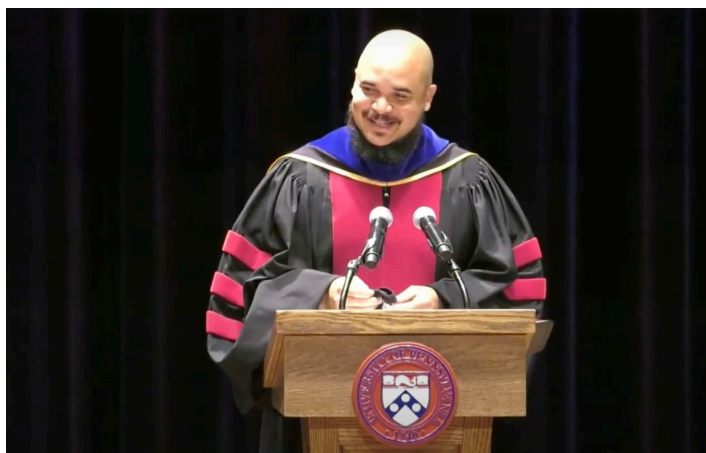


PENN BACCALAUREATE 2022

Remarks delivered by Charles Howard, Vice President for Social Equity and Community and University Chaplain, and Daniel Fragoso, C'22, during Penn's Baccalaureate ceremony on Tuesday, May 10, 2022.

Baccalaureate Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Closing



Vice President for Social Equity and University Chaplain Charles Howard

Welcome

Friends, please be seated.

Good afternoon and welcome to the baccalaureate ceremony in honor of the Class of 2022. And happy senior week, also! Hope you all are excited!

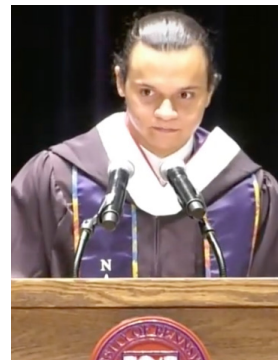
It is wonderful to see you here; it'll be even better to see you on Monday at your graduation ceremony. We have a wonderful program ahead, so I will get out of the way and turn it over to Daniel Fragoso, who will lead us in our land acknowledgement. Thanks for being here, everybody.

Land Acknowledgement

Hello, everyone. I am Daniel Fragoso. I am a proud member of the Nanticoke/Lenni Lenape tribal nation.

We are gathered today on Lenapehoking land that once was and still is sacred to the Lenape people and their descendants, including removed people of the Delaware tribe of Indians and the Delaware Nation of Oklahoma, the Stockbridge-Munsee of Wisconsin, and the Munsee-Delaware of Ontario. Also, local groups that include the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania, the Nanticoke Lenape, the Ramapough Lenape, and the Powhatan Lenape.

It is here that the people called the Grandfather Tribe and the peacemakers have lived their lives, spoken their language, and held their ceremonies for thousands of years. In honor of them, let us pause in the Lenape way: remembering where we are and who we are with; to be one of mind and one heart with all our relations; to remember the ancestors and to walk softly and carefully on our Mother Earth; and to give thanks to our creator.



Daniel Fragoso

Closing

It's been a fantastic program! We're grateful to everyone who made this baccalaureate ceremony a success, from all of our great speakers, our performers, our wonderful organist, Glenn Bryan... We're thankful to the team at Perelman Quad, the President's Office, our wonderful Deans who joined us here today as well. We also thank the Secretary's office, the Provost's office, VPUL, the Office of Student Affairs, our Class Boards, visual, sound, Bon Appetit, my dear colleagues in the Chaplain's Office—Steve, Sana, and especially Patty Burchette. Thank you for all your work.

Penn Interim President Wendell Pritchett's Baccalaureate remarks given in his absence by Charles Howard, Vice President for Social Equity and Community and University Chaplain, during Penn's Baccalaureate ceremony on Tuesday, May 10, 2022.

President's Baccalaureate Remarks

To our parents, families, friends, and, of course, to our amazing Class of 2022 graduates: Welcome to Penn's Baccalaureate Ceremony.



Wendell Pritchett

Next week, on Franklin Field, we will celebrate the achievements of this Class with a blaze of colorful regalia, joyous music, and all the pomp and circumstance for which Penn's Commencement is so famous.

