

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA *Almanac*

Tuesday
May 14, 2024
Volume 70 Number 34
www.upenn.edu/almanac

From the Interim President, Provost, and Senior EVP

Ending the Encampment

May 10, 2024

To the Penn Community,

We have worked with serious intention for nearly two weeks to engage the protestors on College Green, who were notified on April 26—the second day of the encampment—that they were in violation of Penn’s policies. This outreach has been met by unreasonable demands and a dangerous escalation of the encampment.

Our community has been under threat and our campus disrupted for too long. Passion for a cause cannot supersede the safety and operations of our University. Early this morning, we took action, with support from local law enforcement, to remove the encampment. We would like to express our gratitude to the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Police Department for their support. This is an unfortunate but necessary step to prevent violence, restore operations, and return our campus to our community.

Under these extraordinary circumstances, and to provide for the safety of our community, access to the College Green area of campus will be restricted until further notice. Those wishing to enter the area will be required to show a valid PennCard. Those without proper identification will be asked to leave and, if necessary, will be escorted off campus, or considered trespassing.

The protestors refused repeatedly to disband the encampment, to produce identification, to stop threatening, loud, and discriminatory speech and behavior, and to comply with instructions from Penn administrators and Public Safety. Instead, they called for others to join them in escalating their disruptions and expanding their encampment, necessitating that we take action to protect the safety and rights of everyone in our community. We could not allow further disruption of our academic mission. We could not allow students to be prevented from accessing study spaces and resources, attending final exams, or participating in Commencement ceremonies, which for many did not happen during the pandemic.

University leaders met with representatives of the encampment on multiple occasions, for extended periods of time. We hoped that reasonable conversations could address both the concerns of protestors and the needs of the University. We made clear that their proposals were not possible, including their demands that participating students and faculty receive amnesty without proceeding through our due process for conduct and for divestment from entities engaged with Israel.

(continued on page 2)

\$5.5 Million National Institutes of Health Grant to Support Chronic Disease Self-Management Among Philadelphia Residents

The Philadelphia Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL), funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has announced a new \$5.5 million NIH grant focused on chronic disease self-management among Philadelphia residents. The project builds on a sustained strategic partnership between Penn Nursing, the Philly CEAL Community Advisory Coalition, and the City of Philadelphia’s Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO).

The strategic partnership includes a \$3.2 million contribution to sustain and evaluate Philadelphia’s Community Health Worker (CHW) program over the next four years. This program offers personalized support to Philadelphia residents, aiding them with a wide range of psychosocial needs, such as wellness workshops, resource navigation, and scheduling medical appointments. Community health workers will receive training in the DECIDE intervention, which will enhance their skills in group-based chronic disease self-management. Additionally, by intertwining this effort with a structured research program, Philly CEAL aims to generate compelling data for local stakeholders and policymakers, advocating for continued investment and sustainability of the CHW program beyond the study’s conclusion. Together, Philly CEAL, CEO, and Penn Nursing are committed to nurturing a healthier, more resilient community through innovative practices, dedicated care, and a shared vision of equitable health access for all.

“Our long-standing partnership with the city was the foundation to the initial efforts of Philly CEAL—to engage the community to address COVID-19,” said Penn Nursing dean Antonia M. Villarruel. “We are pleased to expand our efforts to address an issue of concern to our communities, chronic illness management. Our collective efforts will bring needed infrastructure support to engage community health workers in this important work. This partnership and project afford great opportunities for our students and faculty at Penn Nursing and beyond.”

“Our collaboration with Penn Nursing and Philly CEAL has been integral in addressing urgent community health issues, from COVID-19 to various social determinants of health (SDoH),”

(continued on page 2)

INSIDE

- 2 Senate Special Meeting Actions; Penn Medicine Climate Pledge
 - 3 Deaths; GAPSA 2023-2024 Annual Report; Penn Medicine and Union Partner for Community Fridge
 - 4 Honors & Other Things
 - 5 Flexible Spending Accounts Updates and Reminders
 - 6 Penn Libraries Announce New Book Prize; Call for Papers; Wharton Executive Education: New Strategies for Accountable AI Program
 - 7 Update; Retirement Information Sessions in May; Spring 2025 Designated Course Proposals
 - 8 The State of University City 2024 Report
- Senate Reports Supplement

Mitchell Schnall: Inaugural Senior Vice President for Data and Technology Solutions for University of Pennsylvania Health System

Mitchell Schnall has been appointed to a newly created role as senior vice president for data and technology solutions for the University of Pennsylvania Health System (UPHS), effective May 1, following two terms as chair of radiology in Penn’s Perelman School of Medicine. In his new role, he will lead teams and projects that will pave a path for Penn Medicine to lead the healthcare industry into a new, technology- and data-driven era.



Mitchell Schnall

Dr. Schnall will spearhead the health system’s efforts to understand new tools and approaches and determine how best to implement them across UPHS to improve the provider experience, boost health outcomes for patients, and drive efficiency across the health system.

“Penn Medicine is excited to seize emerging opportunities to use technology in ways that will

(continued on page 3)

Tyshawn Sorey: 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Music

Presidential Assistant Professor of Music Tyshawn Sorey, a multi-instrumentalist and composer who has performed around the world, won the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Music for “Adagio (For Wadada Leo Smith).” The saxophone concerto was commissioned by the Lucerne Festival and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and premiered on March 16, 2023, at Atlanta Symphony Hall. Winners in this Pulitzer category are honored for “distinguished musical composition by an American that has had its first performance or recording in the United States during the year.”

“Adagio (For Wadada Leo Smith)”—which Mr. Sorey calls an “anti-concerto”—is dedicated to Mr. Smith, a trumpeter with whom Mr. Sorey has performed and recorded. As Mr. Sorey himself described the concerto, “it is more about introversion than extroversion...the work unfolds slowly and quietly with beautiful, sustained har-



Tyshawn Sorey

(continued on page 6)

From the Senate Office

The following is published in accordance with the Faculty Senate Rules. Among other purposes, the publication of SEC actions is intended to stimulate discussion among the constituencies and their representatives. Please communicate your comments to Patrick Walsh, executive assistant to the Senate Office, by email at senate@pobox.upenn.edu.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Special Meeting Actions Thursday, May 9, 2024

Faculty Senate Chair *Tulia Falleti* announced a special meeting of SEC by email on Thursday, May 2, to be held on Thursday, May 9, and a meeting agenda was placed in Almanac on May 7, 2024.

Discussion of Current Events on Campus and Resolution Proposals Received. SEC members discussed the ongoing “Gaza Solidarity Encampment” on College Green, sharing information about the status of the encampment, communications that have occurred between University administration and those participating in the encampment, and SEC members’ and their constituencies’ perspectives on next steps that should be taken in reaction to the situation.

A motion was made and seconded on whether SEC should consider passing a resolution in any form in response to the encampment. A quorum of 35 voting members was recognized, and a vote was conducted. By a vote of 12 in favor, 16 opposed, and 7 not voting, the motion did not pass, and discussion regarding passing a resolution ceased.

