and additional buildings at uCity Square are adding to this robust total. In Q3 of 2021, University City commercial real estate was leased at a percentage of 92.7%, good for the highest occupancy rate of all Philadelphia submarkets, and its asking gross rent of $45.74 per square foot is the highest in the region, displaying the continued desirability of doing business in University City. Because of the dominance of offices dedicated to the life sciences, University City’s office buildings fared better than many others during the pandemic, and workers returned at a higher rate in University City than in other parts of the region. Our neighborhood’s amenities and offerings have attracted companies like GSK, convinced Cambridge Innovation Center to double its lab space, and continually attract new investors, developers, and companies.

Retail and Hospitality: Local and national retailers, restaurants, and hotel operators have long viewed University City as a prime location due to an eclectic mix of employees, commuters, college students, and residents. With help from grants, governmental support, creative offerings, new outdoor dining initiatives, and the generosity and support of loyal
Each year, UCD works with partners to address transportation issues including traffic congestion, transit routing, and bike and pedestrian safety. UCD, major institutions, local developers, the City, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission work together on a Transportation Management Association (TMA) that serves the neighborhood. This association formalizes work these partners have done for nearly two decades and opens new lanes to improve how people and goods get around. Together with SEPTA, the TMA operates the Loop through University City (LUCY) bus that carries hundreds of thousands of passengers each year from 30th Street Station to nearby jobs. In 2021, we worked with SEPTA to help address rider safety concerns tied to COVID-19, and with bikeshare program Indego to research and implement new stations for their bike docks. Moving forward, the TMA will continue to assist in projects aimed at improving every mode of transit to benefit residents and commuters.

Road to Recovery: The COVID-19 pandemic impacted all aspects of our daily lives, including how we work, travel, and gather with others. As a society we’ve dealt with major impacts to small businesses, colleges and universities, and across our local economy, and we’ve been forced to make pivots and adjustments to deal with infection rates and variants, social unrest, and vaccination rollouts. As 2021 comes to a close, there are reasons to feel optimistic about University City’s ability to recover.

—University City District

Honors & Other Things

Architecture Faculty: AIA Architectural Excellence Awards

Five faculty members and alumni of the department of architecture of the Stuart Weitzman School of Design were honored in November by the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Institute of Architects with a 2021 Architectural Excellence Award. Among the firms from across Pennsylvania recognized for excellence in design, contributions to the profession of architecture, and commitment to the quality of the built environment were McHenry Architecture, ISA, DGSUA, and Kieran Timberlake, which are led by instructors or graduates of the Weitzman School.

Jurors selected one project from a pool of 105 submissions to receive the Silver Medal, the most distinguished design award. The recipient of this honor was McHenry Architecture for Anderson Hall. Located on Temple University’s campus, Anderson Hall features a grand atrium, creating a new gateway into the academic building and offering a renewed prominence and added functionality.

Erdy McHenry Architecture, led by lecturer Scott Erdy, was previously awarded the 2016 AIA PA Architectural Practice of the Year Award. When speaking about the firm, Mr. Erdy said, “We are mindful of our firm’s Philadelphia roots, wherever we work. In a city where themes of architectural expression and meaning have been posed by visionaries long before our time, we are proponents for a new Philadelphia school where young firms can explore crafts and programmatic expression that may be unique to Philadelphia, but ultimately will have a broader positive influence.” In addition to the Silver Medal, Erdy McHenry was awarded a Merit Award for Fifth Façade: Franklin County Penn State Extension, the first facility completed as part of the CFAES Master Plan, bridging the gap between the community and the Ohio State University campus, as part of its Land Grant mission.

ISA, which is led by alum and lecturer Brian Phillips, was also honored with a Merit Award for the project 22 South 40th Street. The brick structure at 22 South 40th Street, attributed to architect Frank Furness, originally housed a precursor to the Philadelphia Free Library and was later transformed into a PECO showroom and a community health clinic. ISA’s strategic approach to preservation looked to balance historic restoration with reactivating and re-opening the building to West Philadelphia’s vibrant street life, welcoming whatever the future holds. ISA’s Oxford Green was also recognized with a Merit Award. Oxford Green is the largest, greenest housing project built to date by the Philadelphia’s Habitat for Humanity.

