Jacquie Reses and Matt Apfel’s $5 Million Gift to Support Wharton Undergraduate and Name Space in Wharton’s New Academic Building

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania is delighted to announce a new $5 million dollar gift from Jacqueline Reses, W’92 and her husband Matthew Apfel, L’90. This significant commitment will support the completion of Wharton’s new academic building currently under construction. The gift will also create the Reses Apfel Men and Women of Pennsylvania Challenge Fund and support undergraduate scholarships.

“One of the great fortunes of the Penn community is to have alumni donors like Jackie and Matt. Jackie went from her education at Wharton on to great success in her professional life. By choosing to give back with this gift to the School, she sets a tremendous example for women in philanthropy,” said Dean Erika James. “Jackie and Matt have remained dedicated and connected to Penn and with these extraordinary gifts to Wharton, they help to advance future generations of business leaders and provide inspiration for other alumnae to join in supporting the School at meaningful levels.”

Ms. Reses and Mr. Apfel’s $5 million gift will benefit three separate Wharton causes. A portion of the donation will go toward the completion of one of the newest capital projects taking shape on Penn’s campus. As a new gateway to the campus, this building will serve as a fully equipped modern hub for faculty and student research and will house research programs, including those dedicated to data and analytics. The gift will help create an inviting, pivotal gathering space for students and welcoming lounge area for social events and lectures (at right).

The gift will also support undergraduate financial aid in two separate ways. The Reses Apfel Men and Women of Pennsylvania Challenge Fund will provide matching funds for subsequent scholarship donors multiplying the impact of their philanthropy. A new scholarship will supply financial aid for undergraduates at Wharton as part of the Undergraduate Named Scholarship Program. This expands upon the couple’s devotion to educational access through their Reses Apfel Family Endowed Scholarship, which has supported women studying at Wharton since 2008. Ms. Reses’ commitment to undergraduates is an extension of her service to the School, where she is a member of Wharton’s Undergraduate Executive Board.

“Wharton had a transformational role in my life,” said Ms. Reses. “I want to support the School in its mission to make it possible for every student who earns a place at Wharton to be able to attend and thrive.”

Ms. Reses and Mr. Apfel both continue to dedicate time to Penn and Wharton. Ms. Reses frequently guest lectures in classes at Wharton sharing her expertise on a diverse range of topics—from finance to technology, and she is passionate about imparting her experience to students more directly as a mentor. She was also instrumental in the work to help revamp the undergraduate curriculum, and in 2016, delivered the graduation keynote address to the Wharton MBA Program for Executives at Wharton San Francisco. Mr. Apfel works with Penn’s Carey Law School as a guest speaker on law and technology matters.

Marsha Lester: Christopher Browne Distinguished Professor of Chemistry

Marsha I. Lester has been appointed the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Chemistry. Dr. Lester studies fundamental aspects of the oxidation of volatile organic compounds present in the earth’s atmosphere, and her current research focuses on Criegee intermediates. Dr. Lester’s scientific accomplishments have been recognized by election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences, and membership in the American Physical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Chemical Society. She has served as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Chemical Physics. At Penn, Dr. Lester has been chair of the department of chemistry and a founding member and past chair of the Penn Forum for Women Faculty. Previously, she held the Edmund J. Kahn Distinguished Professorship.

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Deaths

MarJeanne Collins, PSOM, CHOP and Student Health Services

MarJeanne (Mimi) Collins, emeritus associate professor CE of pediatrics, died in Lower Merion, on October 8. She was 84. Dr. Collins was born in St. Louis, grew up in Upper Darby and graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1957. She earned an MD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1961, and her GME, also from Penn, in 1966. She interned at Bryn Mawr Hospital and then completed residencies in physical medicine, rehabilitation, and pediatrics at HUP. During these residencies, Dr. Collins also served as an instructor, and later a fellow, in the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation. Afterwards, she practiced pediatric medicine with Charlie Kertz in West Philadelphia, treating the children of many Penn faculty in the process.

Meanwhile, Dr. Collins continued to advance her career at Penn. In 1969 she became an instructor in pediatrics, and seven years later she became an assistant professor of pediatrics at Penn’s School of Medicine. In 1979, she became an assistant professor at CHOP as well. In 1980, she became the assistant director of Penn’s Student Health Services. Five years later, she became director of SHS (Almanac January 29, 1985). She served as both the director of SHS and as a clinician-educator at Penn’s School of Medicine and at CHOP until her retirement in 2000, when she took emeritus status.