May 15, 2024 Faculty Senate Executive Meeting Agenda

The agenda was revised on May 13 following the resignation of *Tulia Falleti* as Chair of the Faculty Senate on May 10. To read the revised agenda, visit <https://almanac.upenn.edu/volume-70-number-33#from-the-senate-office-faculty-senate-executive-committee-agenda-v70-n33>.

Penn Medicine Signs National Health Sector Climate Pledge

In a public commitment to lead among healthcare organizations in reducing the industry’s outsized impact on climate change, Penn Medicine has signed an ambitious national pledge promising to significantly cut and, eventually, eliminate its carbon emissions.

The Health Sector Climate Pledge is a voluntary commitment by healthcare organizations to slash greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Since it was created by the White House and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 2022, the pledge has been signed by more than 130 organizations representing nearly 1,000 hospitals, health centers, suppliers, insurers, and others. It constitutes a united effort against climate change by the healthcare sector, which is responsible for an estimated 8.5 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States.

Signing the pledge is the latest part of Penn Medicine’s commitment to a wide-reaching goal articulated in the organization’s strategic plan: to become the most environmentally friendly healthcare organization in the nation. The health system is also part of the University of Pennsylvania’s *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan*, which includes reaching 100 percent carbon neutrality by 2042—eight years ahead of the Health Sector Climate Pledge.

“Advancing sustainability is an investment in the future,” said Kevin B. Mahoney, CEO of the University of Pennsylvania Health System. “As an industry, healthcare has played a role in the changing climate. We’re taking a step back now to consider how to best deliver care while also balancing the ecological impact for the long-term health of our patients, the communities we serve, and the generations that will follow.”

Penn Medicine’s plan to fulfill the objectives of the national pledge involved a year-long assessment of the carbon emissions of the health system’s six hospitals and more than

150 properties. The “carbon baseline” report found that UPHS produces more than 300,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Efforts to halve that number by 2030—one of the goals of the pledge—are already underway. A significant step came in December 2023, when Great Cove Solar Energy Facilities, a massive solar array in Central Pennsylvania, began producing 220 megawatts of electricity each year. The energy, purchased by the University and the health system, will supply about 70 percent of the total electricity demand of the downtown Philadelphia university- and UPHS-owned properties. This renewable power purchase agreement is estimated to cut 50,000 metric tons from the health system’s carbon footprint annually.

Penn Medicine is also taking steps to reduce the carbon emissions generated by employees commuting to and from work. The health system offers employees discounted public transportation passes—costing \$10, compared to the standard \$96 for a monthly pass from SEPTA. Switching from driving to riding public transit can cut each employee’s annual carbon emissions by more than two tons. Electric vehicle charging stations are being added at the Princeton Medical Center campus to complement those already available on the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP) campus.

The health system has also committed to ensuring that all new building projects are designed to incorporate recycled materials, integrate expansive greenery, use less water, use less energy, and qualify for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver, or better, certification through the U.S. Green Building Council. In 2021, Penn Medicine’s newest hospital, the 1.5 million-square-foot Pavilion on the HUP campus, marked a healthcare first when it received the prestigious LEED Gold Building Certification for Sustainability.

From the Interim President, Provost, and Senior EVP

Ending the Encampment

(continued from page 1)

Penn remains unequivocally opposed to divestment, and it is unlawful for institutions receiving funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

We also made clear that the encampment needed to disband and offered ways in which the protestors could continue their demonstration in compliance with our policies. We proposed, and still hope to deploy, Penn’s academic resources to support rebuilding and scholarly programs in Gaza, Israel, and other areas of the Middle East. Despite diligent efforts to find a path forward, the gap between the positions of many in the encampment and the University proved too wide to bridge in this volatile environment, while the risks to our community and our missions continued to increase.

This decision is viewpoint neutral and affirmed by our policies. There are times when our abiding commitment to open expression requires balancing free speech with our responsibility to safety, security, and continuing the operations of the University. This is one of those times and why we have acted. Open expression and peaceful protest are welcome on our campus, but vandalism, trespassing, disruption, and threatening language and actions are not.

—*J. Larry Jameson, Interim President*

—*John L. Jackson, Jr., Provost*

—*Craig R. Carnaroli, Senior Executive Vice President*

\$5.5 Million National Institutes of Health Grant to Support Chronic Disease Self-Management Among Philadelphia Residents

(continued from page 1)

said Orlando Rendon, executive director of CEO. “Together, we’re not just tackling challenges; we’re building a resilient foundation for the future of public health. This partnership exemplifies the city’s commitment to fostering innovative solutions and empowering our communities to thrive.”

Penn Nursing researchers from the department of family and community health are leading a groundbreaking study to improve chronic disease self-management and address the social drivers of health. This project, funded by NIH Community Engagement Alliance, takes a multipronged approach to chronic disease self-management. First, the study will enable community health workers to lead group sessions, equipping residents with the knowledge and skills to manage their cardiovascular health effectively. Second, the research team recognizes that factors like access to healthy food, safe housing, and stress management tools significantly influence health outcomes. They will partner with local organizations to develop solutions and bridge these gaps.

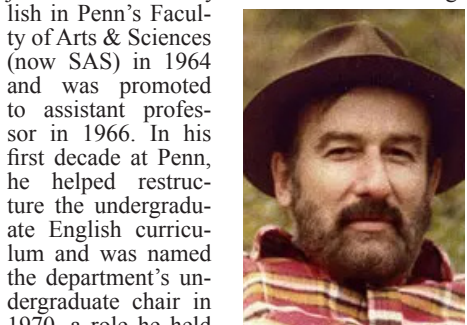
This project, co-led by Penn Nursing’s José Bauermeister, Antonia Villarruel, Carmen Alvarez, Stephen Bonett, and Ashley Clemmons from CEO, holds immense promise for promoting cardiovascular health equity in Philadelphia. By empowering residents and addressing the root causes of health disparities, Penn Nursing and CEO are paving the way for a healthier future for all.

Deaths

Joel Conarroe, English

Joel Osborne Conarroe, a professor of English in the School of Arts & Sciences, the former department chair of English, Penn's first ombudsman from 1971 to 1973, and the dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences from 1983 to 1985, died on April 28. He was 89.

Dr. Conarroe was a 1956 honors graduate of Davidson College. He then earned a master's degree from Cornell University a year later. He joined Penn's faculty as an instructor in English in Penn's Faculty of Arts & Sciences (now SAS) in 1964 and was promoted to assistant professor in 1966. In his first decade at Penn, he helped restructure the undergraduate English curriculum and was named the department's undergraduate chair in 1970, a role he held for three years. As a special assistant to then-Vice Provost Leo Levin, he was also active in involving faculty in undergraduate life, and in 1968, he won the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching. While teaching at Penn, Dr. Conarroe earned a PhD from New York University in 1966. In 1971, Dr. Conarroe was promoted to associate professor.