Other Weitzman honorees were DGSUA, where Mark Sandersen, MArch’00, is principal, and Kieran Timberlake, led by alumni Stephen Kieran, MArch’76, and James Timberlake, MArch’77. In addition to a Merit Award for their design of Jeff and Judy Henley Hall, University of California Santa Barbara, Mr. Kieran and Mr. Timberlake received the Medal of Distinction, the highest honor given by AIA PA. The architects were praised for “a portfolio of beautifully crafted, thoughtfully made buildings that are holistically integrated into site, program, and people.”

Weitzman alum and member of the school’s Board of Advisors, Mark Gardner, MArch’00, of Jaklitsch/Gardner Architects, served on the jury.

Angela Duckworth: Education Week Public Influence

For the second year in a row, Angela Duckworth—Rosea Lee and Egbert Chang Professor at the Wharton School and the School of Arts and Sciences’ department of psychology with a secondary appointment at Penn GSE—has been named at the top of Education Week’s Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings.

Dr. Duckworth, bestselling author of Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance and co-founder of Character Lab, a nonprofit that connects researchers with educators to advance science that improves the lives of children, is widely regarded as having helped shape the national dialogue on child development.

Rick Hess, director of education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, compiles the list annually. It names 200 university-based scholars in the United States who, according to Hess’s rubric, have done the most in the past year to shape educational practice and policy.

Dr. Duckworth was joined on the list by Penn GSE professors Jonathan Zimmerman, Howard Stevenson, Richard Ingersoll, Roberto Gonzales, and Vivian Gadsden, as well as Penn Vice Provost for Faculty Laura Perna and Dean Pam Grossman.

Deep Jariwala: IEEE Photonics Society Young Investigator Award

Deep Jariwala, assistant professor in the department of electrical and systems engineering in Penn Engineering, is the 2022 recipient of the IEEE Photonics Society Young Investigator Award. The IEEE Photonics Society is a technical community of more than 100,000 professionals dedicated to transforming breakthroughs in quantum physics into revolutionary devices, systems and products.

Dr. Jariwala, whose research lies at the intersection of solid-state opto-electronics and emerging low-dimensional materials, is being honored “for breakthrough advances in optical characterization and understanding of light-matter coupling in excitonic and strongly-correlated semiconductors,” according to the society’s website.

The award, established to honor an individual who has made outstanding technical contributions to photonics before their 35th birthday, consists of a certificate of recognition and an honorarium of $2,000.

Three Penn Nursing Hillman Scholars Awarded Pilot Grants from NPO

In late November three University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing Hillman Scholars, Charisse Ahmed, Cassis Boateng, and Kierra Foley, were notified that their small grant proposals were approved, and they would be awarded pilot grants from the Hillman Scholars in Nursing Innovation National Program Office (NPO). The NPO announces requests for proposals each fall and spring to which the Hillman Scholars at Penn and the University of North Carolina can apply. Charisse Ahmed’s proposal, “Designing Intervention Prototypes to Address Behavioral Barriers to Antiretroviral Therapy Adherence among Adolescents Living with HIV in Eswatini,” continues her work in Eswatini, a lower-middle-income country in sub-Saharan Africa. The targeted problem is low adherence among adolescents living with HIV (ALHIV) to antiretroviral therapy (ART).

Cassis Boateng’s proposal is titled “How Black Male Survivors of Gun Violence Perceive Spirituality and Use in Their Recovery Process.” It furthers his research on the use of spirituality in the recovery process for Black men who are victims to gun violence in Philadelphia. Earlier this year, Mr. Boateng completed a project using existing qualitative data on this topic and applying the five steps of Design Thinking for Health.

Kierra Foley also completed a Design Thinking project this year and will use this pilot award to further that work as detailed in the project proposal, “Piloting an iOS App to Reduce Social Isolation in Sexual and Gender Minority Elders.” The result of her Design Thinking project was a concept for a mobile application named Staying Fabulous, which is designed for sexual and gender minority elders.

