

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA *Almanac*

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From the President, Provost, and Executive Vice President

Announcing Penn Forward

September 3, 2025

To the University Community,

Today, we announce the launch of *Penn Forward*, a University-wide strategic planning initiative to shape Penn's future.

Since its founding in 1740, the University of Pennsylvania has continuously innovated in education, scholarship, and service. That constant self-improvement is part of what makes Penn such a practical institution, able to address current challenges and emerging opportunities.

In the late 19th century, Penn responded to industrialization and professionalization by expanding into law, business, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and engineering—helping define the advanced research university. In the 1940s, we modernized our research infrastructure to meet the demands of war and global uncertainty. At the turn of this century, we invested in life sciences, community engagement, and expanded access.

Now, higher education faces new challenges and opportunities. These include a rapidly shifting funding environment, virtual learning, artificial intelligence, new research tools, rising skepticism about higher education's value, and the potential to serve more learners across more stages of life and more parts of the world.

Penn Forward will advance the key pillars of [In Principle and Practice](#) to meet these extraordinary challenges and opportunities with Penn-specific approaches that will continue to shape the higher education landscape.

We will focus on six domains of bold, necessary action:

1. *Undergraduate Education and Innovation*
Ensure that our students are prepared for lives situated in complexity, equipped for personal fulfillment and societal contribution
2. *Graduate and Professional Training*
Prepare graduate and professional students for emerging and evolving fields and careers faster and less expensively, create more flexible pathways toward their goals, and support professional readiness across a wider spectrum of opportunities
3. *Research Strategy and Financing*
Secure new forms of support for our research ambitions and reimagine approaches to innovation, while protecting the freedom and creativity essential for progress
4. *Global Opportunity and New Markets*
Think across place and time—broadening Penn's reach geographically and serving learners, alumni, and partners throughout their lives
5. *Access, Affordability, and Value*
Make Penn more welcoming, and feel more welcoming, to those who can benefit from what we have to offer; clarify the cost and value of a Penn education, and

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Penn Launches New Statewide Engagement Initiative

The Penn Commonwealth-Engaged Scholars (PCES) Program is a new initiative aimed at deepening the University's connection with communities across Pennsylvania. Funding for PCES comes from Penn's inaugural Draw Down the Lightning Grants program.

While Penn is the oldest institution of higher education in the state, it has largely been disconnected from the Commonwealth outside of Philadelphia and its neighboring counties. Consistent with Penn's new strategic framework, [In Principle and Practice](#), the PCES program seeks to address this "familiarity deficit" and position Penn as an anchored, engaged, and interwoven institution that brings forth inventive solutions to pressing problems. The first cohort of PCES scholars is made up of faculty and staff members who are interested in applying their expertise to local Pennsylvania issues. They are:

- Laura Garnick Bellet, director of strategic communications projects, Penn Central Development and Alumni Relations
- Julie Berger, senior associate director,

Office of School & Community Engagement, Penn GSE

- Vanessa Chan, vice dean of innovation & entrepreneurship, Penn Engineering
- Selena A. Gilles, practice professor and associate dean for school and community engagement, Penn Nursing
- David A. Hill, assistant professor of pediatrics, Perelman School of Medicine
- Aaron Levy, senior lecturer of English and the history of art, School of Arts & Sciences
- Irina Marinov, associate professor of Earth and environmental science, School of Arts & Sciences
- Cypress Marrs, research associate, Penn Housing Initiative, Weitzman School of Design
- Desmond Upton Patton, Penn Integrates Knowledge (PIK) University Professor, School of Social Policy & Practice and Annenberg School for Communication
- Carlos Gray Santana, associate professor of philosophy, School of Arts & Sciences

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Margo Brooks Carthon, Jie Deng, and Catherine McDonald: Endowed Chairs in Penn Nursing

J. Margo Brooks Carthon: Van Ameringen Chair in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing

J. Margo Brooks Carthon has been named the Van Ameringen Chair in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing. She is a nationally and internationally recognized nurse scientist and clinical leader whose work has significantly influenced health equity research and its impact on health care delivery. Using perspectives and research designs ranging from historical analysis to quantitative methods with large data sets to inform her scholarship, Dr. Brooks Carthon



J. Margo Brooks Carthon

has demonstrated excellence in her research and teaching, with a strong commitment to advancing health equity. Her scholarship bridges the history of nursing, health services and outcomes research, and the social determinants of health. Her career is dedicated to social justice and health equity. Dr. Brooks Carthon's research has advanced scientific understanding of health equity; she has designed and implemented an innovative clinical intervention, THRIVE, to improve health outcomes among Philadelphia community members at highest risk for poor health outcomes. She has also mentored a new cadre of nurse scientists in health equity research. Dr. Brooks Carthon is a model Penn citizen who serves as associate director of the Center for Health Outcomes & Policy Research (CHOPR) and as director of the Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing.

Jie Deng: Andrea B. Laporte Endowed Professor

Jie Deng has been named the Andrea B. Laporte Endowed Professor, effective July 1, 2025. Dr. Deng is an accomplished professor, scientist, and mentor who exemplifies the essence of this honor. Dr. Deng is a pioneer in head and neck cancer survivorship research, focusing on lymphedema, an under-recognized late effect of cancer therapy. Her work has identified the scope and impact of head and neck lymphedema while developing critical clinical measurement

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From the Faculty 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 Actions

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Welcome. Faculty Senate chair Kathy Brown welcomed Senate Executive Committee members and acknowledged their service with appreciation.

Getting Acquainted. SEC members participated in a brief “icebreaker” exercise in lieu of formal introductions.

Rules of the Road for 2025-2026. Professor Brown proposed the use of Robert’s Rules of Order as a guiding document to be used as an informal guide in a common-sense manner. She emphasized the importance of deliberative processes in arriving at resolutions and motions.

Issues Requiring a Vote. Following discussion, the following matters were adopted by unanimous vote:

- The 2025-2026 hearing list of the Center for Community Standards and Accountability (CSA) was approved by a vote of 31 in favor, five opposed, and with two abstentions.
- The 2025-2026 hearing list of the Faculty Grievance Commission was approved by unanimous vote.
- The draft charges for Senate Standing Committees, 2025-2026 were approved by unanimous vote.

Communication with Constituencies. Professor Brown proposed that regular meeting time be reserved for SEC members to offer reports from their constituents in order to improve democratic representation and communication. SEC members considered methods for improving faculty communication.