Joel Conarroe

Also in 1971, then-Penn president Martin Myerson named Dr. Conarroe Penn's first ombudsman (*Almanac* July 15, 1971), a newly created role. According to faculty senate chair Henry Abraham, Dr. Conarroe "plunged into the manifold tasks of his two-year tenure with élan and imagination." In reports he wrote for *Almanac* (December 21, 1971, October 3, 1972, September 4, 1973), he expounded poetically about the joys of meeting a wide swath of faculty, staff, and students from across the University and helping them resolve issues. Dr. Conarroe ceded his position as ombudsman in 1973, returning to teaching in English and to his academic work, which included writing biographies of poets and compiling anthologies of their works. His books included *William Carlos Williams' Paterson: Language and Landscape* (1970), *John Berryman: An Introduction to the Poetry* (1977), and, as editor, the collections *Six American Poets: An Anthology* (1993) and *Eight American Poets: An Anthology* (1997). During his time at Penn, he received several fellowships to support his work, serving as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, Cornell Junior Fellow, and Danforth Foundation Fellow. In 1977, he was promoted to a full professor at Penn, and during the late 1970s, he also served as the faculty master of Van Pelt College House.

Dr. Conarroe spent 1978 to 1983 on leave from Penn as executive director of the Modern Language Association (MLA), the influential scholarly organization founded in 1883. At the MLA, he edited the influential *PMLA Journal* and acted as a spokesman for the humanities in the U.S. and abroad, in part as a member of the ACLS-Soviet Academy of Sciences Commission on the Humanities and Sciences. He led an MLA delegation to Moscow for a symposium on Walt Whitman at the Gorky Institute for World Literature. During this era, he also spent

four summers at the Yaddo writers' colony and served as vice president of the National Book Critics Circle.

In 1982, Penn enticed Dr. Conarroe to return as dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science (*Almanac* November 30, 1982) and as the Thomas S. Gates Professor. As dean, he produced the second-highest yearly fundraising total for the school, which helped fund the Mellon program to develop fresh graduate curricular options, the biology department's plant sciences initiative, and the Center for Early American Studies. Dr. Conarroe also oversaw the founding of SAS and Wharton's Lauder Institute, the expansion of the Writing Across the Curriculum initiative, and the formation of SAS's External Affairs Office, which managed development and fundraising. In 1984, Dr. Conarroe resigned from the deanship (*Almanac* November 13, 1984).

Five months later, Dr. Conarroe was named the third president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, a position he held until 2002. As president of the Guggenheim Foundation, he was deeply devoted to the foundation's mission and worked tirelessly to increase the size of Guggenheim Fellowships (one of which he had received himself in 1977). "He was attuned to changing cultural mores—the twists and turns in dozens of academic and artistic fields—while dealing with the financial challenges and working to raise the amount of fellowships so that people could do their own work," said Edward Hirsch, the current president of the foundation. Dr. Conarroe was also a trustee of the foundation from 1985 to 2016. While president of the foundation, Dr. Conarroe received honorary degrees from Davidson College, Rhodes College, University Maryland, and Tulane University. He also was a former president of the PEN America Center, chaired the National Book Awards in 1988, served on the Pulitzer Prize Fiction Jury in 1989, and sat on the National Book Foundation from 1991-1994.

Dr. Conarroe is survived by his nephews, Ron, Richard, and Michael Conarroe; a niece, Betty Johnson; and a sister, Harriet.

GAPSA 2023-2024 Annual Report

The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) published its 2023-2024 Annual Report in April 2024. The report can be found [here](#). This report summarizes the project work and initiatives of the 2023-2024 GAPSA Executive Board, General Assembly, and committee members. While navigating an unprecedented and challenging year, GAPSA stood steadfast and provided resources for students and student groups, advocated on behalf of the graduate and professional student community, and hosted dozens of programs for students. GAPSA is thankful to our members for their dedication of time and energy outside of their classroom and other extracurricular responsibilities and to our partners throughout the University for engaging in meaningful and productive dialogue throughout the year. For feedback on this report and any inquiries related to GAPSA, please refer to the contact form on our website, [linked here](#).

—GAPSA

Mitchell Schnall: Inaugural Senior Vice President for Data and Technology Solutions for University of Pennsylvania Health System

(continued from page 1)

transform the health care industry," said UPHS CEO Kevin B. Mahoney. "Dr. Schnall is a talented and visionary leader who will help us draw on our institution's longstanding culture of innovation and continuous learning in this new space and provide a road map for health systems across the nation."

In his new role, Dr. Schnall will lead the offices of the chief information officer, chief medical information officer, and chief analytics officer. Together, they will analyze the clinical and business impact of innovations, and work to build on Penn Medicine's success with tools for automating patient access, monitoring, and self-serve transactions.

During his two terms as chair of radiology, Dr. Schnall doubled both the size of the department and its research funding portfolio. He developed training programs and funding pathways for clinician-scientists in radiology, unified academic programs across UPHS's Philadelphia hospitals, and created a single Penn Medicine radiology residency that has been named as the top radiology program in the nation. Dr. Schnall also developed a strong collaboration between the department's community-based physicians and its academic programs. Additionally, he built a framework for "One Penn Medicine Radiology," which he will continue to lead as he assumes his new role. He will continue to serve in a leadership role in the ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group.

Dr. Schnall has a strong national reputation, having been elected as a member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, the Association of American Physicians, and the National Academy of Medicine.

Penn Medicine and the Philadelphia Union Sponsor a Community Fridge

In an effort to jointly target food insecurity to boost the health of the communities around them, Penn Medicine and Philadelphia Union have opened a community refrigerator, located at the Boys & Girls Club of Chester, Pennsylvania. The first project of its kind in Chester, the community refrigerator is accompanied by a deep freezer and pantry shelving to offer a variety of filling and nutritious foods.

"At Penn Medicine, our work has shown the importance of food access for the health of the wider community, and helping establish a program that makes gains in this area brings us great pride," said Kevin Mahoney, CEO of the University of Pennsylvania Health System. "Everything we do is with an eye toward the communities we serve, and it's thrilling to have a partner like the Union that shares those priorities. We're only in the first year of this partnership and already we're working on projects to benefit the community. I'm excited for what the future holds and what our organizations can achieve together."

"The Philadelphia Union remains committed to prioritizing our community's well-being, and in doing so must address the on-going issue of food insecurity," said Tim McDermott, president of Philadelphia Union. "Together with Penn Medicine, our collective focus on the health and wellness of the community is at the forefront, and we look forward to the ongoing efforts and im-

(continued on page 5)

Honors & Other Things

Arielle Xena Alterwaite and Katherine Scahill: 2024 Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

Two PhD candidates in the School of Arts & Sciences have been named to the 2024 class of the Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, administered by the Institute for Citizens & Scholars.

The Newcombe Fellowship, funded by the Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation, is the largest and most prestigious award for PhD candidates in the humanities and social sciences addressing questions of ethical and religious values in interesting, original, or significant ways. Fellows receive a 12-month award of \$31,000 to support the final year of dissertation writing.