Adriana Perez: NHCOA Award

The National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA) recently honored Adriana Perez, an assistant professor in Penn Nursing’s department of family and community health, with its Research Recognition Award during its 2021 special awards ceremony, United for Equity, on December 9, 2021. The ceremony focused on inequalities impacting health and economic security.

The award recognizes Dr. Perez for her dedication and research to improve the lives of Hispanic older adults, their families, and caregivers. “I am deeply honored to have my research recognized by NHCOA, a leading organization that advocates for the community that is the central focus of my work,” said Dr. Perez. “This is even more special because I was nominated by the Alzheimer’s Association, an important national partner in research and policy.”

NHCOA has been the nation’s leading organization focused on improving the lives of Hispanic older adults, their families, and caregivers for over 50 years.

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ALMANAC January 18, 2022
Benchmarks

Since 1956, Penn has celebrated a rite of passage each year, for faculty and staff of all ranks who have been members of the University community for twenty-five years. Another 175 new members crossed the twenty-five year mark in 2021.

25-Year Club: New Members in 2021

Denise Adamson, School of Dental Medicine
Scott Adkins, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Shirley Alameda, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Ameena V. Al-Amin, Perelman School of Medicine
Margaret Alfaran, School of Veterinary Medicine
Pearette Allen, Provost’s Center
Nadra Allen, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Marianne Altland Williams, Perelman School of Medicine
Hewett Ashbridge, Perelman School of Medicine
Yiwola Awoyale, School of Arts and Sciences
Robert Baldassano, Perelman School of Medicine
Gordon Baltuch, Perelman School of Medicine
Thomas Barber, School of Dental Medicine
Sandra Barile, Perelman School of Medicine
Jeffrey Barta, Residential and Hospitality Services
Khalil Bdeir, Perelman School of Medicine
Sam Belkowitz, Weitzman School of Design
Deborah Bennett, School of Nursing
Bill Berner, School of Arts and Sciences
Ian Blair, Perelman School of Medicine
John Blankemeyer, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Timothy Block, Morris Arboretum
Lawrence Boggs, Provost’s Center
Pamela Bond, Residential and Hospitality Services
Timothy Bouffard, Information Systems and Computing
Patricia Brown, Residential and Hospitality Services
Marvin Brown, University Library
Rebenia Cesar, Residential and Hospitality Services
Jesse Chittams, School of Nursing
Cynthia Clark, Perelman School of Medicine
Dareus Conover, School of Arts and Sciences
Dishea Cummings, Provost’s Center
Andrew Dancis, Perelman School of Medicine
Mark Devlin, School of Arts and Sciences
Clare Din, School of Arts and Sciences
Dennis Discher, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Thomas Donaldson, Wharton School
James Donnelly, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Tamra Dunston, Development and Alumni Relations
Jonathan Epstein, Perelman School of Medicine
David Fahringer, School of Dental Medicine
Patricia Felder, Residential and Hospitality Services
Polina Fenik, Perelman School of Medicine
Susan Ferrazzano, Law School
Alan Flake, Perelman School of Medicine
Shaun Flannery, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Maurice Fluellen, Perelman School of Medicine
John Flynn, Perelman School of Medicine
Mark Fogel, Perelman School of Medicine
Douglas Frye, Graduate School of Education
Tapan Ganguly, Perelman School of Medicine
Lan Gao, Perelman School of Medicine
Randi Garnick, Law School
James Gentner, Facilities and Real Estate Services
William Gipson, Student Services
Leah Glickman, University Library
Jerry Glickson, Perelman School of Medicine