Recommendations for the 2025-2026 SEC Agenda. SEC members identified potential topics for consideration during the coming year.

New Business: Faculty Impact Conversations and Survey. SEC members were consulted about the formation of a Select Committee on a Faculty Survey.

Discussion with Rev. Charles L. Howard. Reverend Charles L. Howard, University Chaplain and Vice President for Social Equity and Community discussed recent campus events with SEC members.

Margo Brooks Carthon, Jie Deng, and Catherine McDonald: Endowed Chairs in Penn Nursing

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tools. This research has filled essential gaps in scientific knowledge, enabling health care providers to better understand, assess, and manage this condition.

Dr. Deng’s scholarship includes research in long-term cancer survivorship, lymphedema management strategies, self-management in cancer survivors, and healthcare delivery. Her findings have been incorporated into the *American Cancer Society Head and Neck Cancer Survivorship Care Guidelines* (2016), and her publications have significantly contributed to the field.

Beyond her research, Dr. Deng mentors students at all levels through innovative pedagogical strategies. She motivates students to acquire new knowledge and provides hands-on experience. A model Penn citizen, she has served in leadership roles in the School of Nursing and in the broader Penn community. Her engaging presence generates genuine excitement among her students and colleagues, making her exceptionally deserving of this distinguished chair.

Catherine McDonald: Nightingale Professor in Honor of Nursing Veterans

Catherine McDonald has been named the Nightingale Professor in Honor of Nursing Veterans. Dr. McDonald is an exceptional nurse scientist who researches adolescent injury pre-

vention; she has developed a robust and diverse portfolio of interdisciplinary research that has advanced scientific understanding of ways to prevent the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among adolescents. Dr. McDonald serves as co-director of the Penn Injury Science Center, a CDC-funded Injury Control Research Center. As an educator, Dr. McDonald has been recognized for her mentorship at Penn Nursing and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), specifically of pre- and post-doctoral fellows. She has been recognized for her mentorship and teaching with the Joahn Lynaugh Faculty Mentorship Award. Through her roles as vice chair and chair of the department of family and community health, she has provided leadership, mentoring, and support to her fellow faculty members in their teaching, scholarship, service, and career development. She has also led innovative teaching and curricular approaches in the department’s entry to practice and graduate programs. Her service extends beyond the school; she has led CHOP’s Leadership Education in Adolescent Health program and served as secretary of Penn’s Faculty Senate. She has recently received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) in recognition of her exemplary career and contributions to science.



Jie Deng



Catherine McDonald

Penn Launches New Statewide Engagement Initiative

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The PCES cohort will take part in educational briefings to learn about the state’s history, political structure, and regional socio-economic differences. The program will include visits with communities across the Commonwealth, exposing scholars to the distinct geographic, demographic, economic, industrial, cultural, and political regions of Pennsylvania. The itinerary will include visits to urban areas including Pittsburgh, rural communities such as Williamsport and Benezette, and the capital city of Harrisburg. It will also feature stops in locations that highlight the state’s energy development history.

The co-leaders of the PCES program include Lia Howard, director of fellows and director of the Political Empathy Lab in the SNF Paideia program; Michael Smith, senior director of Commonwealth Relations in Penn’s Office of Government and Community Affairs; F. Hoopes Wampler, senior associate vice president for alumni relations; and Antonia M. Villarruel, dean of Penn Nursing.

“The goal of the Penn Commonwealth-Engaged Scholars program is to anchor our University in the lives of the people we serve,” said Penn Nursing dean Antonia Villarruel. “We are weaving our knowledge and innovation into the fabric of every community across the Commonwealth. The PCES program is our way of looking closer, listening harder, and seeing the strengths and needs of diverse regions. It is an invitation to our faculty and staff to form relationships that are not transactional but transformational. Partnerships that endure, that matter, that move us all toward healthier, more just futures.”

“The conversations that will emerge from this experience informed by the varied expertise of my PCES colleagues from all over the University are what I am most excited about,” said Dr. Howard. “Dialogue sparks imagination and I am eager to see our curiosity grow as we journey together this academic year.”

“In many ways, Pennsylvania is a microcosm of the U.S.,” said Dr. Smith. “Many of the pressing public problems confronting the Commonwealth can be found in many other states. Given Penn’s tremendous capacity for developing and applying knowledge, PCES is an opportunity for our incredible faculty and staff to see these problems up close and in person so that they can apply their expertise to better society. This program will clearly demonstrate Penn’s commitment to the goals of *In Principle and Practice*.”

“As Pennsylvania is home to more Penn alumni than any other state, it is important for Penn to always be striving to make more connections across the Commonwealth to increase our collective impact and engage all our constituencies,” said Dr. Wampler. “The PCES program gives us the opportunity to do just that in a more comprehensive way than ever before. Pennsylvania is our home, and our success is tied to the way we exist as a productive partner working to find solutions that benefit us all.”

PCES members will be able to apply for competitive Commonwealth Engagement grants to fund community-informed and engaged projects, service, or research. The goal is to strengthen Penn’s affinity across the state and reinforce its leadership as a premier research, teaching, and service partner.

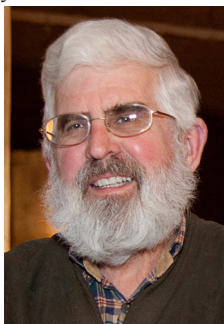
Deaths

Patrick E. McGovern, Penn Museum

Patrick Edward McGovern, GR'80, the former scientific director of the Biomolecular Archaeology Project for Cuisine, Fermented Beverages, and Health at the Penn Museum and a former adjunct professor of anthropology in the School of Arts & Sciences, died on August 23. He was 80.

Dr. McGovern's interdisciplinary academic background combined the physical sciences, archaeology, and history. He earned an AB in chemistry from Cornell University, then completed graduate work in neurochemistry at the University of Rochester Brain Research Center. He then switched gears, earning a PhD in near Eastern archaeology and literature from the Asian and Middle Eastern studies department in Penn's School of Arts & Sciences. After earning his PhD, he joined the faculty of the Penn Museum as a research specialist. He would remain at the Penn Museum until retiring in 2014. While most of his work at Penn was concentrated at the museum, he also taught in the department of anthropology in the School of Arts & Sciences.