Arielle Xena Alterwaite, a PhD candidate in the department of history, and Katherine Scahill, a PhD candidate in the department of music, were named as 2024 fellows.

Ms. Alterwaite's research explores Haiti's sovereign debt in the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution in her dissertation, "Empire of Debt: Haiti and France in the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World."

Ms. Scahill's dissertation, "The Gendered Politics of Religious Authority in Thai Buddhism: Voice, Embodiment, and Sonic Efficacy in the Movement for Female Monastic Ordination," is based upon ethnographic fieldwork with three communities of female Buddhist monks (bhikkhunis) in Thailand. Drawing on the fields of religious studies and music studies, Ms. Scahill's dissertation investigates the sonic practices bhikkhunis employ to establish alternate channels of recognition, given that women's ordination is not accepted at a national level.

Funding at the dissertation stage remains a vital way to support up-and-coming scholars. Since its creation in 1981, the fellowship has supported more than 1,300 doctoral candidates with essential time and resources to complete their writing. Newcombe Fellows have gone on to be noted faculty at domestic and foreign institutions, leaders in their fields of study, Pulitzer Prize winners, MacArthur Fellows, and more.

Sharon Y. Irving: Vice President of ASPEN

Penn Nursing's Sharon Y. Irving is the first nurse, nurse practitioner, and woman of African American heritage to be elected vice president of the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN). Her term begins June 1, 2024. Dr. Irving, who was recently promoted to full professor, effective July 1, is also the Miriam Stirl Endowed Term Chair in Nutrition and vice-chair of graduate education in Penn Nursing's department of family and community health.



Sharon Irving

Founded in 1976, ASPEN is a multi-professional, interdisciplinary professional organization whose members are involved in the research and provision of clinical nutrition therapies across the lifespan. With members

from around the world, ASPEN is a community of dietitians, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, physicians, physician assistants, scientists, students, and other health professionals from every facet of nutrition support clinical practice, research, and education. Currently, there are 5,500 members in ASPEN.

The vice president of ASPEN has responsibility for monitoring progress in the implementation and updating of the society's strategic plan. In the absence of the president or the president-elect, or in the event of their inability or refusal to act, the vice president performs the duties of the president. As vice president, Dr. Irving will automatically succeed to the office of president-elect (2025), then president (2026), then immediate past president (2027). Her term on the board will end on May 30, 2028.

"We are incredibly lucky and grateful for Dr. Irving's guidance and leadership," noted Wanda Johnson, CEO of ASPEN. "Her vast experience as a nurse practitioner and educator and her unwavering dedication to enhancing patients' lives provides a unique perspective that will be extremely valuable in ASPEN's mission to widen and increase our influence as an interprofessional organization."

Brigitte Keslinke: Rome Prize

The American Academy in Rome has named Brigitte Keslinke, a PhD candidate in the art and archaeology of the Mediterranean world graduate group at Penn, among 31 winners out of 1,100 applications. Ms. Keslinke's proposal, "The Making of a Meal: Commensality in the Cult of Mithras," was awarded the Samuel H. Kress Foundation/Donald and Maria Cox Rome Prize in the category of ancient studies.

The prize includes a stipend, workspace, and room and board for five to ten months at the academy's campus in Rome, starting this September. Rome Prize winners are selected annually by juries of distinguished artists and scholars through a national competition.

Valentina Proust, Taylor Smith and Azsaneé Truss: James D. Woods Award

Annenberg School for Communication doctoral students Valentina Proust, Taylor Smith and Azsaneé Truss have been named co-recipients of the 2024 James D. Woods Award. Named in memory of Annenberg graduate student James D. Woods, the award is given to outstanding graduate teaching assistants.

Valentina Proust was nominated for the award by senior lecturer Kim Woolf for her work as a teaching fellow for Dr. Woolf's class COMM 2250: Children and Media. Dr. Woolf praised Ms. Proust's exceptional organizational skills, detailed and constructive feedback to students, and creative teaching style. "Valentina's guest lecture on gender and media was exceptional," Dr. Woolf said. "She listened carefully to students' thoughts regarding the material and handled questions confidently." Ms. Proust studies collective memory and identity as tools to challenge dominant narratives around gender issues within the Global South.

Taylor Smith was also nominated by Dr. Woolf for her work as a teaching fellow for

COMM 2250. Dr. Woolf commended Ms. Smith's dedication to helping students during office hours, her constructive feedback, and her clear and engaging teaching. "What makes Taylor stand out as a teacher is her commitment to her students and her ability to empathize with the undergraduates while continuing to challenge them," Dr. Woolf said. "At least two students mentioned to me that meeting with Taylor enabled them to better understand the material and apply both developmental and media theory to content." In her own research, Ms. Smith explores Black women's unique contributions to Black textual and visual literacies.

As a teaching fellow for COMM 2640: "Media Culture & Society in Contemporary China," doctoral candidate Azsaneé Truss's rapport with students, enthusiasm, and dedication to teaching earned her a nomination from professor Guobin Yang. "It was a big class with 75 enrolled students," Dr. Yang said. "Azsaneé always came to class with infectious energy and very soon became beloved by the students. I would count Azsaneé as one of the top teaching fellows I have had in my decade of teaching at Penn." Ms. Truss's research focuses on Black feminism and how it connects with different forms of expression, drawing from fields like cultural studies, performance studies, critical media studies, and Black studies.

Ms. Proust, Ms. Smith, and Ms. Truss will receive the award at Annenberg's PhD/MA graduation ceremony on May 20.

PSOM's Master's and Certificate Program's Teaching in Excellence Awards and Master's Student Colloquium

The inaugural Perelman School of Medicine Master's and Certificate Program's Teaching in Excellence Awards were presented on April 22 at the annual Master's Student Colloquium in the Smilow Center for Translational Research's Rubenstein Auditorium. The awards were created to honor faculty by recognizing innovative assessment, effective communication, and impactful content delivery.

Emma Meagher, associate dean for the PSOM master's & certificate (MaC) programs, delivered opening remarks and announced the awardees for student poster presentations and the teaching awards. Dr. Meagher then introduced Carl June, the Richard W. Vague Professor in Immunotherapy in the department of pathology and laboratory medicine, who is one of the pioneers of CAR T-cell immunotherapy, as the keynote speaker. The two discussed Dr. June's career journey and his insights from his historic work in the form of a fireside chat. To conclude the event, master's students then gathered in Smilow Commons for a poster presentation session.

The 2024 Teaching in Excellence awardees are:

- Rafe McBeth, assistant professor of clinical radiation oncology, Master of Science in Medical Physics Program
- Laura Conway, associate director, Master of Science in Genetic Counseling Program
- Marilyn Schapira, professor of medicine, Master of Science in Health Policy Research Program

(continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

More information, including poster presentation awardees and an event recording can be found on the [Colloquium website](#).

Kyle Vining: Hartwell Foundation Award

Kyle Vining, an assistant professor of preventive and restorative sciences in Penn Dental Medicine and in materials science and engineering in Penn Engineering, has received an individual Biomedical Research Award from the Hartwell Foundation to explore a novel approach to improving treatment for childhood leukemia. Dr. Vining, a member of the Center for Innovation & Precision Dentistry (CiPD), is among ten researchers representing eight institutions selected as 2023 Hartwell Foundation awardees.