Paul Goldin, School of Arts and Sciences
Michael Granato, Perelman School of Medicine
Steven Greenberg, Perelman School of Medicine
Thomas Grogan, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Stephan Grupp, Perelman School of Medicine
Carmen Guerra, Perelman School of Medicine
Indira Gurubhagavatula, Perelman School of Medicine
Daniel Hammer, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Andre Harris, Information Systems and Computing
Banadur Hassan, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Christopher Helker, Perelman School of Medicine
Lori Hitt, Wharton School
Tina Horowitz, Wharton School
Catherine Hou, Perelman School of Medicine
Zhen-Yu Huang, Perelman School of Medicine
Alfred Hunter, Residential and Hospitality Services
Christopher Hunter, School of Veterinary Medicine
Diane Hurley, School of Veterinary Medicine
Sheila Jainlet, University Library
Charles Johnson, Residential and Hospitality Services
Eric Johnston, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Philip Jones, University Museum
Kimberly Junod, President’s Center
Patrick Kim, Perelman School of Medicine
Leslie King, School of Veterinary Medicine
Athena King-Miller, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Jennifer Kogan, Perelman School of Medicine
Magdalena Korecka, Perelman School of Medicine
Eric Krilowicz, Information Systems and Computing
Taryn Kutish, School of Arts and Sciences
Tony Kutney, Wharton School
Dwayne Latimer, University Museum
Liza Law, Wharton School
Denise Lay, School of Engineering and Applied Science
David Levy, Perelman School of Medicine
James Lewis, Perelman School of Medicine
Jun Li, Perelman School of Medicine
Chengyang Liu, Perelman School of Medicine
Kathleen Loomes, Perelman School of Medicine
Alison Loren, Perelman School of Medicine
Zhe Lu, Perelman School of Medicine
Elizabeth Mackenzie, Graduate School of Education
Margrit Maggio, School of Dental Medicine
Carla Maimon, Graduate School of Education
David Malamed, Perelman School of Medicine
Beth Mark, Health and Wellness
Diane Mckarvey, Perelman School of Medicine
Edward Mclaughlin, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Gayle Meadows, Perelman School of Medicine
Qing Meng, Perelman School of Medicine
Rosemary Mck, Perelman School of Medicine
Bryan Miles, Division of Finance
Lisa Montenegro, Perelman School of Medicine
Joanne Murray-Gilmore, Annenberg School for Communication
Karen Naidchuk, Perelman School of Medicine
Hillary Nelson, Perelman School of Medicine
Russell Ney, Wharton School
Michael Ng, Business Services
Russell Nix, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Rolf Noyer, School of Arts and Sciences
Una O’Doherty, Perelman School of Medicine
Edwards Ochseh, Perelman School of Medicine
Michael Pack, Perelman School of Medicine
Tonya Parks, Perelman School of Medicine
Warren Pear, Perelman School of Medicine
Robert Perlsh, Perelman School of Medicine
Nadya Petryk, University Library
James Pillai, Perelman School of Medicine
David Porter, Perelman School of Medicine
Susan Primavera, Perelman School of Medicine
Kathleen Proprt, Perelman School of Medicine
Ricardo Ramos, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Vasu Renganathan, Perelman School of Medicine
Susan Rheingold, Perelman School of Medicine
Gailfline Robinson, Provost Interdisciplinary Programs
Edward Royzman, School of Arts and Sciences
David Rubin, Perelman School of Medicine
Eduardo Ruchelli, Perelman School of Medicine
Robert Sadoff, Provost’s Center
Christopher Savidge, Perelman School of Medicine
Elizabeth Scheyder, School of Nursing
Edna Schwab, Perelman School of Medicine
Alison Seward, School of Veterinary Medicine
Brian Sherman, School of Veterinary Medicine
Anne Shuman, Provost’s Center
Rudra Sil, School of Arts and Sciences
Rebecca Simmons, Perelman School of Medicine
Julie Sochalski, School of Nursing
Julie Spegal, Development and Alumni Relations