A pioneer in the field of biomolecular archaeology and archaeological residue analysis, Dr. McGovern worked with experts from academic and industrial laboratories to analyze the world's earliest alcoholic beverages. Under the auspices of the Penn Museum, he directed excavations in the Baq'ah Valley, Jordan, for more than 25 years; one of these excavations located one of the largest early Iron Age burial caves ever found in the southern Levant. His



Patrick McGovern

later excursions pioneered the interdisciplinary field of biomolecular archaeology, including such discoveries as alcoholic beverages in China that dated to about 7000 BCE; early wine from a Neolithic Iranian village, Hajji Firuz, from about 5400 BCE; beer from the Middle East from 3500 BCE; and some of the earliest chocolate from the Americas, dating to 1400 BCE. His most recent research identified residues of 8,000-year-old grape wines in the country of Georgia.

Dr. McGovern was a longtime faculty affiliate of the Penn Museum's Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology (MASCA) and was heavily involved in neutron activation analyses of ceramics study of residues from ancient jars. He studied jars containing royal purple, an ancient dye extracted from sea snail glands and used by the Phoenicians, and his work on the residue of jars found in tombs from Abydos contributed to scientific understanding of organic medicine in ancient Egypt. His best-known public project with the Penn Museum introduced modern consumers to ancient ales: Using residues extracted from drinking vessels found in a tomb belonging to King Midas's father, Dr. McGovern successfully recreated the beverage served at the famous ruler's funerary feast. This recipe led to a commercially produced beer, Midas Touch, in partnership with Dogfish Head Craft-Brewed Ales.

Dr. McGovern wrote the renowned books *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* (2003) and *Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages* (2009), which received an award from the Archaeological Institute of America. He wrote or edited eight other books and over 150 peer-reviewed articles, and the work of his Biomolecular Archaeology Project for Cuisine, Fermented Beverages, and Health Laboratory was featured widely in print and televised media.

He is survived by his wife, Doris.

Todd Craig: Marks Family Senior Director of the Marks Family Center for Excellence in Writing

The School of Arts & Sciences welcomes Todd Craig as the new Marks Family Senior Director of the Marks Family Center for Excellence in Writing.

Dr. Craig joins the Penn community from the City University of New York's graduate center, where he held the positions of associate professor of urban education and associate professor of English, and from New York City College of Technology, where he served as an associate professor of African American studies. He succeeds Valerie Ross, who retired as senior director of the Marks Family Center in October 2023, and Matthew Osborn, director of the critical writing program, who held the role of interim senior director for the past two academic years.

The center is dedicated to teaching writing and to creating a community of writers across Penn's undergraduate schools, strengthening



Todd Craig

the University's commitment to developing students' critical thinking, writing, and collaborative skills.

Dr. Craig's research interests lie at the intersection of writing and rhetoric, sound studies, and hip hop studies. He is the author of "*K for the Way*": *DJ Rhetoric and Literacy for 21st Century Writing Studies*, for which he received the 2024 David H. Russell Award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English from the National Council of Teachers of English, and the 2025 Advancement of Knowledge Award from the Conference on College Composition and Communication. *K for the Way* also received an Honorable Mention for the 2025 Outstanding Book Award from the Rhetoric Society of America. Dr. Craig's forthcoming book projects include *Beyond "An Institution Adrift": The Third Current of Writing at CUNY in the 21st Century* and *The Sonic Biography of Thin Air: A Mixtape for Sonic Rhetoric*.

Dr. Craig received his doctorate in English from St. John's University, a master of education in learning and teaching from Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a bachelor's degree in sociology with a concentration in African American studies from Williams College.

From the President, Provost, and Executive Vice President

Announcing Penn Forward

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more powerfully communicate its purpose and impact

6. Operational Transformation

Redesign and simplify Penn's business and financial operations, and position administrative staff for the opportunities ahead

Working groups in each area, comprising faculty, staff, and students, will begin their work this semester—some have already started. The charge to each working group is straightforward:

- Question our legacy assumptions
- Propose bold, implementable strategies
- Stay grounded in Penn's values—and make those values visible in our structures and operations

The working groups will move with speed and focus, engaging perspectives from across the Penn community. Success means producing strategic clarity and executable choices that reflect Penn's distinctive strengths and rise to the scale of our moment.

Success also means something harder to measure: fostering trust that the institution will act wisely, move with purpose, and adapt without losing the primacy of its values. We invite everyone in the Penn community to contribute ideas and questions. We'll be sharing more in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, details can be found [here](#).

Today, we have a powerful opportunity and a deep obligation to shape Penn's future and propel Penn forward.

—J. Larry Jameson, President

—John L. Jackson, Jr., Provost

—Mark F. Dingfield, Executive Vice President

The Marks Family Center for Excellence in Writing was endowed through the support of Howard S. Marks, W'67, and Nancy Marks. Howard Marks has spent his career in finance. He is the co-founder and co-chair of Oaktree Capital Management, LLC. As chair of the Penn Trustees' investment board from 2000 to 2010—a decade bookended by major financial crises—he avoided the market's excesses and grew Penn's endowment from \$3.2 billion to \$5.9 billion, receiving national recognition for his management.

Howard Marks is the author of two books: *The Most Important Thing Illuminated: Uncommon Sense for the Thoughtful Investor*, published in 2011, and *Mastering the Market Cycle: Getting the Odds on Your Side*, published in 2018. Mr. Marks is also widely admired in the investment community for his memos, which detail his investment strategies and insight into the economy. In addition to endowing the writing center, the Marks' Penn philanthropy includes the Howard Marks Investor Speaker Series at Wharton, endowed professorship support, and endowed scholarship support for undergraduates. Howard Marks is a frequent guest lecturer on campus and an emeritus trustee of the University of Pennsylvania.

Honors & Other Things

Eugenie Birch: Regional Plan Association's Above and Beyond Award

Eugenie Birch, the Lawrence C. Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research and Education in the department of city and regional planning in the Weitzman School of Design and co-director of the Penn Institute for Urban Research (IUR), has been selected to receive the Above and Beyond Award from the Regional Plan Association (RPA).

The award recognizes Dr. Birch's contributions to urban planning policy and longstanding service to the RPA, where she has been a board member since 2017. In the 1990s, she served on the New York City Planning Commission, and, in 2002, was a member of the jury that selected designers for the World Trade Center site. Dr. Birch currently serves as secretariat of the SDSN Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance. Dr. Birch will be formally recognized at the RPA's Celebrate the Tri-State Gala on October 23, 2025.