In 1973, when CHOP moved from South Philadelphia to the west side of the Schuylkill River, Dr. Collins advocated for the creation of an inpatient adolescent medicine unit there; she went on to serve as CHOP’s adolescent unit’s inaugural director. Dr. Collins published many influential papers and received many awards during her time at Penn. In 1985, the American College Health Association (ACHA) gave her an award for her work with the Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Task Force. In 1997, she was a co-recipient of the ACHA’s Edward Buck San award for Outstanding Contributions in College Health (Almanac May 20, 1997).

She was a member of the Main Line Unitarian Church, where she served as president of their South American Task Force, the Cosmopolitan Club of Philadelphia, the New Century Trust, the Bryn Mawr College Alumnae Association (Golden Sages), the Nationalities Service of Philadelphia, and Women of the Block.

“Mimi was an extraordinary physician, mentor, and leader in adolescent and young adult health,” says her colleague Gail Slap, professor of pediatrics in the Perelman School of Medicine. “Her move from CHOP to the directorship of Student Health at the University of Pennsylvania broadened University-wide awareness of health needs during the transition from childhood to adulthood. Mimi was a friend and role model who will be missed by those fortunate to know her.”

Dr. Collins is survived by her husband, Luis Blasco, emeritus professor CE of OB-GYN at PSOM; her sons, Ian (Caitlin) and Trevor (Suzanne); and her grandchildren, Colin, Tate, Caroline and Javier.

A celebration of her life will take place after COVID-19.

Robert Marshak, Penn Vet

Penn Vet Dean Emeritus Robert R. Marshak died on October 19 at Penn Hospice at Rittenhouse. He was 97.

Dr. Marshak graduated from the New York State Veterinary College (now part of Cornell University) in 1945. For the next 11 years, he engaged in clinical investigation and practice on dairy cattle in Vermont, researching two metabolic diseases of cattle, pernicious paralyis (“milk fever”) and ketosis. In 1956, Penn Vet dean Mark Allam recruited Dr. Marshak as an interim chair of Penn Vet’s department of medicine. Five years later, he was also appointed a professor of medicine.

During the 1960s, Dr. Marshak researched bovine leukemia, initiating work that in 1965 culminated in the establishment of the National Cancer Institute-sponsored Bovine Leukemia Research Center at Penn Vet’s New Bolton Center. In 1968, Dr. Marshak received an honorary Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Bern in Switzerland.

As department chair, Dr. Marshak brought Penn Vet’s clinical program up to the standards of medical schools’ clinical programs at the time. He recruited eminent clinician-scientists, incentivized research from professors, and redefined veterinary specialty practices for a new era of veterinary schools. In response to this innovation, Penn President Martin Meyerson appointed Dr. Marshak the ninth dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine in 1973 (Almanac September 18, 1973). He served in this position until retiring in 1987, an era that Penn Vet called “a period of sweeping change, innovation, and investment” in an online tribute to Dr. Marshak.

As dean, Dr. Marshak oversaw the construction of Penn Vet’s small animal hospital in the late 1970s (Almanac May 10, 1977). In addition, he oversaw enhancements and additions to Widener Hospital at New Bolton Center (Almanac May 8, 1980) and the building of the C. Mahlon Kline Center for Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, at the time the world’s most advanced equine treatment center. Under Dr. Marshak’s leadership, Penn Vet garnered an international reputation as a trailblazer in comparative medical research. Among other curricular innovations, he introduced a core- elective curriculum and launched the pioneering Program of Aquatic Animal Medicine and Center for Interactions of Animals and Society.

In 1983, Dr. Marshak led the five-year, $41.5 million Second Century capital campaign that accelerated the School’s breakthroughs in cancer research, reproductive physiology, and pathobiology; and set the stage for the School to flourish in the decades since. In recognition of his contributions to the School, Vernon and Shirley Hill established the Robert Marshak-Vernon Hill Scholarship Fund for VMD-MBA Training at Penn Vet and Wharton in 2016 (Almanac July 12, 2016). “Dr. Marshak transformed veterinary medicine, and we are pleased to partner with him as Penn Vet and the Wharton School take the next big step,” said Mr. Hill. After retiring in 1987, Dr. Marshak became emeritus professor and Penn Vet Dean Emeritus.