Today's event is a little bit quieter. It is more reflective. And the roots of the Baccalaureate ceremony are ancient, connecting us with centuries of fellow academics stretching all the way back to the Medieval era.

Legend has it that, back then, every graduate was required to complete a final exam of sorts. They had to stand and deliver an entire sermon...in Latin.

Now, today's graduates know all about hard work. They are no strangers to performing with grace under pressure. And I'd be willing to wager that more than a few Penn graduates actually can hold forth in Latin.

But of course, our traditions have evolved. I'm happy to say we have long since waived the Latin requirement, so all of you can breathe easy.

Today's ceremony is about reaffirming the relationships you have

cultivated here; meditating on our bonds of family and love, community and faith; and cherishing fond Penn memories while contemplating a future of good works.

To these ends, I am absolutely delighted that my friend and Penn Carey Law colleague Dorothy Roberts is our honored speaker today. She is the George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology, as well as the Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights.

A renowned interdisciplinary scholar of race, gender, and the law, Professor Roberts works on some of the most urgent social justice issues of our time. We are grateful to have her with us today.

I am grateful as well to our student performers and leaders for making this event even more special and meaningful. I'm thankful to the Reverend Charles Howard and his team. Most of all, looking out at all of you, I am so very proud to see embodied by this Class the highest aims and ideals of our University.

You have come quite far since that warm August evening, four years ago, when we first welcomed you at Convocation. As the sun set to the west and the lights came up on College Hall, we could not have known then what was ahead, the challenges and trials you and all of us would face. Nonetheless, you have persevered. You have triumphed. Be very, very proud of all you've achieved, just as Penn will always be so very proud of you.

Congratulations and enjoy.

This year's Baccalaureate Address was delivered on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 by Dorothy Roberts, George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology and the Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights.

Baccalaureate Address: Envision the Future We Are Building Now



Dorothy Roberts

Reverend Howard, President Pritchett, Deans, fellow speakers and performers, Class of 2022, families and friends. I'm absolutely thrilled to join in this special service honoring all the undergraduates who have completed their academic studies at Penn.

Every year I'm sure a baccalaureate speaker reminds you of the challenging times you are entering. But this year surely takes the cake. Our lives are still constrained by a pandemic that persists despite each year's prediction of its approaching end. Legal precedents advancing freedom that we have relied on for decades and even a century are at risk of evisceration. A war is waging in Europe, along with wars all over the world that the media no longer

report. Economists issue dire warnings of an economic recession whose toll will be felt most terribly by those already suffering from poverty, other structural inequities, and violence. Yes, Class of 2022, you hit the jackpot!

When I learned that the baccalaureate ceremony is rooted in religious tradition and is now an interfaith service, I became extra excited. Because despite being a professor and scholar in disciplines that rely on scientific explanations and evidence-based solutions, I have just described a time that requires vision, faith, and hope. Some challenges call for spiritual guidance.

I want to speak to you today about what I believe is the burning question for our time, for me, and for you. How do we envision a society that is more equitable, peaceful, and humane while focusing on the problems of today? Or to put it in reverse, how do we deal with the world as it is now while also working toward the world as we want it to be?

Or to put it in more existential terms, how do we live on Earth while reaching for Heaven? For me, this is a central question of my faith; but I suspect it cuts across many spiritual traditions.

Jesus taught us that our hope in an afterlife in Heaven had to shape how we loved people on Earth. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus identifies those who will be blessed in Heaven:

"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." But the righteous people are confused about when they did all those things. And Jesus replies that it's whatever they did for the least among us on Earth that counts.

When we arrive in Heaven—whatever that means to you—we will be asked, not about our faith in a heavenly future that awaited us, but what we did for others while we were right here on Earth.

I know she wasn't exactly singing about the kind of love Jesus was talking about, but the words of Belinda Carlisle come to mind:

*Ooh, baby do you know what that's worth?
Ooh, Heaven is a place on Earth
They say in Heaven, love comes first
We'll make Heaven a place on Earth
Ooh, Heaven is a place on Earth*

More seriously, I see this very same idea in the spirituals that my enslaved ancestors sang. One famous one starts with "I am a poor pilgrim of sorrow" and goes on to say, "I heard of that city called Heaven, I started to make it my home."