Sarah Gronningsater: Book Award Prizes from OAH and SHEAR

Sarah Gronningsater, an associate professor of history in the School of Arts & Sciences, has been honored for her 2024 look at historical race relations, *The Rising Generation: Gradual Abolition, Black Legal Culture, and the Making of National Freedom*. Most recently, the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR) awarded Dr. Gronningsater the James H. Broussard Best First Book Prize, a distinction awarded annually to "to the best 'first book' by a new author published in the previous calendar year" and dealing specifically with the history of the early American republic.



Sarah Gronningsater

Published by Penn Press, *The Rising Generation* takes a historical look at the paths of freed children born to enslaved women in New York, already an economic and political powerhouse in the young country. The book is part of a series looking at early American studies and published in partnership with the McNeil Center.

Earlier this year, *The Rising Generation* also received the James A. Rawley Award from the Organization of American Historians (OAH), a professional association that singles out "excellence in historical scholarship, teaching, and service to the profession" on an annual basis via a handful of prizes. The Rawley Award honors one book per year for its handling of race relations in the United States.

"The work of these historians inspires us, challenges us, and deepens our understanding of the past," said Beth English, director of the Organization of American Historians, of this year's awardees. "These prizes honor outstanding work and reflect OAH's core values of promoting innovative scholarship, elevating diverse voices, and supporting historians at all career stages."

Charles Kane: 2026 Lorentz Medal

Charles Kane, the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Physics in the School of Arts & Sciences, will receive the 2026 Lorentz Medal from the Royal Academy for the Sciences in the Netherlands. Every four years, the honor goes to a researcher who has made groundbreaking contributions to theoretical physics.

"The Royal Academy for the Sciences in the Netherlands pays homage to one of the most influential physicists of our time," the organization wrote in its announcement. "The medal is bestowed upon the American scientist for his visionary research into matter specifics on a quantum scale. His work has transformed our understanding of quantum physics tremendously."

Within quantum physics, Dr. Kane studies topological insulators, materials that have the capability to conduct electrons on the surface but isolate them on the inside. In 2005, he and Eugene Mele, the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Physics, predicted the quantum spin Hall effect, a new state of matter in quantum physics with these characteristics. In 2007, with then-PhD student Liang Fu, Dr. Kane demonstrated that such materials indeed exist and that they are able to block currents as well as allow them to pass.

"Kane's research laid the groundwork for a whole new research field and was groundbreaking in the development of new techniques that can be applied to quantum computers," noted the Royal Academy announcement. "However, it is not Kane's ambition to work out such applications himself. As a great scientist, he is driven by his own curiosity. Kane continues to explore new fields of research, to get a still better understanding of how materials and electrons interact."

The honor's namesake, Hendrik Antoon Lorentz, was a Nobel laureate and the founding father of theoretical physics in the Netherlands. Dr. Kane will receive the medal at a ceremony in December 2025, joining the ranks of Max Planck, Gerard 't Hooft, Frank Wilczek, and others.



Charles Kane

Sanjeev Chawla and Max Cavitch: Fulbright Awards

Two Penn faculty members have recently received Fulbright awards.

Sanjeev Chawla, a research associate professor and course instructor in the department of radiology in the division of neuroradiology in the Perelman School of Medicine, was awarded a Fulbright fellowship. He will perform a research study and conduct teaching sessions on MRI Physics at National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in Bengaluru, India, in collaboration with Manoj Kumar, an associate professor in the department of neuroimaging & interventional radiology (NIIR) at NIMHANS.

Max Cavitch, an associate professor of English, was the Fulbright-Freud visiting lecturer in psychoanalysis at the Sigmund Freud Museum and the University of Vienna. Since 1999, the Sigmund Freud Foundation and the Austrian Fulbright Commission have invited American scientists for a study visit, which is combined with a visiting professorship at a university in Vienna.

Fulbright is a program of the U.S. Department of State, with funding provided by the U.S. Government. Participating governments and host institutions, corporations, and foundations around the world also provide direct and indirect support to the program, which operates in over 160 countries worldwide.

Penn Students and Recent Alumni Awarded 2025-2026 Fulbright Student Program Grants

Nine University of Pennsylvania students and recent alumni were offered Fulbright U.S. Student Program grants for the 2025-2026 academic year. The list includes six members of the Class of 2025, who graduated in May, and three current graduate students.

This allows them to conduct research, pursue graduate degrees, or teach English. The Fulbright Program, which has rolling admissions, is the United States government's flagship international educational exchange program, awarding grants to fund as long as 12 months of international experience. Penn consistently ranks as a "Top-Producing Institution" among those with the highest number of candidates selected for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program.

In addition to the recipients, seven Penn affiliates have been named alternates for Fulbright awards during this application cycle. Most of the Penn recipients applied for the Fulbright with support from the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships.

Among Penn's Fulbright grant recipients for 2025-2026 are three current graduate students:

Claire Elliot is a doctoral student in religious studies in the School of Arts & Sciences, studying modern Theravada Buddhism, primarily in Thailand and Sri Lanka. She graduated from Penn in 2017 with a bachelor's degree in religious studies. She has been offered a Fulbright to research contemporary dreaming practices in Thailand.

Arielle Hardy is a doctoral candidate in Penn's art and archaeology of the Mediterranean world graduate group in the School of Arts & Sciences. She has been offered a Fulbright Greece-Turkey Joint Research Award to study Hellenistic altars.

Theresa Haupt is a graduate student pursuing a master's degree in bioengineering, concentrating in biomedical devices, from the School of Engineering & Applied Science. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 2024 from Haverford College, which assisted in her Fulbright application. She has been offered a Fulbright to conduct research at the University of Melbourne in Australia, focusing on the kinematics of patients with lower limb osteoarthritis.

Six of the recipients graduated in May in the Class of 2025:

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Leo Biehl earned a bachelor's degree in urban studies and political science with a minor in German from the College of Arts & Sciences. He has been offered a Fulbright Community-Based Combined Award to Austria to study housing policy at TU Wien at the Vienna University of Technology and to explore the city's novel approach to reducing homelessness by working for Neunerhaus, an Austrian community organization. He also would teach English at Austrian schools.

Emmie Chacker submatriculated to earn a bachelor's and a master's degree in biology from the School of Arts & Sciences. She has been offered a Fulbright to study biology at the Berlin Institute of Health and Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in Germany.