Kyle Vining

Each year, the Hartwell Foundation invites a select group of biomedical research institutions to nominate faculty for its highly competitive awards, which provide significant financial support for three years, specifically for early-stage, innovative, and cutting-edge biomedical research that has not yet received outside funding. Research proposals must focus on improving the lives of children in the United States.

To date, cellular immunotherapy has shown great promise in treating childhood leukemia by engineering immune cells to target cancerous tissue. However, many patients suffer relapses and require additional treatments, risking serious side effects. One reason that some children do not respond to immunotherapy or relapse after treatment may be changes in their bone marrow itself. Dr. Vining's team recently identified fibrotic tissue—that is, tissue that has hardened or scarred—in the bone marrow of such children. With the support of the Hartwell Foundation, Dr. Vining's lab will undertake two research projects to investigate whether structural changes in these children's bone marrow is suppressing the effectiveness of immunotherapies.

Daniel A. Wagner: Fulbright Award

Daniel A. Wagner, the UNESCO Chair in Learning and Literacy and a professor of education in the policy, organizations, leadership, and systems division of the Graduate School of Education, has received a Fulbright Specialist Program award. He will lead a project at Osaka Jogakuin University in Japan that aims to foster knowledge exchange and build partnerships. This initiative will include educational and training activities designed to promote mu-



Daniel Wagner

tual understanding and cooperation between the U.S. and Japan.

Dr. Wagner's selection recognizes his notable academic and professional contributions, along with his ability to drive long-term collaboration between international institutions. His project aligns with the Fulbright Program's mission to create enduring global connections through educational exchanges that benefit communities in the U.S. and abroad.

Joey Wu: 2024 Udall Scholar

Joey Wu, C'25, ENG'25, has received the Udall scholarship.

Mr. Wu, who is studying bioengineering and environmental science in the Vagelos Integrated Program in Energy Research, has been named a 2024 Udall Scholar by the Udall Foundation. Scholars, who receive as much as \$7,000 each, are recognized for leadership, public service, and commitment to issues related to the environment or to Native American nations. Mr. Wu is the 10th student from Penn to be named a Udall Scholar since Congress established the foundation in 1992.

Mr. Wu is the founder and international director of Waterroots, a nonprofit environmental education project that uses climate storytelling to combat water insecurity in more than 20 countries. He is also a researcher in Penn Engineering's McBride Lab, where he works as a plant specialist for a project that promotes environmental stability and sustainable agriculture.



Joey Wu

Karen Xu: 2024 P.E.O. Scholar Award

Karen Xu, a 2024 doctoral graduate in bioengineering at the University of Pennsylvania, is one of 100 doctoral students in the U. S. and Canada selected to receive a \$25,000 Scholar Award from the P.E.O. Sisterhood.

The P.E.O. Scholar Awards were established in 1991 to provide substantial merit-based awards for women of the United States and Canada who are pursuing a doctoral-level degree at an accredited college or university. P.E.O. Scholar Awards recipients are a select group of women chosen for their high level of academic achievement and their potential for having a positive impact on society.

The P.E.O., founded January 21, 1869, at Iowa Wesleyan College, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, is a philanthropic educational organization dedicated to supporting higher education for women. There are approximately 6,000 local chapters in the United States and Canada with nearly a quarter of a million active members.



Karen Xu

Flexible Spending Accounts Updates and Reminders

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) are tax-advantaged accounts that let you use pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible healthcare and dependent care expenses. Using FSAs can save money, however the amount of unused dollars that will roll over—or stay in your account from one plan year to the next—is limited. If you currently have an FSA or you plan to add one to your benefits for 2024-2025, carefully consider your contribution for the new plan year.

Health Care FSA

If you have a Health Care Flexible Spending Account (HCFSA), you will be able to roll over up to \$610 of all unused funds from the 2023-2024 plan year to the 2024-2025 plan year. All unused funds over the \$610 limit will be forfeited. The maximum amount you can contribute to the Health Care FSA is increasing from \$3,050 to \$3,200. The rollover amount will also increase from \$610 to \$640.

You must incur all expenses between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025. Claims must be submitted by September 30, 2025. All rollover funds will be available in November.

Dependent Care FSA

You must use all available funds by the end of the plan year deadline, or you will forfeit any remaining balance. You have until September 15 of the following plan year to incur expenses, and until September 30 of the following plan year to submit eligible claims.

For example, if you enroll in a Dependent Care FSA during the 2024-2025 plan year, you'll have until September 15, 2025 to incur expenses and until September 30, 2025 to submit eligible expenses for reimbursement.

Visit the [Flexible Spending Accounts webpage](#) for more FSA details and single-sign-on access to WageWorks/HealthEquity.

—Division of Human Resources

Penn Medicine and the Philadelphia Union Sponsor a Community Fridge

(continued from page 3)

Our partnership brings.”

At the unveiling, the refrigerator was full of fresh items that included, grapes, avocados, tomatoes, raspberries, green beans, and oat milk. The pantry shelves held canned tomato sauce, dry pasta, and apple sauce, while the deep freezer chest sitting opposite the shelves held a variety of cuts of beef and steak.

The community refrigerator will be open weekdays from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. and available for anyone facing food insecurity. There is a no-questions-asked policy. The refrigerator and pantry shelves will continually be re-stocked weekly through deliveries by the non-profit, food donation facilitator Sharing Excess. The Union will supplement stock with partner donations and provide U-serve opportunities for volunteers to donate food and earn rewards. Additionally, Penn Medicine will conduct volunteer days with their staff to stock the pantry.

In addition to the fridge unveiling on May 4, members of the community attended a free farmers market, where they could collect produce and other essential products provided from Sharing Excess. Residents leaving games at the Boys & Girls Club's gym with basketballs tucked at their hips grabbed fresh tomatoes and red peppers with their free hands. Other residents danced to a DJ's music and played tailgate-style games.

Penn Libraries Announces New Book Prize in Sustainability Sponsored by the Lynn Family

The University of Pennsylvania Libraries have announced the launch of the Penn Libraries Book Prize in Sustainability, presented by the Lynn Family. This new annual award acknowledges outstanding contributions to the global discourse on environmental sustainability, with a specific focus on books that have a substantial impact on the public's understanding of these crucial issues.

The winning author will receive an \$8,000 cash prize and will present their award-winning research during a formal award ceremony on September 26, 2024.

"The Penn Libraries Book Prize in Sustainability is a call to action, encouraging authors and thinkers to contribute to the vital discourse on sustaining our planet for future generations," said Brigitte Weinsteiger, interim director of the Penn Libraries and Gershwind & Bennett Family Senior Associate Vice Provost for Collections and Scholarly Communications. "In fostering a deeper public understanding of environmental sustainability, the Penn Libraries continues our tradition of advancing knowledge for the public good, echoing Penn's broader mission to contribute to a better and more sustainable future for all."