Another well-known spiritual goes: "I got a robe, you got a robe, all of God's children got a robe, When I get to Heaven gonna put on my robe, gonna shout all over God's heaven."

Enslaved people were able to survive the brutal inhumanity of their current bondage by envisioning their freedom in God's kingdom.

But that didn't mean they waited to die to see that promise fulfilled. No, the spirituals speak of already partaking in Heaven. And they also speak of taking action now to grasp the freedom they were entitled to as children of God. They escaped plantations, often bringing others with them. They

rebelled against the evil of human bondage even while they were subjected to it on Earth.

This theology of enslaved Africans is especially poignant in the spiritual *Steal Away to Jesus*:

*Steal away, steal away,
Steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.*

Robert Tam, whom I believe I tracked down as a history teacher in Hawaii, explains that songs like these were "a call to sneak off to the woods to meet to learn to read, plan an escape or organize an uprising." In fact, the renowned freedom fighter Nat Turner used "Steal Away" to summon his followers in 1831 Virginia when he led a short-lived revolt against slavery.

Note that both were necessary to this liberation theology—both the vision of Heaven and the struggle to implement its promise of freedom on Earth. Enslaved people had to imagine a future where slavery didn't exist in order to strive toward freedom in the here and now. Abolishing slavery meant believing in a radically different future and working toward it even while still in chains.

The great sociologist and civil rights leader WEB Du Bois, who wrote *The Philadelphia Negro*, published in 1899 while he was here at Penn, elaborated on this principle of abolition after the Civil War ended and the hope of Reconstruction was crushed by white supremacist violence. Du Bois attributed the defeat of freedom to the failure to create what he called an Abolition Democracy. True freedom required not only the end to chattel slavery but also the simultaneous building of a free society for everyone.

What is the lesson for you as you graduate into the world today? It is to have a bold vision of a future society that you are working toward, even in the seemingly insurmountable setbacks of today. I've found as I've spoken to countless audiences about dismantling oppressive societal structures, what blocks people the most is their unwillingness to imagine a society without them.

You can't know what changes to work toward today if you can't imagine where you want them to take you tomorrow. Without imagination, what will guide our aims and strategies? If we don't have a vision of a radically different society, we'll be tempted to settle for inadequate reforms—reforms that might fool us into thinking we've made progress, when in reality we've left in place the very structures that keep producing unequal and inhumane results.

There's so much injustice to criticize, dismantle, and abolish, that the task can seem overwhelming. But what if we envision the new world we're creating? That goal gives us direction for what next steps to take, motivation to keep moving toward it, and hope that eventually we—or your generation—will achieve it.

In the words of a great visionary, Angela Davis, "You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time."

That's the secret: You must envision the world you want and then act, along with others who share your vision and commitment, as if it were possible to build it.

I know that it's possible because it's happening now all around us. Look at the Class of 2022 recipients of the President's Engagement, Innovation, and Sustainability Prizes, which are competitively awarded annually to Penn seniors to design and undertake post-graduation projects that make a substantial, lasting impact in the world. I don't have time to name all the recipients and describe their projects, but they range from providing equitable opportunities for free, accessible creative writing education to K-12 students across the United States, regardless of socioeconomic background, to increasing resilience across the healthcare supply chain, and to EcoSPIN, an innovative device to capture microfibers at their laundry point source and protect our oceans and waterways.

So, I leave you with this call: believe in your boldest vision of a better world and then, whatever path you take after you leave this campus, act as if it's possible to achieve it. Class of 2022, you inspire me to act as if the world I envision can actually become a reality.

Congratulations—and go change the world!

Watch the 2022 Baccalaureate ceremony at <https://chaplain.upenn.edu/baccalaureate2022/>.

PENN COMMENCEMENT 2022

Invocation and dismissal given on Monday, May 16, 2022, by Charles Howard, Vice President for Social Equity and Community and University Chaplain.

Invocation and Dismissal

Invocation

Beloved members of the Class of 2022 and all who are gathered here to celebrate them, please join me in a spirit of prayer for our invocation:

Two years ago, because of the pandemic, Commencement was held virtually with all of us watching from our homes.

And last year, though we invited graduates onto Franklin Field, guests were not allowed and were forced to celebrate via the internet.

To see all of us here in this historic stadium with smiles on our faces, teary-eyed loved ones in the stands...well, it feels like we are witnessing a miracle.