Timothy Lie earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the College. He has been offered a Fulbright to conduct research at Universitas Indonesia, exploring the role of mitochondrial DNA variants in dengue severity and investigating how mitochondrial function is permanently altered after dengue virus infection.

Henry McDaniel earned a bachelor's degree in Russian and East European studies and diplomatic history from the College. He has been offered a Fulbright to teach English in Moldova.

Aleena Parenti earned a bachelor's degree in linguistics with a minor in Chinese language and culture and a certificate in French from the College. She has been offered a Fulbright to teach English in Taiwan.

Elan Roth earned a bachelor's degree in mathematical logic with a minor in religious studies from the College. He has been offered a Fulbright to pursue mathematics research at the University of Waterloo in Canada, building on research in computable algebra, which classifies the difficulty of calculating properties of mathematical objects found in nature.

Additionally, Maria Balhara, an undergraduate student at Penn studying philosophy and religious studies, was awarded a place in a Fulbright Summer Institute to study at the University of Birmingham in the U.K.

Several Penn alumni were also awarded Fulbright grants.

USPS Sets First-Ever Holiday-Season Surcharge

For the first time, the U.S. Postal Service will implement a holiday-season price increase on retail and commercial package services. The surcharge—in effect from October 5, 2025 through January 18, 2026—applies to Priority Mail, Priority Mail Express, and USPS Ground Advantage services. First-Class Mail prices will not rise.

[Click here to download the USPS' full holiday rate chart.](#)

Those sending retail or commercial packages during this time frame may wish to expedite mailings before October 5 or adjust their budgets accordingly. Contact MailServices@upenn.edu with questions.

Nominate Candidates to Receive an Honorary Degree

Dear Colleagues,

We invite you to nominate candidates to receive an honorary degree from the University of Pennsylvania at Commencement. Candidates should exemplify the highest ideals of the University, which seeks to educate those who will impact the world through innovative scholarship, scientific discovery, artistic creativity, and civic leadership.

We encourage you to involve your faculty colleagues, within and across departments and schools, in the nomination process. Nominations should highlight how nominees meet the criteria for selection. Please do not advise nominees of their candidacy as the selection process is confidential. We particularly encourage nominations from departments and schools whose fields have not been recognized by the awarding of honorary degrees in recent years. You can view a list of previous Penn honorary degree recipients [here](#).

The University Council Committee on Honorary Degrees and Awards welcomes nominations at any time and conducts review on an ongoing basis. Candidates may ultimately be selected several years after their initial nominations. Please note that it is University policy to bar from consideration Penn standing faculty, Trustees, or members of school and center Boards of Advisors. The University Council Committee's recommendations are forwarded to the Trustee Committee on Honorary Degrees and Awards for final selection.

If you would like to submit a nomination, please follow this [link](#) to additional information on the honorary degree selection process, including an [online nomination form](#). If you have any questions, please contact Laura Brennan, Office of the University Secretary, at lmbr@upenn.edu or (215) 573-5047.

Honorary degrees are important statements of Penn's values and aspirations, and we strongly encourage your participation in this process.

—J. Larry Jameson, President

—Michael L. Platt, James S. Riepe

University Professor and Chair, University Council Committee on Honorary Degrees

Morris Arboretum & Gardens' 18th Annual Scarecrow Design Contest

Morris Arboretum & Gardens' Scarecrow Design Contest is back for its 18th year. From Saturday morning classics to modern animated icons, this Halloween we're celebrating the colorful, quirky, and beloved world of cartoons! Think big eyes, wild expressions, and unforgettable personalities—heroes, sidekicks, villains, and everything in between. Whether you're channeling the charm of vintage animation or the bold style of today's hits, we want to see scarecrows that bring your favorite cartoon characters to life.

Scarecrows will be displayed at the arboretum from October 1 to November 2. Visitors will vote for their favorite scarecrow on-site from October 1–20 to determine the winners. The top three scarecrows win a cash prize: \$300, \$200, and \$100. The design contest registration deadline is Friday, September 26. The cost is \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members.

For more information and to register, visit <https://www.morrisarboretum.org/see-do/events/18th-annual-scarecrow-design-contest>.

One Step Ahead

Security & Privacy
Made Simple

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

Changes in Password Policies Affecting Developers and System Administrators

The Information Technology Policy Committee (ITPC) is announcing some changes in password policies affecting developers and system administrators, effective September 1, 2027.

The updated policies are divided into two categories: interactive authentication and non-interactive authentication. While the interactive authentication policies remain largely unchanged, with one notable addition, the non-interactive authentication policies are entirely new. Summaries of both categories are provided below for your reference.

1. **Interactive Authentication:** Devices and services that use passwords for authentication must be secured with strong passwords or passphrases. For those accessing "high-risk" data, strong authentication is mandatory. Passwords must be encrypted both in transit and at rest. Whenever possible, PennKey should be used for user authentication. If PennKey is not an option, passwords must be cryptographically hashed and salted according to industry standards.
2. **Non-Interactive Authentication:** This policy pertains to secrets used for non-interactive authentication, such as API credentials, SSH private keys, client keys, or passwords. These secrets must be encrypted both in transit and at rest whenever possible. Unencrypted secrets should never be hard-coded into the application's source code or stored in the source code repository, except when the application handles only low-risk data. All application integration points must require authentication using a strong password, client certificate, SSH public key, or Kerberos principal, or an equally robust method.

For any questions, please contact Anita Gelburd, chair of ITPC, at gelburda@upenn.edu.

Resources:

Authentication and password changes for developers and system administrators: <https://isc.upenn.edu/iam/authentication-password-changes-developers-sysadmins>.

PennKey password length change from 8 to 16 characters: <https://isc.upenn.edu/iam/pennkey-password-length-change>.

For additional tips, see the One Step Ahead link on the Information Security website: <https://isc.upenn.edu/security/news-alerts%23One-Step-Ahead>.

Division of Public Safety University of Pennsylvania Police Department Crime Report

About the Crime Report: Below are the crimes against persons and/or crimes against property from the campus report for **August 25-31, 2025**. The crime reports are available at: <https://almanac.upenn.edu/sections/crimes>. Prior weeks' reports are also online. –Eds.

This summary is prepared by the Division of Public Safety (DPS) and contains all criminal incidents reported and made known to the Penn Police, including those reported to the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) that occurred within our patrol zone, for the dates of **August 25-**

31, 2025. The Penn Police actively patrol from Market Street to Baltimore Avenue and from 30th Street to 43rd Street in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police.