Dr. Marshak was a charter diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and served as president in 1975. He served on the editorial boards of several journals, including the American Journal of Veterinary Research, the Journal of the American Veterinary Radiology Society, and the Cornell Veterinarian. He held numerous veterinary association leadership roles, including at the American Association of Veterinary Clinicians, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Veterinary Medical Association, and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

“Dean Marshak’s accomplishments as Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine are surpassed only by his unwavering love and dedication to our community,” said the Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of Veterinary Medicine, Andrew M. Hoffman. “He worked tirelessly to redefine the veterinary profession and he is unquestionably the ‘Father of Veterinary Clinical Specialties.’ Dr. Marshak will be greatly missed; by his adoring family, by the veterinarians and scientists who respected him so deeply, and by his extraordinary network of cherished friends and colleagues. His passionate and deep commitment to basic science revolutionized our institution, and his legacy will live on.”

Dr. Marshak is survived by his wife, Margo; sons, William, John, Andrew, Derick Marshall; and a granddaughter. Donations in Dr. Marshak’s memory may be made to the Dr. Dobert Marshak Memorial Fund at Penn Vet Office of Institutional Advancement, 5800 Spruce St., Suite 151E, Philadelphia, PA 19104, “Attn: Marshak Memorial Gifts” or at https://giving.upenn.edu/fund?program=VT2&fund=604863.

A Statement on the Killing of Walter Wallace, Jr.

The senseless killing of West Philadelphia resident Walter Wallace, Jr. in West Philadelphia by police strikes home. We offer our heartfelt condolences to Mr. Wallace’s family. This is our community. Some of us were born and raised here, others live and/or work here. All of us are dedicated to working with others to eradicate racism, injustice, generational poverty, the stigma of mental illness, and detachment from community. We believe that Black Lives do not yet matter. The Netter Center and its Staff and Community Advisory Board will assure that Black Lives will matter.

Mr. Wallace’s death means much more than the loss of a life. The series of horrific murders of Black Americans, the disproportionate impacts of police violence, and the continued denial of Black Lives will be remembered by our generation and beyond. The Netter Center and its partners are working with others to eradicate racism, injustice, generational poverty, the stigma of mental illness, and detachment from community. We believe that Black Lives do not yet matter. The Netter Center and its Staff and Community Advisory Board will assure that Black Lives will matter. We are committed to having the Netter Center function as a genuinely democratic, anti-violence, justice- and equity-seeking organization that works with campus and community partners to help create the conditions that will assure that Black Lives finally matter.

—Ira Harkavy, Founding Director, Netter Center for Community Partnerships, its Staff and Community Advisory Board
**From the President and Provost**

**A Message to All PhD Students and Faculty Regarding the President’s PhD Initiative**

October 22, 2020

Long before this public health crisis, we have affirmed our strong commitment to advance our core missions of teaching and research. With the start of the pandemic, we have redoubled our efforts to provide the strongest counterweight we can to these extremely challenging circumstances. We believe that it is precisely during moments like these when institutions of higher education are called upon even more to help set the intellectual agenda of the future and to produce the next generation of the most creative, thoughtful, and engaged scholars. To further our missions and to support doctoral education at Penn, we are announcing today the President’s PhD Initiative, a six-year $30 million commitment above and beyond the funds already dedicated for doctoral education, to begin this year.

For this academic year (2020-2021), we will provide a Supplementary Stipend to help support our PhD students as they shoulder additional expenses incurred by the pandemic. Every enrolled PhD student at Penn will receive a President’s PhD Supplementary Stipend of $1,200, paid in two equal parts, one this semester and the second in the Spring semester.

Over the ensuing five years, the President’s Initiative will create and support Presidential PhD Fellows, drawing from the most accomplished and diverse PhD trainees and also enabling competitive recruitment of new PhD students in future years. We will dedicate $10.6 million to support an inaugural class of Presidential PhD Fellows who will be selected from Penn’s current PhD students. Also recognizing the need to strengthen the pipeline of PhD students, we will devote an additional $12.7 million to recruiting new applicants to Penn. Each Presidential PhD Fellow will receive a three-year fellowship, including summer support and funds to support their research. Early in the spring semester 2021 we will launch the nomination process for the inaugural class of Presidential PhD Fellows to start next academic year (2021-2022).