(continued on page 10)
25-Year Club: New Members in 2021

(continued from page 9)
Kelly Spratt, Perelman School of Medicine
David Steinberg, Perelman School of Medicine
Julie Stern-Delliner, Perelman School of Medicine
Eric Stoopler, School of Dental Medicine
Angelo Tailey, Business Services
Jonathan Tanner, Perelman School of Medicine
Elena Taratuta, Perelman School of Medicine
Andrew Thomas, University Library
Ann Marie Thompson, Perelman School of Medicine
Sharon Thompson-Schill, School of Arts and Sciences
Petra Todd, School of Arts and Sciences
Andrew Ulane, Information Systems and Computing
Jose Vithayathil, School of Arts and Sciences
Domenic Vitelli, Weitzman School of Design
William Vought, Perelman School of Medicine
Lori Waddell, School of Veterinary Medicine
David Wallace, School of Arts and Sciences
Kim Walls, Perelman School of Medicine
Tammy Watson, Student Services
Laurel Weaver, Perelman School of Medicine
Frederick Webb, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Andrew Wells, Perelman School of Medicine
Ramona Wesolowski, Facilities and Real Estate Services
Eleanor Whittock Martin, Perelman School of Medicine
Cynthia Wicks, Perelman School of Medicine
Robert Wilensky, Perelman School of Medicine
Vern Yoneyama, Information Systems and Computing
Kelly Young Graver, School of Veterinary Medicine
Jennifer Yuan, Information Systems and Computing

Summer Camps and Programs at Penn

Almanac publishes a supplement early each year featuring the camps and programs taking place at Penn over the summer. Offerings listed are camps for children, teens and young adults for an array of activities, from academics, enrichment and recreation—including anthropology, business, law, veterinary medicine and music—to numerous sports camps. To submit information about a camp, email almanac@upenn.edu with the following information: name of camp, dates held (if multiple sessions, indicate dates for each); age range for participants; summary of the program that is 35 words or less; cost (note any discounts); URL for enrollment/application forms; deadline to apply/enroll (if applicable); and an email, link, and/or phone number to obtain more information.

One Step Ahead
Security & Privacy Made Simple

Another tip in a series provided by the Office of Information Security, Information Systems & Computing and Audit, Compliance & Privacy

Resolve to Protect High-Risk Data

The start of the New Year is a great time to do some “data housekeeping”—ensuring you know what data you are handling, and how to protect that data.

Based on the sensitivity of the data, government regulations, and University policies, Penn categorizes data into three risk classification groups: high, moderate, and low.

Data is classified as high-risk if the loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability of the data or system could have a significant adverse impact on any individual, or on the University’s mission, safety, finances, or reputation. High-risk data includes, but is not limited to:

- PennKey password and other system credentials
- Personal health information (PHI)
- Social Security numbers
- Credit card and financial account numbers
- Some student and personnel records
- The export of controlled data

Protection of high-risk data is required by laws or regulations, and Penn is required to report to the government, or provide notice to the individual, if such data is inappropriately accessed.

By understanding the risks associated with the Penn data you use, you can help keep that data, the University, and its people more secure.

In the new year, resolve to protect your accounts and all Penn data:

- Use strong passwords, and also use Two-Step Verification where available
- Stop retaining data when it is no longer needed, and store data securely if it must be kept
- Avoid sending sensitive data by email, which is inherently insecure; use services such as Secure Share when necessary
- Make sure you are familiar with University policies and guidelines that govern the Penn data you use and manage

Learn more about how to protect high-risk data: Penn Data Risk Classification: https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/data-classification; Protecting Penn Data: https://oaep.upenn.edu/privacy/penndata; Information Security Tips for Staff: https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/staff; Two-Step Verification: https://www.isc.upenn.edu/how-to/two-step-faq

For additional tips, see the One Step Ahead link on the Information Security website: https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/news-alerts#One-Step-Ahead

Update
January AT PENN

CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES

Penn Museum
Online events. Info: www.penn.museum/calendar.
25 At-Home Anthro Live: The Story of the Chinese Zodiac; 1 p.m.

EXHIBITS

Penn Museum
Online and in-person events. Info: www.penn.museum/calendar.
21 Virtual Global Guide Tour: Mexico & Central American Gallery; 2:30 p.m.

FITNESS AND LEARNING

21 SNF Paideia Fellows Meet and Greet; hear from Class of 2024 students about their experience in the SNF Paideia Fellowship Program; 3 p.m.; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/paideia-info-join-21 (SNF Paideia Program).

Center for Undergraduate Research & Fellowships
Online webinars. Info: https://www.curf.upenn.edu/curf-events.
21 Fellowships Explained; 2 p.m.
21 Udall Information Session and Scholar Panel; 4 p.m.