In this effort to provide you with a thorough and accurate report on public safety concerns, we hope that your increased awareness will lessen the opportunity for crime. For any concerns or suggestions regarding this report, please call DPS at (215) 898-7297. You can view the daily crime log on the [DPS website](#).

Penn Police Patrol Zone

Market Street to Baltimore Avenue and from 30th Street to 43rd Street

Crime Category	Date	Time	Location	Description
<i>Assault</i>	08/26/25	11:28 PM	4100 Chestnut St	Unknown offender punched complainant in the face
	08/29/25	12:01 PM	249 S 36th St	Threatening email sent to Penn Admissions Office
	08/31/25	9:27 PM	3900 Walnut St	Complainant sprayed with chemical agent during verbal argument with a driver
<i>Auto Theft</i>	08/25/25	1:31 PM	4210 Chestnut St	Theft of a secured electric scooter from inside garage
	08/25/25	4:20 PM	4210 Chestnut St	Theft of a secured electric scooter from inside apartment building's garage
	08/26/25	3:20 PM	233 S 33rd St	Theft of a secured electric scooter from bike racks
<i>Bike Theft</i>	08/27/25	8:07 AM	3820 Locust Walk	Theft of a secured electric bicycle from bike racks
	08/26/25	3:59 AM	3500 Woodland Walk	Theft of a secured Penn Security bicycle from bike racks
	08/28/25	10:58 AM	4233 Chestnut St	Theft of a secured bicycle stolen from apartment building's garage
	08/28/25	2:26 PM	4233 Chestnut St	Theft of a secured bicycle stolen from inside apartment building's garage
<i>Other Offense</i>	08/25/25	10:30 PM	4000 Spruce St	Offender eluded police after attempting a theft/Arrest
<i>Retail Theft</i>	08/26/25	10:47 AM	3330 Market St	Retail theft of consumable goods/Arrest
	08/28/25	8:52 AM	4233 Chestnut St	Retail theft of alcohol
	08/29/25	6:17 AM	3330 Market St	Retail theft of consumable goods/Arrest
<i>Sex Offense</i>	08/30/25	12:54 AM	Confidential	Confidential
<i>Theft from Building</i>	08/25/25	7:52 AM	3901 Locust Walk	Theft of a large plant from lounge area
	08/26/25	4:27 PM	209 S 33rd St	Theft of student's backpack containing cell phone and other items from inside classroom
	08/28/25	12:16 AM	51 N 39th St	Theft of two packages from loading dock
<i>Theft from Vehicle</i>	08/29/25	10:36 AM	4046 Chestnut St	Theft of a package containing furniture from apartment lobby
	08/29/25	11:53 AM	3300 Walnut St	Generator taken from secured parked vehicle on highway
	08/26/25	4:16 PM	4040 Spruce St	Multiple packages stolen from complainant's porch
	08/27/25	8:28 AM	51 N 39th St	Theft of a refrigerator from loading dock area

Philadelphia Police 18th District

Schuylkill River to 49th Street & Market Street to Woodland Avenue

Below are the crimes against persons from the 18th District: 6 incidents were reported for **August 25-31, 2025** by the 18th District, covering the Schuylkill River to 49th Street & Market Street to Woodland Avenue.

Crime Category	Date	Time	Location
<i>Aggravated Assault</i>	08/25/25	5:09 AM	4800 Blk Pine St
	08/25/25	12:53 PM	4700 Blk Locust St
	08/31/25	9:45 PM	3900 Blk Walnut St
<i>Assault</i>	08/25/25	3:15 PM	220 S 47th St
<i>Rape</i>	08/26/25	11:49 PM	4100 Blk Chestnut St
	08/31/25	8:32 PM	200 Blk S Ithan St

The Division of Public Safety offers resources and support to the Penn community. DPS has developed a few helpful risk reduction strategies outlined below. Know that it is *never* the fault of the person impacted (victim/survivor) by crime.

- See something concerning? Connect with Penn Public Safety 24/7 at (215) 573-3333.
- Worried about a friend's or colleague's mental or physical health? Get 24/7 connection to appropriate resources at (215) 898-HELP (4357).
- Seeking support after experiencing a crime? Call Special Services (support and advocacy resources) at (215) 898-4481 or email an advocate at specialservices@publicsafety.upenn.edu.
- Use the [Walking Escort](#) and [Riding](#) services available to you free of charge.
- Take a moment to update your cell phone information for the [UPennAlert Emergency Notification System](#).
- Download the [Penn Guardian App](#), which can help police better find your location when you call in an emergency.
- Access free [self-empowerment and defense courses](#) through Penn DPS.
- Stay alert and reduce distractions. (Using cell phones, ear buds, etc. may limit your awareness.)
- Orient yourself to your surroundings. (Identify your location, nearby exits, etc.)
- Keep your valuables out of sight and only carry necessary documents.

Update

September AT PENN

FILMS

16 *CHANGES: Community Voices on Health, Basic Needs, and Neighborhood Resilience*; a documentary by Helena Jeudin highlighting community voices on health, basic needs, and neighborhood resilience; 5 p.m.; room TBA, Annenberg School; register: <https://tinyurl.com/eii-film-sep-16> (Environmental Innovations Initiative).

FITNESS & LEARNING

10 *Soros Fellowships Information Session*; learn about a fellowship opportunity that provides merit-based graduate study funding for New Americans, immigrants, and children of immigrants; noon; room G08/09, College Hall (Center for Undergraduate Research & Fellowships).

11 *Makuu Open House*; learn more about Makuu, a group that centers the experience, concerns, and possibilities of students of the African Diaspora, and the resources they have available; 4-8 p.m.; ARCH (Makuu: The Black Cultural Center).

15 *Procession of Flags & La Casa Latina Open House*; learn about a group that promotes greater awareness of Latinx issues, culture, and identity at the University of Pennsylvania; 5:30 p.m.; ARCH (La Casa Latina).

16 *The ABCs of Constructive Conversation: A Workshop to Explore Different Perspectives*; an interactive workshop to practice how you can navigate differences with clarity, empathy, and confidence; 4 p.m.; room 201, Walnut Street West Library; register: <https://tinyurl.com/paideia-workshop-sep-11> (SNF Paideia Program).