Miracles. Those moments or occurrences that inspire awe, that take our breath away, that call forth a deep gratitude after being surprised by joy.

In so many ways, the journeys of each of our graduates has indeed been miraculous.

Overcoming personal or systemic challenges to make it here to our university.

And then to obtain these degrees, that were in part completed online, or through masks and social distancing...well these degrees seem different.

To compete and succeed in our wonderful athletics program and to win championships (three just last week!), or to put on plays or concerts or recitals, or to lead in student government, or perpetuate our hundreds of clubs, to advocate and protest, serve in medical, dental, or veterinary clinics, to offer free consulting or pro bono counsel, or to make it off campus to mentor and tutor...with a devastating pandemic, economic turmoil, deep political divides, and war in the background...to accomplish all that this

group has, well it indeed seems like a miracle—and for this we give thanks.

Gracious One, this class has been through a lot, but they have done a lot...they will do a lot.

And this morning we give thanks not only for the miracles in their lives, but for the miracles that they are.

We pray your blessing on all of them and your blessing on these commencement exercises.

Amen.

Dismissal

After all that has taken place these last few years, we are painfully aware of how quickly things can change.

How a long-planned event can suddenly be postponed.

Or no matter how much we had hoped to be present somewhere or with someone, plans can be cancelled.

Thus, when plans do come to fruition—we should be fully present, all in, living these moments to the fullest...

So, Class of 2022,

When the Glee Club leads us in the singing of “The Red and the Blue,” sing your heart out.

And then when you throw your cap into the sky, hurl it as high as you can,

When you hug your loved ones after recessing out, hold them a little longer,

And wherever your path after Penn leads you, take nothing for granted.

And know that we will never take for granted the gift you have been to us.

Congratulations.

Remarks given on Monday, May 16, 2022, by Vivian Gadsden, William T. Carter Professor of Child Development and Education in the Graduate School of Education, and 2022-2023 chair of the Faculty Senate.

Commit to Educate, Serve, and Elevate the Social and Public Good

Good morning, Interim President Pritchett, Interim Provost Winkelstein, Chair Scott Bok, University Trustees, Honorary Degree Recipients, Faculty Colleagues, Families, and Friends. Most importantly, congratulations to you, the graduating Class of 2022!

I am delighted to see you, and I am honored to represent the Faculty Senate as chair. Our Commencement speaker, the premier storyteller of our times, eloquently speaks to the embodiment of Benjamin Franklin’s perseverance, evolution, intellect, and, yes, human struggles and growth. We meet here today because of Franklin’s indefatigable commitment to educate, lead, and work in the service of civic enlightenment. I urge you to learn from the highlights of his life and, in your lives, aim to educate and to build and learn from diverse communities. I implore you to protect our planet to ensure a high quality of life for yourselves and others. I ask you to dedicate yourselves to define, serve, and elevate the social and public good.

As I look over the sea of talent, I can only imagine the excitement and bewilderment that you are experiencing. As once a young person your age and with parents and family committed to civil rights and justice, I was in a country still coming to terms with how it would respond to the demands for equality and access for people like myself, a member of an historically underrepresented racial group and a woman. Here you are in 2022, having weathered the Covid storms, the social protests for justice, and a shifting socio and geopolitical world.

So, for the next few minutes, I will share with you a little of what it has meant for us, the faculty, to get to know you, particularly over the past two years. We have witnessed your incredible strength and tenacity in an historical moment of enormous uncertainty. We have watched you embrace big hopes and heard your aspirations. You have given us the opportunity to experience your intellectual gifts and personal growth. You have allowed us to observe the many ways you have sought knowledge and understanding, and you have applied both, with increasing fortitude. You learned from and



Vivian Gadsden

with us virtually. You were way ahead of most faculty in your knowledge and use of BlueJeans and Zoom, and we came to know these electronic media as more than technological connectors; they were the interlopers into our lives, the saviors and bane of our existence. They dictated how we would know each other and how you lived at home and at Penn, and we felt like family as you attended virtual classes with your bedrooms as your background (Thank you for sharing!). Once we returned to campus, who knew what a joyous moment it would be for us to see each other in person? In the midst of a rapidly changing societal backdrop, you locked arms with us to make Penn a place that not only represents our intellectual accomplishments but also speaks to our humanity. You push us to reflect on what it means to educate, serve, and elevate the social and public good, and to challenge who we are and what we can and should stand for.