The effects of the global pandemic have impacted every Penn student. Penn’s PhD students are among those adapting to the unique challenges of the pandemic as they navigate their scholarly research, childcare and other family responsibilities, and an even more competitive job market. Our PhD students embody our profound mission of creating new knowledge, understanding, and teaching that will shape the future. They make a tangible impact by tackling the world’s most significant challenges and most perplexing questions. Sustaining their innovative teaching and world-changing scholarship will be more important than ever in a post-pandemic world.

We will follow up in the weeks ahead with more details and an FAQ about the Initiative and the selection process for Fellows. In the meantime, please also check our webpage on Valuing Graduate Students for helpful programs and updates on this new Initiative.

—Amy Gutmann, President
—Wendell Pritchett, Provost

**From the President, Provost and EVP**

**A Message to the Penn Community Regarding the Death of Walter Wallace, Jr.**

October 28, 2020

Our community is grieving the loss of Walter Wallace, Jr. His death is a tragedy on so many levels, and a stark reminder of the life and death struggles faced by so many Black Philadelphians. This has been a year where we have witnessed the repeated violent deaths of people of color, and struggled with the emotions and rage that stirred. But Walter Wallace’s death is particularly hard for all of us at Penn, because it occurred in our West Philadelphia community. He was our neighbor. And his loss is felt profoundly.

It is at times like this that we need to be particularly mindful of taking care of each other, and remembering our common bond as a community here in West Philadelphia. We know that this is a particularly fraught time for students, faculty, and staff of color. Words alone will not soothe their anguish, but we want them to know of our unequivocal support in this difficult hour.

We are also mindful of the needs of our West Philadelphia neighbors. Recently we announced Penn Medicine’s commitment to help transform Mercy Catholic Medical Center to ensure the continuity of care for the West Philadelphia community. It is an initiative that will, among many other things, provide important behavioral health services for the neighborhood.

We also want to remind the campus community of the mental health and support services available here at Penn. There are many places to turn for help in times of stress and grief. In addition to those formal channels, we urge you to look out for each other. There has never been a more important time to be personally supportive of friends, colleagues and classmates. These are difficult times, where there are no easy solutions. Our thoughts are with the family of Walter Wallace, Jr., and our hope is that no other families suffer as they have this week.

**Resources and Support**

If you have any doubt about where to turn, Penn’s HELP Line is available 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, at 215-898-HELP.

**CAPS:** 215-898-7021
**Student Health Service:** 215-746-3535
**Student Intervention Services:** 215-898-6081
**Office of the Chaplain:** 215-898-8456
**Weingarten Learning Resource Center:** 215-573-9235
**Special Services (with Division of Public Safety):** 215-898-6600
**Employee Assistance Program:** 866-799-2329

—Amy Gutmann, President
—Wendell Pritchett, Provost
—Craig Carnaroli, Executive Vice President

**Trustees November Meetings**

Meetings of the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania will be held on November 12 and 13 via the BlueJeans Events platform. Anyone wishing to attend an open public committee meeting can find the attendee link on the Secretary’s website, https://secretary.upenn.edu/trustees-governance/open-trustee-meeting/, on the day of the meeting. Please send your meeting attendance plans to Antoine Jones (jonesan@upenn.edu).

**Thursday, November 12, 2020**

10:11 a.m.
- Local, National, and Global Engagement
  11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
- Facilities & Campus Planning
  1:45-2:45 p.m.
- Student Life
  3:15-4:15 p.m.
- Academic Policy
  3:15-4:30 p.m.
- Budget & Finance
  8:30-9:30 p.m.

**Friday, November 13, 2020**

12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Stated Meeting of the Trustees

**Roberto Gonzales: PIK Professor**

(continued from page 1)

text by universities and school districts across the country. Most recently, he led a national longitudinal study of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program and a collaborative study of educators’ responses to immigration issues in their schools and communities.

Dr. Gonzales’ work has been featured across leading scholarly journals—such as the American Sociological Review and Current Anthropology—and such media as The New York Times, Washington Post, and Wall Street Journal. His research has been widely supported by the MacArthur Foundation, Gates Foundation, and Russell Sage Foundation. In addition to Lives in Limbo, he is co-author of Undocumented Migration (Polity Press, 2019), Within and Beyond Citizenship (Routledge, 2017), and the forthcoming The Growing Significance of Place: Assessing the Diverging Trajectories of DACA-Eligible Young Adults (University of California Press). Dr. Gonzales has taught at Harvard since 2013, following earlier positions at the University of Chicago and the University of Washington. He earned a PhD and MA in sociology from the University of California at Irvine, an AM from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, and a BA in sociology from Colorado College.