Penn Libraries

Various locations. Info: <https://www.library.upenn.edu/events>.

10 *Writing a Data Management & Sharing Plan Using DMPTool*; learn how to write a Data Management & Sharing Plan, which will soon be a requirement for all federally funded grant applications; 11 a.m.; online webinar.

R Basics: Get Started in RStudio; learn how to use R and RStudio for assignments, research, teaching, service, or the job market; 3:30 p.m.; room 244, Van Pelt Library, and online webinar.

MUSIC

13 *Blacktronika Presents: Tyshawn Sorey and King Britt*; drummer, composer, and Pulitzer Prize winner Tyshawn Sorey, alongside veteran producer, synthesist, and Pew Fellow King Britt, embody the spirit of improvised performance, deep sonic exploration, and polyrhythmic time travel; 6:30 p.m.; Institute for Contemporary Art; register: <https://tinyurl.com/ica-blaktronika> (ICA).

READINGS & SIGNINGS

15 *Reparations and the Human*; David Eng, English; 6:30 p.m.; Zoom webinar; register: <https://tinyurl.com/eng-reading-sep-15> (English).

TALKS

10 *Non-Equilibrium Dynamics of Lipid Vesicles Using Automated Flow Control*; Charles Schroeder, Princeton University; 10:30 a.m.; room 101, Levine Hall (Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering).

Plants, People, Planet; Doris Wagner, biology; noon; Ben Franklin statue, College Hall (60-Second Lectures).

Rethinking Test-Time Thinking: From Token-Level Rewards to Robust Generative Agents; Furong Huang, University of Maryland; noon; room 414, Amy Gutmann Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/94857956796> (ASSET Center).

Towards an HIV Cure: Strategies for Post-ART Viral Control; Afam Okoye, Oregon Health & Science University; noon; Austrian Auditorium, Clinical Research Building (Microbiology).

Scalable Sim-to-Real Learning for General-Purpose Humanoid Skills; Tairan He, Carnegie Mellon University; 3 p.m.; room 307, Levine Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/96632884234> (GRASP Lab).

Geometry and Topology of Vector Fields in Three-Dimensions; Francesco Lin, Columbia University; 3:30 p.m.; room A4, DRL (Mathematics).

The Mystery of Fast Radio Bursts; Victoria Kaspi, McGill University; 3:30 p.m.; room A8, DRL (Physics & Astronomy).

What We Value; Katy Milkman, Wharton School; Emily Falk, psychology and communication; 4 p.m.; Agora, Annenberg Public Policy Center (Communication Neuroscience Lab).

11 *Algorithmic Stability for Regression and Classification*; Rina Foygel Barber, University of Chicago; noon; room 414, Amy Gutmann Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/98220304722> (IDEAS Center).

Asian American Across the Disciplines; Samip Mallick, South Asian American Digital Archive; noon; room 244, Fisher-Bennett Hall (Asian American Studies).

Locus-Specific Differential Expression of Pericentric Satellite DNA in Cancer Cells; Dawn Carone, Swarthmore College; noon; room 109, Leidy Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://tinyurl.com/biology-zoom-fall-2025> (Biology).

A Stealth Urban History from the Countryside: Punjab's Early-Twentieth-Century Canal Colonies as Urban Space; Will Glover, University of Michigan; noon; Blank Forum, PCPSE (Center for the Advanced Study of India).

Curvature, Cobordism, and Twisted Dirac Operators; Jackson Goodman, California Polytechnic State University; 3:30 p.m.; room 4C8, DRL (Mathematics).

Two-Dimensional Artificial Lattice Structures: Production and Properties; Fang Liu, Stanford University; 4 p.m.; Carolyn Hoff Lynch Lecture Hall, 1973 Chemistry Building (Chemistry).

15 *The Other History of the Green Revolution*; Prakash Kumar, Pennsylvania State University; 3:30 p.m.; room 392, Cohen Hall (History & Sociology of Science).

Interference Competition Mechanisms in a Bacterial Symbiont; Tim Miyashiro, Pennsylvania State University; 4 p.m.; room 209, Johnson Pavilion (Microbiology).

The Age of Choice Technology; Sophia Rosenfeld, history; 5:15 p.m.; Class of 1978 Orrery Pavilion, Van Pelt Library (Workshop in the History of Material Texts).

Denise Scott Brown: Thinking Through Photography; Izzy Kornblatt, Yale University; Lars Müller, publisher; Joan Ockman, architecture; Bill Whitaker, Architectural Archives; 6:30 p.m.; Kleinman Energy Forum, Fisher Fine Arts Library (Architectural Archives).

16 *Micro-Surgical Tools for Dissecting Cells and Tissues*; Sindy Tang, Stanford University; 10:15 a.m.; room 101, Levine Hall (Mechanical Engineering & Applied Mechanics).

Economics

In-person events in various locations. Info: <https://economics.sas.upenn.edu/events>.

9 *Auctions as Competition Policy in Markets with Consumer Inertia: Evidence from Chile's Pension Fund Market*; Keusang Song, economics; noon; room 101, PCPSE.

10 *The Optimal Monetary Policy Response to Tariffs*; Louphou Coulibaly, University of Wisconsin, Madison; 4 p.m.; room 200, PCPSE.

This is an update to the [September AT PENN calendar](#), which is available online now. The deadline to submit events for *Almanac's* October AT PENN calendar is Monday, September 16, 2025.

Planning an Event? Email Almanac

If you or your department is planning an event, let *Almanac* know so it can be included in the monthly AT PENN calendar.

Almanac's monthly AT PENN calendar is the only all-inclusive calendar of Penn events on campus. A free listing in the AT PENN increases visibility and attendance.

Email us at almanac@upenn.edu with your event details.

Almanac

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Which Anti-Vaping Messages Work for LGBTQ+ Youth?

Approximately 2.6 million American teenagers identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. These youth are at significantly higher risk for using tobacco and nicotine vaping products than their heterosexual peers, but there aren't many anti-vaping campaigns designed specifically for them.

As part of Project SMART, a study to test the effectiveness of a tailored social media intervention to prevent vaping initiation among LGBTQ+ youth, health communication researchers at the Annenberg School for Communication and colleagues recently published a paper detailing LGBTQ+ youth's thoughts on social media anti-vaping messages in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

Here's a quick summary of their findings, written by the researchers, who include Annenberg School professors Andy Tan and David Lydon-Staley as well as doctoral candidate Kate Okker-Edging, Penn Medicine professor Andrew Strasser, and Health Communication & Equity Lab research project manager Elaine Hanby.