Penn's new strategic framework, *In Principle and Practice*, urges the Penn community to play a leading role in addressing the existential challenge of climate change, stating, "We must, in an all-in University effort, do more." The framework notes that Penn will seek additional ways to fuel and support a variety of initiatives, including those that advance understanding and promise solutions.

"As the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion loom large, the need for informed public discourse has never been greater," said Michael E. Mann, director of the Penn Center for Science, Sustainability & the Media, and a Presidential Distinguished Professor in the department of Earth & environmental science and in the Annenberg School for Communication. "This prize seeks to elevate books that not only address these

critical issues but also inspire actionable insights and solutions and elucidate the interconnectedness of economic progress, social equity, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development, thereby fostering a more informed and proactive global citizenry."

Dr. Mann is one of five jurors representing academia, climate activism, and the private sector who will select finalists and, ultimately, the winner of the prize. Other jurors include Daniel Cohan of Rice University; Sara Cronenwett of Comcast; Genevieve Guenther of End Climate Silence and The New School; and Julie DiNatale of FMC; along with Brigitte Weinsteiger, ex officio.

All non-fiction books in English published between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023 are eligible for submission. Successful candidates for the award will focus on environmental sustainability, covering topics including but not limited to climate change, renewable energy, conservation strategies, sustainable agriculture, water resource management, and green technologies.

Penn Libraries Board of Advisors member Haniel J. Lynn, ENG'91, WG'95, PAR'23, and his wife Anita Hsueh Lynn, ENG'91, PAR'23, generously provided funding to establish the book prize.

"Anita and I are very happy to support this initiative, which spotlights the vital work being done to address the urgent environmental issues of our time," said Haniel Lynn. "Our hope is that the prize ignites dialogue and discussion and extends the impact of the winning book among researchers, policymakers, and the public."

The Penn Libraries began engaging publishers and encouraging submissions for the prize earlier this year, and submissions will be accepted through April 30, 2024. Nominations must be submitted directly by publishers, and each publisher may submit only one title for consideration. Publishers can view the full rules and details of the contest and submit a work for consideration through this [form](#).

Call for Papers: Narratives of Struggle and Hope: Ethnography, Education, and Democracy at a Crossroads

The University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education will host the 2025 Ethnography in Education Research Forum February 7-8, 2025. The topic of the conference is *Narratives of Struggle and Hope: Ethnography, Education, and Democracy at a Crossroads*. For the conference, the Ethnography in Education Research Forum invites scholars and researchers to submit their qualitative and ethnographic inquiries that interrogate the connection between democracy and education, particularly in uncertain or precarious times. The call for papers seeks to explore the nuanced ways in which educators and educational institutions, broadly defined, may serve as sites for democratic struggle, hope, or something in between.

The conference will discuss the politicized times we live in. The last decade has come to be marked by global crises, political divisions, and economic insecurity, and the approaching 2024 presidential election holds the potential to redress or exacerbate these tensions. As we anticipate the political landscape unfolding, a wide and growing array of issues pose challenges for educators, schools, families, and scholars as

they seek to understand and navigate an evolving landscape.

Submissions are encouraged that delve into the multifaceted dimensions of uncertainty, revealing how complex human beings acquiesce, ignore, resist, or challenge their political worlds. Ethnographers, practitioners, students, and scholars are therefore invited to illuminate how university campuses, K-12 schools, and community spaces become dynamic arenas for the negotiation of democratic values, where societal uncertainties are woven into the daily experiences of students, educators, and administrators.

This call for papers goes out to scholars who aim to foster a rich dialogue on schools as (potentially) democratic spaces in uncertain times, challenging researchers to rethink and redefine the boundaries of their ethnographic practice to capture the essence of democratic education in the face of uncertainty.

Papers will be accepted through June 1, 2024. For more information, including submission guidelines, visit <https://2025forum.dryfta.com>.

Wharton Launches Executive Education Program: New Strategies for Accountable AI

With so many organizations rapidly adopting artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, and it changing the way we work, risks are growing as well, including well-known concerns such as bias, hallucinations, privacy and intellectual property issues, legal liability, and regulatory penalties. What are companies doing to prepare and protect themselves? A recent BCG survey found that although 84 percent of executives believe responsible AI should be on top management agendas, only 25 percent have comprehensive programs in place.

Kevin Werbach, a professor and the department chair of legal studies and business ethics in the Wharton School, alongside Wharton's thought-leading AI faculty, will help executives get ahead of the curve in the new Wharton Executive Education program, *Strategies for Accountable AI*. Mr. Werbach will serve as academic director, accompanied by faculty experts from the renowned research center AI at Wharton. The live online program will run from October 16–December 18, 2024.

Strategies for Accountable AI offers participants a real-world, up-to-the-minute roadmap for effective AI oversight, empowering them to build, monitor, and maintain accountable AI solutions. Participants will explore the legal, ethical, and business controversies posed by AI; acquire techniques to mitigate AI risks; discover how fast-changing laws and enforcement across the globe could affect their business; assess their own organization's responsible AI readiness; and more. The program will help executives win a competitive advantage as they discover how to protect their firm and its reputation while leveraging AI for business success.

Executives in all industries who are considering, adopting, evaluating, or expanding AI systems will benefit from this program. So will entrepreneurs working in the AI space, as well as developers and marketers seeking a better grasp of AI's risks and how to mitigate them. The program is also valuable for those working in legal and compliance groups.

[Strategies for Accountable AI](#) is now accepting applications. Prospective participants can learn more and apply at executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu.

Tyshawn Sorey: 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Music

(continued from page 1)

monies and only slightly less sustained melodies introduced via the orchestra or intermittently by the saxophone soloist. This stately but understated work is a welcome respite from the chaos and intrusiveness of modern life."

Mr. Sorey's composition "Monochromatic Light (Afterlife)" was a finalist for the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in Music. That same year, he and Brooke O'Harra, a senior lecturer in creative writing at Penn, debuted a musical collaboration with percussion ensemble Yarn/Wire titled "Be Holding," a multimedia adaptation of the book-length poem by Ross Gay about Julius Erving's momentous sky hook dunk during the 1980 NBA Finals. Mr. Sorey was a 2018 United States Artists Fellow and a 2017 MacArthur Fellow. He has released 13 critically acclaimed recordings as a composer and bandleader, and has received support for his creative projects from the Jerome Foundation and the Shifting Foundation, among others.

Update

May AT PENN

EXHIBITS

18 *Weitzman School 2024 Year End Show*; brings together work from the Class of 2024 in architecture, landscape architecture, city and regional planning, historic preservation, urban spatial analytics, and fine arts; Meyerson Hall. Through June 14.

FITNESS & LEARNING

16 *Executive Program in Design for Sustainability Info Session: Meet XDS Students*; meet current students and instructors and learn how to register at a 30% discount; Zoom webinar; register: <https://tinyurl.com/xds-info-session-may-16> (XDS).