“The pioneering work of Roberto Gonzales,” said Provost Pritchett, “exemplifies Penn’s commitments to using innovative research and ideas to make a significant, tangible impact on people’s lives and to positively influence responses to the most urgent challenges of our contemporary world. He will be a galvanizing presence not only on our campus but also in our Philadelphia community, a community that has been energized by generations of immigrants from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.”

The Penn Integrates Knowledge program was launched by President Gutmann in 2005 as a University-wide initiative to recruit exceptional faculty members whose research and teaching exemplify the integration of knowledge across disciplines and who are appointed in at least two Schools at Penn. The Richard Perry University Professorship is a gift of Richard C. Perry, a 1977 graduate of the Wharton School who founded the investment management firm Perry Capital. He is a University Trustee and a former member of the Undergraduate Executive Board of the Wharton School. His 2005 gift created the first four Penn Integrates Knowledge University Professorships.
Avisi Technologies:  
$1 Million NSF Grant
In 2017, Brandon Kao of Penn Engineering and Rui Jing Jiang and Adarsh Battu of the Wharton School devised a way to use a nanoscale material to form a form of glaucoma. That material, developed by Igor Bargatin, associate professor in the SEAS department of mechanical engineering and applied mechanics, could be comfortably implanted in the eye and shunt away the fluid that builds up with the disease, preventing damage to the optic nerve.

Their implant idea, VisiPlate, and subsequent company, Avisi Technologies, earned the trio the 2016-2017 Y-Prize, the 2018 President’s Innovation Prize, and a home base at the Pennovation Center.

Now, it has earned them a $1 Million Small Business Innovation Research Phase II grant from the National Science Foundation. The funding will help prepare the team for clinical trials, which they plan to begin in 2021.

Alex Breitweiser:  
IBM PhD Fellowship
Alex Breitweiser, a graduate student in the School of Arts & Sciences’ department of physics & astronomy and member of Penn Engineering’s Quantum Engineering Laboratory, has been awarded an IBM PhD Fellowship.

The IBM PhD Fellowship has a 70-year history of honoring young researchers working at the forefronts of their fields. Mr. Breitweiser is one of 24 fellows who have “demonstrated expertise in pioneering research areas, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, quantum computing, data science, security, hybrid cloud technology, and the next generation of cutting-edge processors.” Each application for the fellowship program was reviewed by distinguished technologists from across IBM. Mr. Breitweiser and fellow recipients demonstrated “academic excellence as well as provided innovative, exceptional research proposals.” The fellowship will cover Mr. Breitweiser’s tuition and provide a living stipend for two years.

Working with Lee Bassett, director of the Quantum Engineering Laboratory and associate professor in the department of electrical & systems engineering, Mr. Breitweiser’s research focuses on optically addressable spin qubits and their potential applications to quantum computing and quantum communication.

“Alex has a broad background in physics, mathematics, and computer science,” said Dr. Bas selt, “and he has a keen sense for the potential of quantum physics to drive new technologies. The IBM fellowship is a fantastic opportunity for him to pursue his own research while interacting with industry experts. The fact that IBM is interested in supporting this type of basic science research also speaks to the rapid progression of quantum engineering, and the need to connect people with different perspectives and disciplinary backgrounds in order to solve hard problems.”

César de la Fuente:  
AIChE 35 Under 35 List
César de la Fuente, Presidential Assistant Professor in Psychiatry, Microbiology, and Bioengineering, was named one of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers’ (AIChE) 35 members under 35 for 2020.

The AIChE 35 Under 35 Award was founded to recognize young chemical engineers who have achieved greatness in their fields. The winners are a group of driven, engaged, and socially active professionals representing the breadth and diversity that chemical engineering exemplifies.