What is the problem being addressed?

Sexual and gender minority (SGM) youth are more likely to vape, but there aren't many anti-vaping campaigns designed specifically for them. This means that SGM youth may have access to fewer resources that could prevent them from vaping. To help fill this gap, we asked SGM youth about the types of anti-vaping messages that they would pay attention to and connect with if they saw them on social media.

How was the study conducted?

This study surveyed 245 SGM youth in the U.S., ages 13 to 18, and showed them different types of images that could be used in an anti-vaping social media campaign. The images varied in two ways: (1) how much the images reflected SGM identities (none, a little, or a lot) and (2) how many people were shown in the image (one person, two people, or 3 or more people). SGM identities were reflected through gender-diverse representation in the images, and by using rainbow and pride imagery.

The researchers developed images for every combination of SGM identity representation and number of people (e.g., no SGM identity representation, one person; a little SGM identity representation, two people, etc.). They used a discrete choice experiment to understand which combinations of SGM identity and number of people were most positively viewed by SGM youth. A discrete choice experiment is a method that allows researchers to identify which combinations were most appealing, compared to other combinations. They asked participants which images they liked the most, which images they liked the least, which images were most likely to grab their attention, and which images they were most likely to repost or share.

What were the results of the study?

Overall, youth cared more about whether the images reflected SGM identity than how many people were shown. They liked images that strongly reflected SGM identities the most, and images with no reflection of SGM identity the least. The top choices were images with two people and high SGM representation, which may have looked like SGM couples, or larger groups (3+) with some or no SGM representation. The least popular were group images with high representation—possibly because they felt less relatable or more staged.

Why is this study important?

These findings suggest that when anti-vaping messages reflect the identities of SGM youth, they may be more likely to grab their attention, feel relevant, and be shared with friends. This can help make anti-vaping campaigns more effective for this high-risk group.

Adapted from an [Annenberg School news release](#), August 25, 2025.

Pioneering Strategy May Keep Breast Cancer From Coming Back

A first-of-its-kind, federally funded clinical trial has shown it's possible to identify breast cancer survivors who are at higher risk of their cancer coming back due to the presence of dormant cancer cells and to effectively treat these cells with repurposed, existing drugs. The research, led by scientists from the Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania and Penn's Perelman School of Medicine, was published in *Nature Medicine*.

While breast cancer survival continues to improve, thanks to advances in detection and treatment, when breast cancer relapses—or returns

after initial treatment—it is still incurable. For the 30 percent of women and men who do relapse, the only option is continuous and indefinite treatment which cannot eliminate the cancer completely. Some breast cancers, like triple negative and HER2+, recur within a few years, and others like ER+ can recur decades later. Until now, there has not been a way to identify those breast cancer survivors who harbor the dormant cells that lead to recurrence in real time and to intervene with a treatment that can prevent incurable relapse.

In a randomized phase II clinical trial with 51 breast cancer survivors, existing drugs were able to clear dormant tumor cells from 80 percent of the study participants. The three-year survival rate without any disease recurrence was above 90 percent in patients who received one drug and 100 percent for patients who received both study drugs.

"The lingering fear of cancer returning is something that hangs over many breast cancer survivors after they celebrate the end of treatment," said principal investigator Angela DeMichele, the Mariann T. and Robert J. MacDonald Professor of Breast Cancer Research. "Right now, we just don't know when or if someone's cancer will come back—that's the problem we set out to solve. Our study shows that preventing recurrence by monitoring and targeting dormant tumor cells is a strategy that holds real promise, and I hope it ignites more research in this area."

The study builds on previous research that showed how dormant tumor cells continue to lay in wait in some patients after breast cancer treatment. These so-called "sleeping cells," also referred to as minimal residual disease (MRD), can reactivate years or even decades later. Because they are not "active" cancer cells and can be scattered throughout the body, they do not show up on standard imaging tests that are used to watch for breast cancer recurrence.

Once the sleeping cells begin to expand and circulate in the bloodstream, it can lead to the spread of metastatic breast cancer. Patients who have MRD are more likely to experience breast cancer recurrence and have decreased overall survival.

Lewis Chodosh, chair of cancer biology and senior author of the study, previously led research to identify the pathways that allow dormant tumor cells to survive in patients for decades.

Drs. DeMichele and Chodosh have collaborated for years to translate biological discoveries about dormant tumor cells made in his lab, to clinical trials that she leads for breast cancer patients.

"Our research shows that this sleeper phase represents an opportunity to intervene and eradicate the dormant tumor cells before they have the chance to come back as aggressive, metastatic disease," Dr. Chodosh said. "Surprisingly, we've found that certain drugs that *don't* work against actively growing cancers *can* be very effective against these sleeper cells. This tells us that the biology of dormant tumor cells is very different from active cancer cells."

In the preclinical part of the latest research publication, Dr. Chodosh's team conducted a series of experiments in mice to better understand the underlying mechanisms. They showed that two different drugs—approved by the FDA to treat other conditions—could effectively clear MRD in mice, resulting in longer survival without cancer recurrence. The drugs target autophagy and mTOR signaling, which the researchers found were key mechanisms to allow the tumor cells to remain dormant.

Dr. DeMichele's team first enrolled breast cancer survivors who had completed treatment within the last five years and had clear scans into a screening study that looked for dormant tumor cells in participant's bone marrow.

If dormant tumor cells were found, patients were then eligible to enroll in the Phase II CLEVER clinical trial, which randomized patients to receive six cycles of either monotherapy with one of two study drugs, or combination therapy with both drugs. The treatment cleared dormant tumor cells in most patients after 6 to 12 months. After a median follow-up time of 42 months, only two patients on the study have experienced a cancer recurrence.

"We want to be able to give patients a better option than 'wait and see' after they complete breast cancer treatment," Dr. DeMichele said. "We're encouraged by these results that we're on the right track."

The team is already enrolling patients in two larger, ongoing studies to confirm and extend the results of the CLEVER study: the Phase II ABBY clinical trial and the Phase II PALAVY clinical trial, available at several cancer centers across the country. Patients interested in learning more about these or other breast cancer clinical trials at Penn Medicine should contact BreastCancerClinicalTrials@pennmedicine.upenn.edu.

Adapted from a [Penn Medicine news release](#), September 2, 2025.