Graduate School of Education (GSE)
Unless noted, online events. Info: https://www.gse.upenn.edu/news/events-calendar.
20 Penn GSE Teacher Programs Information Session; 5 p.m.
21 Friday Virtual Chats with Admissions; noon.

READINGS & SIGNINGS


TALKS

18 Conditional Calibration: Controlling FDR Under Dependence and Uniformly Improving Knockoff Methods; Will Fithian, UC Berkeley; BlueJeans webinar; register: https://bluejeans.com/1349012/0327 (Center for Clinical Epidemiology & Biostatistics).
19 Plant Chromatin “Senses” Mechanical Stress; Kateryna Fal, Université de Lyon; 11 a.m.; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/mechanobiology-spring-2022 (Center for Engineering MechanoBiology).

Human Monoclonal Antibody Therapy for HIV-1 Infection; Michel C. Nussenzweig, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; noon; BlueJeans webinar; join: https://primebluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/qxqVRq18mh (Penn Center for AIDS Research, Microbiology).
Tackling Disease-Associated Biomolecules: Freer RNA Therapeutics to Single-Molecule Detection; Connie Wu, Harvard; 3:30 p.m.; Wu and Chen Auditorium, Levine Building; info: https://cbe.seas.upenn.edu/events/(Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering).

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Tulip Figures and Ottoman Fashions in Renaissance Art and Natural History; Vin Narduzzi, University of British Columbia; 4:30 p.m.; Zoom webinar; info: jmcrebel@sas.upenn.edu (English).

Cardiovascular Safety of Biologic and Targeted Synthetic DMARDs in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis; Seo Young Kim, Harvard; 9 a.m.; BlueJeans webinar; join: https://bluejeans.com/873734674/4747?rec=info (Center for Clinical Epidemiology & Biostatistics).

How Do Tissues Fracture and Repair Across Length Scales? Ottman Tertuliano, MEAM; 10:30 a.m.; Zoom webinar; join: https://tinyurl.com/tertuliano-talk-20 (Materials Science & Engineering).

Special Briefing: 2022 Outlook for States and Cities; panel of speakers; 11 a.m.; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/sur-briefing-21 (Penn Institute for Urban Research).

Embodying the Complexity of Korean Queerness: Affective Counter-profiles, Affective Solidarity, and Reconfigured Citizenship; Woori Han, CUDCS; noon; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/han-talk-30 (Korean Studies).

Engineering New Tools to Understand Airway Mucosal Barrier Function; Gregg Duncan, University of Maryland; 3:30 p.m.; room 216, Moore Building and Zoom webinar; info: be@seas.upenn.edu (Bioengineering).

Aristophanic Gyno-Futures: Reproduction Transness Disability; Mario Telò, UC Berkeley; 4:45 p.m.; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/classical-studies-spring-22 (Classical Studies).

The Origins and Futures of the Modern University of Michigan; Emily Levine, Stanford; 5 p.m.; Zoom webinar; join: https://upenn.zoom.us/j/93569894889#success (Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies).

Making and Knowing in Early Modern How-To Texts; Pamela H. Smith, Columbia; 5:15 p.m.; online webinar; info: https://pennmaterialtexts.org/about/events/ (Workshop in the History of Material Texts).

Orchestrating B Cell Responses to Drive Protective T Cell Immunity to Solid Tumors; Chrysalis Paulos, Emory University; noon; GoToMeeting webinar; join: https://global.gotomeeting.com/join?227215405 (Wistar Institute).

The Hippocampus: A Brain Region Worth Remembering; Douglas Coulter, pediatrics; Ameilia Eisen, anesthesiology and critical care; Dong Wang, Drexel University; 6 p.m.; Crowdcast webinar; register: https://www.crowdcast.io/e/neurolecture-hippocampus (Biomedical Graduate Studies).

Continuing Education Series: Current Oncology Clinical Trials and New Treatments for Cancer; Brian Fleischer, oncology; 7 p.m.; Zoom webinar; register: www.upenn.edu/oncotrialseries (Penn Vet).