As you leave us, we ask you to enjoy life while continuing to hold close the importance of your intellectual presence, civic purpose, and public engagements. On this day, at the precipice of new beginnings, we urge you not to over-reflect on what you should have done (you will have time when you get old) but to be introspective about what you can and will do. You will walk away from Penn as knowledge brokers and educators, some of you in formal schools and others in the workplace and communities. You will convey the immense significance of climate change and how it affects distant areas of the globe as well the precarious effects of our carbon footprint on the health and well-being of millions of children and families in low-income urban neighborhoods. You will speak of your enchantment and embrace of the possibilities afforded by learning and doing, and you will muse over the power and impact you will represent for good. Like all of us, as members of our fine institution, you will be called upon to serve as exemplars of issues and questions that matter—i.e., to strengthen the physical environments that we often take for granted, improve social systems that reinscribe racial inequity and economic instability, and accept the charge to think and act in ways that lead to meaningful and sustainable change.

For the time being, though, we want you to wrap yourselves up in this glorious moment and revel in the ways that you have inspired us and in which you have been inspired. Live your possibilities, make a difference, draw on the compelling strengths that lie within, share fearlessly your intellect and your heart, and take hold of a future filled with opportunities and potential that stretch the imagination.

PENN COMMENCEMENT 2022

Penn Commencement Address delivered on Monday, May 16, 2022, by Interim President Wendell Pritchett at Franklin Field.

Created Creative

Photos by Scott Spitzer and Eric Sucar.



Interim President Wendell Pritchett delivers remarks at Commencement on May 16, 2022.

Hello Class of 2022! Now, I know you can do better than that. Let's really hear it for the great Class of 2022!

That's more like it.

We gather today to celebrate your many achievements. We also mark the remarkable years—unprecedented, even—that you have spent at Penn.

These historic times have required much of you all. You have experienced more and endured more than many Classes who came before. Yet, to our everlasting pride, you more than met the challenge. You evolved. You thrived.

You could even say you've developed certain special adaptations that now set you apart.

Superpowers, if you will.

Among them, your Class exhibits heightened resilience and responsiveness. Exceptional optimism tempered by pragmatism. Courageous compassion and selflessness.

Also super strength, Spidey senses, and amazing web-slinging abilities.

Wait. Okay, maybe you haven't evolved those superpowers.... Though that would be pretty awesome....

I argue as well that you now possess even stronger skills for navigating the unfamiliar, the unexpected, and the uncertain. You see the world—its many countless challenges and unmapped possibilities—with near-superhuman keenness. Where others see a roadblock, you discern a path forward.

Now, because this is Penn, I will not simply claim all of these fantastic things as true without evidence. Like the scholars and scientists we are, we will put my claims to the test—one last test before you officially graduate. And we're going to do it right here and now, though I promise it will be quick.

Listen up as I share some instructions. Here's how your test will go. I will show you a picture of a landmark at Penn, something iconic, and I want you to guess what it is. But there's a catch.

The iconic image will be presented in some way that is unfamiliar. It may be an extreme closeup, or an unusual angle. I want you to think about it, then shout out your answer. Once I hear some sort of crowd consensus, I'll reveal the correct answer. Got it? Ready? Ok, let your last test begin.

Can I have the first image, please?

[On screen appears: The Button close-up]

Do I have any guesses? Come on, call it out!

Okay, let's see what it actually is.

[On screen appears: The Button sculpture]

The Button is correct! Now that we're all warmed up, let's really get this party started. Next image, please.

[On screen appears: Love Statue close-up]

Alright, let's hear some guesses! Say it loud!

Okay, let's have the reveal.

[On screen appears: Love Statue]

Great! Let's get right into round three.

[On screen appears: Ben On the Bench close-up]

Alright graduates, let's have the answer! Yell it out.

Alright, let's see the image.

[On screen appears: Ben On the Bench]

It's no surprise you are rocking this test. Here's our final image.

[On screen appears: The Quaker close-up]

I think I hear the right answer but yell it out again to be sure.

I believe you nailed this one. Final image, please.

[On screen appears: The Quaker]

As President, I officially declare that you all passed—with flying colors. You also proved my hypothesis beautifully.