Dr. de la Fuente was named in the list’s Bioengineering category for his lab’s work in microbiology. Their goal is to develop computer-made tools and medicines that will combat antibiotic resistance. Dr. de la Fuente has already been featured on several other young innovators lists, including MIT Technology Review’s 35 under 35 and GEN’s Top 10 under 40, both in 2018. His research in antibiotic resistance has been profiled in Penn Today and Penn Engineering Today, and he was recently awarded Penn Health-Tech’s inaugural NEMO Prize for his proposal to develop paper-based COVID diagnostic system that could capture viral particles on a person’s breath.

The AIChE honorees will receive a $500 prize and will be celebrated at the 2020 AIChE Annual Meeting this November.

Five Penn Faculty:  
National Academy of Medicine
Five faculty members from Penn have been elected to the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), one of the nation’s highest honors in the fields of health and medicine. Election recognizes individuals who have made major contributions to the advancement of the medical sciences, health care, and public health. These five Penn faculty members are among 100 new NAM members, elected by current members.

William Beltran is professor of ophthalmology in the department of clinical sciences and advanced medicine and director of the Division of Experimental Retinal Therapies at Penn Vet. His research focuses on inherited retinal degeneration, a major cause of blindness in dogs and humans worldwide. Specifically, he has investigated the signaling pathways affected by X-linked retinitis pigmentosa and autosomal dominant retinitis pigmentosa, two of the most common forms of inherited retinal degeneration in humans. Working in canines, who suffer from forms of retinal degeneration that closely mimic the human diseases, he has helped develop effective gene therapies with promising results for treating both early- and late-stage disease.

Ronald Paul DeMatteo is the John Rhea Barton Professor and chair in the Perelman School of Medicine’s department of surgery. Dr. DeMatteo served as principal investigator on three national trials for the adjuvant drug imatinib for gastrointestinal stromal tumor, the most common human sarcoma. His work led to imatinib’s approval for adjuvant use by the FDA and established the standard-of-care for GIST, combining surgery and imatinib. Dr. DeMatteo is also being recognized for his work to define the immune response to GIST and its modulation by targeted therapy.

Matthew McHugh is the Independence Chair for Nursing Education and professor of nursing at Penn Nursing, associate director of the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research (CHOPR), and fellow of the Institute of Health Economics. As principal investigator on multiple large-scale studies funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Dr. McHugh’s work has advanced the field of nursing outcomes and policy research by shaping the value of investing in nursing to achieve a higher functioning health care system. In addition to findings from direct evaluations of nurse staffing ratio laws, research from Dr. McHugh and colleagues from the CHOPR at Penn Nursing has informed legislation proposed in multiple states and countries on safe nurse-staffing levels.

Raina Merchant is associate vice president and director of the Center for Digital Health in Penn Medicine and associate professor of emergency medicine in the Perelman School of Medicine. Dr. Merchant’s work has sought to gain insights through digital media about important health trends, and she is recognized for developing, deploying, evaluating, and refining novel tools and techniques to promote individual and population health. Some of her projects in this arena include tracking both physical and mental health symptoms via Twitter during the COVID-19 pandemic, determining keywords and phrases that could be used to flag depression via Facebook posts, and a crowdsourcing initiative called the MyHeartMap Challenge to construct an online map of automated external defibrillators across Philadelphia. In 2019, Dr. Merchant was named to NAM’s class of Emerging Leaders of Health and Medicine Scholars.

Hongsan Song is the Perelman Professor of Neuroscience in the Perelman School of Medicine’s department of neuroscience and co-director of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine Neurokevelopment and Regeneration Program. His work focuses on neural stem cell regulation and neurogenesis and their effects on neural function as well as epigenetic and epitranscriptomic mechanisms and their role in the mammalian nervous system. He is being recognized for revealing unexpected dynamics and plasticity of the neuronal epigenome, as well as its functions under physiological and pathological conditions.

In response to urgent global health concerns, his team made a series of timely discoveries on the pathogenesis, mechanisms, and treatment of Zika virus infections.

Renata Holod:  
MESA Mentoring Award
Renata Holod, professor emerita of history of art and curator of the Near East section of the Penn Museum, is the recipient of the 2020 Mentoring Award from the Middle East Studies Association (MESA). The MESA Mentoring Award was established in 1995 and first given at MESA’s 1996 annual meeting. The award recognizes exceptional contributions retired faculty have made to the education and training of others. With this prestigious honor, Dr. Holod’s peers recognize her enduring contributions to several fields through her ongoing advising and mentorship. The news was announced on October 12 at the award ceremony of MESA’s (continued on page 5)
The original plan for GreenPlan Philadelphia was developed by WRT for the City of Philadelphia during the administration of former Mayor Michael Nutter. The ideas and strategies laid out in GreenPlan have helped inform a variety of active programs in Philadelphia today, including Greenworks Philadelphia, Tree Philly, Green City, Clean Waters, and more. Together, these efforts are making Philadelphia a healthier, more vibrant and more climate resilient city that can thrive in the future.