MUSIC

17 (*deep*) *listening: Resonance*; features poet and musician Moor Mother with a supporting performance by Delish (featuring exclusive new material) & interstitial sets by DJ Precolumbian; 7 p.m.; Institute of Contemporary Art; register: <https://tinyurl.com/deep-listening-may-17> (ICA).

SPECIAL EVENTS

18 *Penn Women's Center 50th Anniversary Celebration*; help commemorate a half-century of empowerment, advocacy, and community; 2:30-4:30 p.m.; room TBA; the ARCH; register: <https://tinyurl.com/pwc-50-may-18> (Penn Women's Center).

TALKS

15 *Inequities in Severe Maternal and Neonatal Morbidities*; Stephanie Leonard, Stanford University; 9 a.m.; room 701, Blockley Hall, and Zoom webinar; register: <https://penncine.zoom.us/j/96442998641> (Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics).

Computational FSI Modeling of the Cardiovascular System; Ryan T. Black, mechanical engineering & applied mechanics; 2 p.m.; room 212, Moore Building (Mechanical Engineering & Applied Mechanics).

16 *Uncovering COPD Subtypes Via Multimodal Immunoprofiling*; Leigh Marsh, Medical University of Graz; *Regulation of Smooth Muscle Cell State Through Heterotypic Cell Signaling*; Slaven Crnkovic, University of Graz; 4 p.m.; room 12-146, Smilow Center (Penn-CHOP Lung Biology Institute).

21 *Leveraging Implementation Science to Improve Supports for Students*; Abigail Gray, TRAILS; 11 a.m.; Zoom webinar; register: <https://tinyurl.com/gray-talk-may-21> (Penn Implementation Science Center).

This is an update to the [May AT PENN calendar](#), which is online now. To submit events for upcoming AT PENN calendars or weekly updates, email us at almanac@upenn.edu.

WXPEN Board Meeting: May 22

An open session of the WXPEN Policy Board will meet Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at noon at WXPEN. For more information, email abby@xpn.org or call (215) 898-0628 during business hours.

Retirement Information Sessions in May

Ready to spring into retirement? To help you prepare for the next phase of your life, Penn will host the next series of [Thinking About Retirement](#) presentations on Wednesday, May 29 in Houston Hall from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thinking About Retirement offers three different concurrent sessions specially designed for Penn staff and faculty. Each 90-minute presentation covers an important aspect of retirement benefits: *Penn Benefits & Medicare*, *5 Steps to Creating Your Retirement Income Plan*, and *Social Security Benefits Planning*.

At the *Penn Benefits & Medicare* session, representatives from Health Advocate and benefits specialists from Human Resources will explain the [Rule of 75](#), retiree healthcare options, and how they integrate with Medicare.

During the *5 Steps to Creating your Retirement Income Plan* session, a TIAA retirement plan counselor will discuss such topics as budgeting in retirement, income options, and investments to help you get the most out of your 403(b) plan.

The *Social Security Benefits Planning* session, led by a TIAA representative, provides valuable details about how this program impacts your plans for retirement. You will also get an overview of Social Security benefits, eligibility rules, how to apply, benefits for your spouse, and more.

Benefits specialists from Penn Human Resources will be available throughout the event to answer your questions about Penn's retirement savings plans, healthcare benefits, and other aspects of retiree benefits for you and your dependents.

To register for the presentations, click on the session times in the table below or visit www.hr.upenn.edu/thinkretirement.

Thinking About Retirement, May 29, 2024 Sessions

Social Security Benefits Planning	5 Steps to Creating Your Retirement Income Plan	Penn Benefits & Medicare
9:00-10:30	9:00-10:30	9:00-10:30
10:45-12:15	10:45-12:15	10:45-12:15
1:30-3:00	1:30-3:00	1:30-3:00

For more information about retirement, visit the [Retiree Benefits webpage](#).

Spring 2025 Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Paideia Designated Course Proposals: Requested by May 24

SNF Paideia designated courses examine the theory and practice of dialogue across differences from diverse disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. They also explore the interplay among dialogue, citizenship, service, as well as individual and community wellness. Collectively, they are intended to provide students with the scholarly and applied knowledge, skills, ethical orientations, and experiences necessary for integrating their personal, professional, and civic identities—that is, for “educating the whole person.”

Courses are rostered by academic departments. SNF Paideia is not a rostering academic department. Applicants need prior contingent approval from an academic department before they apply for SNF Paideia funding and designation. It is recommended that faculty reach out to their academic department as soon as possible before applying for SNF Paideia funding and designation.

Course proposals will usually be submitted at least eight months before the course will be offered to allow sufficient time to gather all necessary approvals from the SNF Paideia Program and the appropriate departments and schools. Faculty applications to teach in spring 2025 are requested by May 24, 2024.

Proposals can be submitted at https://curf-upenn.smapply.io/prog/snf_paideia_course_proposal/.

Weekly Crime Reports

The preparation of weekly crime reports for April 28 through May 4 has been delayed.

When available, the reports will appear online at <https://almanac.upenn.edu/sections/crimes>.

If you have any questions, please email almanac@upenn.edu.

Almanac

3910 Chestnut Street, 2nd floor
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111
Phone: (215) 898-5274 or 5275
Email: almanac@upenn.edu
URL: www.upenn.edu/almanac

The University of Pennsylvania's journal of record, opinion and news is published Tuesdays during the academic year, and as needed during summer and holiday breaks. Its electronic editions on the Internet (accessible through the Penn website) include HTML, Acrobat and mobile versions of the print edition, and interim information may be posted in electronic-only form. Guidelines for readers and contributors are available on request and online.

EDITOR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
ASSISTANT EDITOR
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Alisha George
Jackson Betz

ALMANAC ADVISORY BOARD: For the Faculty Senate: Sunday Akintoye, Christine Bradway, Daniel Cohen, Al Filreis, Cary Mazer, Martin Pring. For the Staff Assemblies: Jon Shaw, PPSA; Marcia Dotson, WPPSA; Rachelle R. Nelson, Librarians Assembly.

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, educational or athletic programs, or other University-administered programs or in its employment practices. Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to Sam Starks, Executive Director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, 421 Franklin Building, 3451 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6205; or (215) 898-6993 (Voice).

The State of University City 2024 Report from the University City District

Spotlight on University City: University City is the region’s leader in education, science, and innovation. The 2.4 square mile neighborhood boasts world-class institutions that have catalyzed nearly 80,000 jobs in fields including medicine, higher education, technology, real estate, and hospitality. 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 some of the most significant development projects and life sciences breakthroughs in the region. With diverse demographics, a blend of housing and rental options, top-notch schools and hospitals, and amenities galore, University City is one of Greater Philadelphia’s neighborhoods of choice.

Real Estate Development: In a time of flux for real estate developers across the country due to high interest rates, increased construction and land costs, and a lack of debt capital, University City continues to persevere, due in large part to the ongoing demand for life science office and laboratory spaces. University City is on pace to reach a projected 2.525 million square feet of new development valued at over \$710 million, both record highs for the neighborhood. 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 the 30th Street Master Plan. Other key developments, including the next phase of expansion of the Provident Building campus at 4601 Market Street, the new headquarters for Spark Therapeutics at 3001 Chestnut, and over 4,000 units of multi-family housing planned to arrive by 2027, point toward University City’s continued growth, with an additional 2.77 million square feet in the pipeline expected to be completed in 2024.