Your shared experience as a Class has been forged in the crucible of global change, enormous and at times quite scary.

This experience has granted your Class certain gifts. Among them, your advanced ability to roll with the challenges, and to navigate extreme uncertainty with resilient creativity.

That gift will continue serving you well all your lives. Which is a very good thing because the world needs your unique abilities more urgently than ever. Fundamental threats to democratic norms and values; pandemics and climate change; the rip currents of war: You don't need me to tell you that life—and the world—won't be getting any simpler or more certain anytime soon.

Thirty years ago, the late and forever great Maya Angelou penned an essay about this very thing. She observed that, for all our assumptions, we actually know nothing certain about how our day will go. We cannot know for sure what each day may bring.

Who, after all, could have possibly predicted the twists and turns of the past two years?

(continued on page V)



Vice President for Social Equity and University Chaplain Charles Howard delivers the invocation during Commencement.



Penn President emerita Amy Gutmann received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

(continued from page IV)

I now quote Angelou's essay: "Life is pure adventure," she wrote, "and the sooner we realize that, the quicker we will be able to treat life as art: to bring all our energies to each encounter, to remain flexible enough to notice and admit when what we expected to happen did not happen. We need to remember that we are created creative and can invent new scenarios as frequently as they are needed."

I want to linger for a moment on that final, wonderful sentence: We are created creative and can invent new scenarios as frequently as they are needed.

Angelou rightly observes that while all of us have the capacity for such creativity, it does not simply bubble up by default. Especially amid adversity, there is no autopilot for ingenuity, no cruise control for craft. When a calamity like COVID overtakes us, we must be inventive.

How well your Class has proven it.

That fateful spring of your sophomore year, when Penn decided to evacuate campus to save lives, you turned your own lives upside down to make the plan a reality. You adapted to wholly online learning. You gave of yourselves to care for others. You masked up, marched for Black Lives Matter, got out the vote, got vaccinated and boosted. All of this you did while sacrificing special milestones and moments of joy, on top of acing your studies and extracurriculars, I might add.

You invented new scenarios as needed, and you made it work.

Writing three decades ago, Maya Angelou couldn't have predicted any of the things you have seen. Yet, with the example you have set and your achievements we now celebrate, I believe she could just as easily have been peering into the future and writing about you.

Ten years, 25 years, 50 years from now, you will reunite for milestones. You will gather for weddings and anniversaries and, of course, Penn Alumni Weekends.

At each and every one, you will swap stories about living through an era-defining moment of enormous adversity and rising to the challenge.

You will take pride in those memories. You will reminisce.

And I bet you will still, still, be pretty tired of Zoom calls.

Speaking of reminiscing, while I was preparing to celebrate you today, I did a little digging. I wanted to recall something that occurred way

back in 2018, at the beginning of the fall semester. That was a distant time which, according to the official COVID timeline of events, occurred roughly 100 years ago.

I took a look at the Convocation ceremony for the Class of 2022, and I was reminded that President Gutmann called you the "once in a millennium class." She has been proven even more right than she knew.

But, looking back, I recall that you chose a Class nickname as well. Do you remember? That balmy August evening, by popular acclaim, you elected to call your Class "22 Together."

If our former president has been proven more right than she knew, then all of you have proven downright prophetic.

This Class will forever be woven together more tightly than most. You proved that you are indeed created creative, and you have the amazing track record to back it up. In this and countless other ways, you have earned our everlasting respect and deserve our longest and loudest applause.

So, I ask all the families here today to stand with me now. All of our Trustees, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends, please stand now and join me in showing our boundless affection and pride for the Great Class of 2022.

Thank you and congratulations!



A short rain shower did not dampen the graduates' enthusiasm.

Interim Provost Beth Winkelstein introduced the Commencement speaker, Ken Burns, and presented the academic honors during the ceremony.

A Commencement address was delivered on Monday, May 16, 2022, by Ken Burns at Franklin Field. Mr. Burns is an award-winning documentary filmmaker. Since creating the Academy Award-nominated *Brooklyn Bridge* in 1981, Mr. Burns has gone on to direct and produce many documentaries, primarily focused on American history, culture, politics, and luminaries, including Penn's founder Benjamin Franklin. The address can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jb4KDd4YHil>.