In concert with the professional medalists, the Weitzman School has selected two outstanding students entering their final year of study to receive a $50,000 scholarship each for the 2020-2021 Academic Year.

The Kanter Tritsch Prize is given to a Master of Architecture candidate entering the final year of study who demonstrates transformational thinking on the built environment and innovation in his or her approach to one or more challenges of energy, ecology, and social equity. The recipient of the 2020 Prize is Paul Germain.

The Witte-Sakamoto Family Prize is given to a Master of City and Regional Planning candidate for innovation and impact in planning. The recipient of the 2020 Prize is Avery Harmon, whose work explores potential solutions to improve the lives of African Americans through the built environment.

The honorees will be recognized in a virtual event planned for December 2, 2020.

**Kanter Tritsch and Witte-Sakamoto Medal and Prize Winners**

The University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design has selected Peter Eisenman as the 2020 recipient of the Kanter Tritsch Medal for Excellence in Architecture and Environmental Design, and the City of Philadelphia as the 2020 recipient of the Witte-Sakamoto Family Medal in City and Regional Planning for GreenPlan Philadelphia.

The Kanter Tritsch Medal for Excellence in Architecture and Environmental Design was established in 2017 through a $1.25 million gift from Penn alumnus Lori Kanter Tritsch (MPhil ’85), a member of the Board of Overseers at Weitzman, and her partner and fellow Penn alumnus William P. Lauder, who holds a bachelor of science in economics from the Wharton School and is a Penn trustee. The Prize honors an architect who has changed the course of design history, with a particular focus on the areas of energy conservation, environmental quality, and/or diversity.

The Witte-Sakamoto Family Medal in City and Regional Planning was established by William Witte (C’73, MCP’75), an alumnus of the Weitzman School and member of the Board of Overseers, and his wife, Keiko Sakamoto, Esq. to recognize an outstanding team, or professional for an exemplary plan that advances plan making in at least four of the following areas: social equity, environmental quality, design, public health, mobility, housing affordability, and economic development.

**Patricia Kapur:** 

ASA Distinguished Service Award

The American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) presented Patricia Kapur with its 2019 Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her long and highly distinguished career as a physician anesthesiologist, administrator, and educator. The award is the highest honor ASA bestows and is presented annually to a member who has transformed the specialty of anesthesiology.

Dr. Kapur is a clinical professor of anesthesiology and critical care at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. Previously, she spent 17 years as chair of the department of anesthesiology at the David Geffen School of Medicine of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) before rising to the role of executive vice president of the UCLA Health System, and CEO of the UCLA Faculty Practice Group. During her 36 years as a member of ASA, Dr. Kapur has made countless contributions, including serving as chair of the Section on Education & Research for nine years, chairing the 2008 ASA annual meeting, and delivering the Ravenstone Lecture in 2011. She also was a longtime member of the ASA’s Board of Directors, and serves on the editorial board and as section editor of the journal Anesthesia & Analgesia.

**Amy Offner:** Michael H. Hunt Prize in International History

Amy Offner, assistant professor of history, has been awarded the inaugural Michael H. Hunt Prize in International History by the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR), which recognizes outstanding international scholarship. Dr. Offner was recognized for her book, *Sorting out the Mixed Economy: The Rise and Fall of Welfare and Developmental States in the Americas*, which explores how Latin American economic and social welfare initiatives in the years following World War II were later reimagined by US leaders who had very disparate goals in mind.