Employment: New development, institutional expansions, and a burgeoning life sciences scene contribute to University City’s continued status as a top regional employment hub. In 2023, over 18,000 jobs from our neighborhood’s main employers were posted. More than 70% of University City’s 78,000+ jobs pay over \$40,000 a year, compared to just under 60% for Philadelphia as a whole. University City accounts for approximately 11% 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, but growth associated with nascent technology firms and commercialization of research is also creating more employment opportunities at every rung of the career ladder. Leaders at the local, regional, and national level are taking note of the existing jobs and those on the horizon, and are actively working to invest in and accelerate our status as a regional leader in life sciences and biotech, including the newly created Keystone LifeSci Collaborative resulting from a U.S. Economic Development Administration Good Jobs Challenge grant.

Office: University City is home to ample office and lab space. Since 2000, over 4.5 million square feet of office space has been developed within our neighborhood. Recently, developers have altered their priorities when creating new inventory as a reaction to shifting workplace conditions in a post-COVID world, and new projects instead seek to add to the 3.3 million square feet of lab space instead of traditional offices. The asking lease rate in 2023 increased more than 19% over last year’s figure to \$58.71 per square foot, the highest rate among regional submarkets. Coupled with the region’s 4th lowest vacancy rate of 15.40%, our accelerating life sciences and technology sector is spurring continued investment that can be felt through the city and beyond.

Higher Education: True to its name, University City offers top options in the region and nation for undergraduate and graduate studies. Over 50,000 students are enrolled in the neighborhood’s institutions of higher education, and whether they’re coming from around the city or around the world, scholars are drawn to the proximity to employment opportunities, the beautiful urban campuses, and the vitality of the surrounding community. Both the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University fared well in recent *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, with Penn ranked the 6th best national university and the top business program in the country, while Drexel excelled in similar lists for most innovative schools (#18) and finished #2 for its co-ops and internships.

Healthcare: The neighborhood’s medical institutions—Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP), Penn Presbyterian Medical Center, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), and Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center—combine to account for over 40% of all jobs in University City, making them an essential component of the local economy. Both CHOP and HUP receive annual accolades for quality of care and as top national workplaces: in the 2023 *U.S. News and World Report* rankings of hospitals, CHOP finished #4 for top national hospitals for children, while HUP was nationally ranked in 11 adult specialties. Both hospitals landed on Forbes’ list of best large employers for 2023, with Penn Medicine plac-

ing at #30 on the list. Our local hospitals are also leading the way in new treatments, procedures, and medical technologies, and with the forthcoming arrival of the Children’s Hospital New Patient Tower and Schuylkill Avenue Research Building, there are more on the horizon.

Innovation: University City is a nationally recognized hub for advances in science, research, and medicine. Cutting-edge innovations originate out of 3.3 million square feet of lab space in research hubs including the Wistar Institute, Pennovation, Drexel’s ic@3401, uCity Square, and Schuylkill Yards. This confluence of labs, benches, and clinics contributed to Philadelphia ranking at #6 in top U.S. metros for life sciences research talent according to CBRE. Discoveries initiated in University City spark billions of dollars in economic growth and attract international attention in fields like biotech, robotics, and medicine. In 2023, 225 patents were issued to University City businesses and institutions, which also accounted for \$990 million in NIH funding and over \$30 billion in cumulative R&D spending. Since 2021, over 675 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines were administered in the United States using messenger RNA delivery, a process developed in 2005 by Penn researchers Dr. Katalin Karikó and Dr. Drew Weissman, who were honored with the 2023 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

Transportation: Need to get around the neighborhood? You’re in luck. University City boasts excellent options for bicyclists, pedestrians, and commuters using public transit, earning Walkscore.com’s “paradise” status for all three modes of transportation. It’s no surprise, then, that 84% of neighborhood residents also work in University City. In 2023, the Streets Department and PennDOT completed a major repaving project of Walnut Street from 33rd to 63rd Streets to create safer crossings at intersections, to provide traffic calming, and to install parking-separated bike lanes. As more employees return to the office, University City boasts a network of light rail, bus routes, and protected bike lanes to support them, and in 2023, Amtrak reported 4.2 million riders at William H. Gray III 30th Street Station, or 93% of the pre-pandemic high in 2019.

People: University City is home to a diverse and growing cross-section of residents. Following a dip in 2020 due to COVID, our population has surpassed 55,000 residents for the first time ever, and with a forthcoming increase in housing options—4,200 units of multi-family housing expected by 2026—this surge will likely continue. Our residents skew young (median age of 27.6), educated (25.2% possess a bachelor’s degree or higher), and ethnically diverse, with nearly 19% of residents born outside of the United States and 24% of households speaking non-English languages within their homes. Our dynamic neighborhood, rich in medical and educational institutions, led to 12% of residents moving here from another state, compared to 3% citywide.

Life in the Neighborhood: How do you define a great place to live? For University City, it’s fantastic amenities, an excellent dining scene, diverse housing options, world-class transit, parks and public spaces aplenty, and communities with distinct and unique personalities.

Schuylkill Yards: Currently rising in University City, Schuylkill Yards is the \$3.5 billion master-planned neighborhood being developed by Brandywine Realty Trust in partnership with Drexel University. Beginning with the development of Cira Centre in 2005, Schuylkill Yards continues today along the Schuylkill riverfront. Schuylkill Yards is a new nexus of knowledge and innovation within the top life science hub of Philadelphia—a 14-acre neighborhood that features striking architecture, 6.5 acres of public greenspace, 70,000 square feet of dynamic retail and entertainment options, 3.9 million square feet of world-class life science and workspace, and 1.5 million square feet of living space. Drexel Square, the first of Schuylkill Yards’ 6.5 acres of planned green spaces, opened to the public in June 2019. The 1.3-acre park features a 12,000-square-foot elliptical lawn, 23 Dawn Redwood trees, and an array of shrubs and perennials in over 9,000 square feet of raised planted beds.

In August 2019, Brandywine unveiled architectural designs for the east and west towers at Schuylkill Yards. Designed to complement one another, the towers artfully merge inspiration from historic building materials with modern architecture and are linked by High Line Park, a welcoming, publicly accessible destination for intimate programmed events, relaxation, collaboration, and community enjoyment.

As Philadelphia continues to grow as one of the leading life science clusters in the nation, Schuylkill Yards solidifies its place as the ecosystem’s heart. Here, directly adjacent to Amtrak’s 30th Street Station, Drexel University, and the University of Pennsylvania, Brandywine is building a connection point to world-class healthcare and academic institutions, top-tier talent, and readily available investment capital.

For the full report, visit <https://issuu.com/universitycity/docs/the-state-of-university-city-2024>.

—University City District