Penn Dental
Unless noted, online webinars. Info: https://www.dental.upenn.edu/news-events/events/.

21 Oral Appliances and TMDs; Charles Greene, University of Illinois Chicago; 7 p.m.

Economics
Online webinars. Info: https://economics.sas.upenn.edu/events.

19 Designing Representative and Balanced Experiments by Local Randomization; Max Cynthy, MPh; 20 Redesigning Federal Student Aid in Higher Education; Luis Armona, Stanford; noon.

21 (Don’t) Take Me Home: Home Bias and the Effect of Self-Driving Trucks on Interstate Trade; Ron Yang, Harvard; noon.

24 Affirmative Action in Centralized College Admission Systems: Evidence from Brazil; Sebastian Otero, Stanford; noon.

25 Monitoring Team Members: Information Waste and the Self-Promotion Trap; Matteo Camboni, Northwestern University; noon.

Sociology
Locations TBA. Info: https://sociology.sas.upenn.edu/events.

20 Marriage Engagements in New Delhi; Meghan Reed, sociology; 9:30 a.m.

24 Family Composition among US Children: Dynamic, Diverse, and Dispersed; Paula Fomby, University of Michigan; noon.

11 Parenting and the Transition to Adulthood; Elana Van Stee, sociology; noon.

AT PENN Deadlines
For more events, visit the January AT PENN calendar online. The February AT PENN calendar will be published on January 25. To submit an event for a future AT PENN calendar or update, email the salient details to us at almanac@upenn.edu.

On January 25, children can learn about the Chinese Zodiac just in time for Lunar New Year 2022, the Year of the Tiger.

The University of Pennsylvania Police Department
Community Crime Report

About the Crime Report: There are no crimes Against Persons or Crimes Against Society from the campus report for January 3-9, 2022. Eight crimes against property were reported (3 burglaries, 1 arson, 1 retail theft, 1 theft from vehicle, 1 theft other, and 1 other offense) with 3 arrests. Full reports are available at: https://almanac.upenn.edu/sections/crimes Prior weeks’ reports are also online.—Eds.

This summary is prepared by the Division of Public Safety and includes all criminal incidents reported and made known to the University Police Department between the dates of January 3-9, 2022. The University Police actively patrol from Market St to Baltimore Avenue and from the Schuylkill River to 43rd St in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police. In this effort to provide you with a thorough and accurate report on public safety concerns, we hope that your increased awareness will lessen the opportunity for crime. For any concerns or suggestions regarding this report, please call the Division of Public Safety at (215) 898-4482.

18th District

Below are the Crimes Against Persons from the 18th District: 10 incidents (5 aggravated assaults, 2 assaults, 2 robberies, and 1 rape) and 1 arrest were reported for January 3-9, 2022 by the 18th District covering the Schuylkill River to 49th St & Market St to Woodland Avenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Incident Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01/04/22</td>
<td>4:39 PM</td>
<td>3330 Market St</td>
<td>Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/04/22</td>
<td>9:27 PM</td>
<td>4613 Baltimore St</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/05/22</td>
<td>6:00 AM</td>
<td>3401 Civic Center Blvd</td>
<td>Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/05/22</td>
<td>7:55 AM</td>
<td>S 49th St &amp; Chester Ave</td>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/06/22</td>
<td>4:28 PM</td>
<td>S 40th &amp; Market St</td>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/06/22</td>
<td>9:35 PM</td>
<td>4500 Bik Walnut St</td>
<td>Rape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/07/22</td>
<td>4:53 AM</td>
<td>4200 Chestnut Ave</td>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/07/22</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>N 46th &amp; Market St</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/08/22</td>
<td>9:46 PM</td>
<td>4636 Walnut St</td>
<td>Aggravated Assault/Arrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/08/22</td>
<td>11:44 AM</td>
<td>1102 S 47th St</td>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vaccine-like mRNA Injection Can Be Used to Make CAR T Cells in the Body

Experimental immunotherapy can temporarily reprogram patients’ immune cells to attack a specific target via only a single injection of messenger RNA (mRNA), similar to the mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines, according to a new study from researchers in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

The researchers, whose work was published on January 6 in *Science*, demonstrated the new approach with an mRNA preparation that reprograms T cells—a powerful type of immune cell—to attack heart fibroblast cells. Heart failure is often driven in part by these fibroblast cells, which respond to heart injury and inflammation by chronically overproducing fibrous material that stiffens the heart muscle, impairing heart function—a condition called fibrosis. In experiments in mice that model heart failure, the reduction in cardiac fibroblasts caused by the reprogrammed T cells led to a dramatic reversal of fibrosis.

“Fibrosis underlies many serious disorders, including heart failure, liver disease, and kidney failure, and this technology could turn out to be a scalable and affordable way to address an enormous medical burden,” said senior author Jonathan A. Epstein, chief scientific officer at Penn Medicine and executive vice dean and the William Wikoff Smith Professor of Cardiovascular Research in the Perelman School of Medicine. “But the most notable advancement is the ability to engineer T cells for a specific clinical application without having to take them out of the patient’s body.”

The new technique is based on chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cell technology, which, until now, has required the harvesting of a patient’s T cells and their genetic reprogramming in the lab to recognize markers on specific cell types in the body. These specially targeted T cells can then be multiplied using cell culture techniques and re-infused into the patient to attack a specific cell type. The first CAR T cell therapy was developed by researchers from Penn and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2017 for use against certain leukemias—and later approved for lymphoma—that arise from immune cells called B cells.

Although CAR T cell technology is currently used primarily for treating cancers, with dramatic results in many otherwise hopeless cases, its developers have long envisioned harnessing the approach for other diseases. Indeed, Dr. Epstein and colleagues showed in a 2019 study that the standard CAR T cell approach can be used to attack overactive cardiac fibroblasts and restore heart function in a mouse model of heart failure.

However, this standard CAR T cell strategy would be problematic when directed against heart failure or other fibrotic diseases in humans. Fibroblasts have a normal and important function in the body, especially in wound healing. CAR T cells that are reprogrammed genetically to attack fibroblasts could survive in the body for months or even years, suppressing the fibroblast population and impairing wound-healing for all that time.

Therefore, in the new study, Dr. Epstein and colleagues devised a technique for a more temporary and controllable, and procedurally much simpler, type of CAR T cell therapy. They designed mRNA that encodes a T cell receptor targeting activated fibroblasts and encapsulated the mRNA within tiny, bubble-like lipid nanoparticles (LNPs) that are themselves covered in molecules that home in on T cells. That technology is also crucial to the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines now in use across the globe.

“Standard CAR T cell technology involves modifying patients’ T cells outside the body, which is expensive and difficult to scale for common diseases or for use in less wealthy countries,” said study co-author Drew Weissman, the Roberts Family Professor in Vaccine Research at Penn. “Making functional CAR T cells inside the body greatly extends the promise of the mRNA/LNP platform.”

Injected into mice, the encapsulated mRNA molecules are taken up by T cells and act as templates for the production of the fibroblast-targeting receptor, effectively reprogramming the T cells to attack activated fibroblasts. This reprogramming is very temporary, however. The mRNAs are not integrated into T-cell DNA and survive within T cells for only a few days—after which the T cells revert to normal and no longer target fibroblasts.

The scientists found that, despite this brief duration of activity, injections of the mRNA in mice that model heart failure successfully reprogrammed a large population of mouse T cells, causing a major reduction of heart fibrosis in the animals and a restoration of mostly normal heart size and function with no evidence of continued anti-fibroblast T cell activity one week after treatment.

The researchers are continuing to test this mRNA-based, transient CAR T cell technology, with the hope of eventually starting clinical trials. Along with Drs. Epstein and Weissman, the other co-corresponding authors are Haig Aghajanian, co-founder and vice president of research at Capstan Therapeutics; and Hamideh Parhiz, a research assistant professor of medicine at Penn. Joel Rurik, the lead author, is a PhD candidate in Dr. Epstein’s laboratory.

Funding for the study was provided by the National Institutes of Health.

*Adapted from a Penn Medicine News article, January 6, 2022.*