The Hunt Prize recognizes the best first book on any aspect of international or global history since the mid-19th century that makes substantial use of historical records in more than one language. Dr. Offner shares the 2020 prize with Giuliana Chamedes of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The prize announcement called *Sorting out the Mixed Economy* “strikingly original” and said it “holds lessons for all nations in the throes—or aftermath—of development.” The book argues that the economy of the mid-century Americas presented opportunities for economists, managers, planners, and corporate leaders to become agents for social change while also exploiting development for private profit.
The Year of Civic Engagement

Wendell Pritchett

We announced in June, as many of you know, that this would be a special Year of Civic Engagement at Penn. Our panel is going to tell you about the wide range of civic engagement programs that we have at Penn. We were founded as a practical academy and this mission has been central to our work for hundreds of years. It is more important than ever to remember this year. This is in part because of the election, which is less than two weeks away, and we’re going to learn more in a few minutes about the amazing work of our students in Penn Leads the Vote in registering and mobilizing voters. But we also need to reaffirm that civic engagement is always at the heart of what Penn is about, even if we are dispersed around the world. We will learn more this afternoon about Civic House, the Netter Center, and the Paideia Program and how they advance these values.

I would also encourage you to think about three specific things that you can do—all of you—to embody these values. First, as you no doubt heard, voting on November 3rd—or before November 3rd, as I have done, if that’s your preference. Second, I encourage you all to get engaged in your communities, wherever you are right now. You don’t need to live on campus to practice civic engagement. It’s more important than ever for us to help our local communities stay vital and connected during the pandemic. Third, we will all be essential to revitalizing our city of Philadelphia and our neighborhood of West Philadelphia in the critical years ahead. So the Year of Civic Engagement urges us to look beyond this specific moment to the great history of Penn and Philadelphia and to the great future of Penn in Philadelphia. I’m now going to turn it over to my wonderful colleague, Deputy Provost Beth Winkelstein, who I want to thank, not only for being the impresario of many of these activities, but for all her leadership in standing up our educational program this year in a very challenging situation. She and our panelists will talk more about our defining commitment to Civic Engagement and the Year of Civic Engagement. So, without further ado, Dr. Winkelstein.

Beth Winkelstein

I will be super brief because we have a wonderful panel—a two-part presentation on the Year of Civic Engagement and then, as Provost Pritchett previewed, several really engaged and interesting panelists that I want you to hear from. As you’ve already heard, this is a Theme Year that we launched only a few months ago. But as the Provost just pointed out, this is something that is a longstanding tradition of commitment and investment and a practice here at Penn around civic engagement.

Today not only will we hear about the current moment, which is punctuated by the activities and the landscape around us and the Year of Civic Engagement, but we will also celebrate and share some of those long-standing and newly created programs here on campus and you’ll hear more from our panelists. For the first part of our presentation, I want to introduce David Fox, the Director of New Student Orientation and Academic Initiatives. David and his team have pulled off nothing short of—I don’t call it a miracle because it’s more than a miracle—but it’s a huge lift and a major pivot. Together with their office and our partners across campus, they rose to the challenge and launched the Penn Reading Project and Herman Beavers, Associate Vice President and Founding Director of the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships Ira Harkavy, and student co-chairs of Penn Leads the Vote Harrison Feinman and Eva Gonzalez.

David Fox

I intend to be very brief here and to let the video that was a great part of the Year of Civic Engagement do most of the talking for me. But I also wanted to echo Beth’s discussion of partnership we had—this was an extraordinary group of people who came together. I would say that the discussions which were weekly—this is an odd word to use in a sense about this time—but I found them often joyful and exhilarating and I could not have asked for a better team. You’re going to have the pleasure of meeting three of the keys players in this, but I would be remiss if I didn’t thank my partners—my teammates in New Student Orientation—Ira Harkavy and Andrea Naughton who did extraordinary heavy lifting here. Except it didn’t feel like heavy lifting. It felt exciting in every possible respect.

I’ll just focus on a couple of things that changed in the Penn Reading Project particularly, which was first salvo really in this Year of Civic Engagement. We obviously moved to an online format, which lasted a week rather than the kind of one event central day that we normally would do. All of the materials were made available through Canvas, which were a group of readings or short essays plus a 30-minute video. It was of major importance to us that students would be able to download these easily and access the materials on their own in whatever context that they would have them.

We opened the gates more widely to invite members of the entire Penn community—students, faculty, and staff—to take part as facilitators and get a chance to meet students in small groups. We had more than double the amount of volunteers that we normally had. We were able to have multiple facilitators for each group. We began the week and ended the week with a video. The video that we ended the week with, you’re about to see: https://youtu.be/q68G_XKVPxg. The video that we began the week with—I’m very grateful to Provost Pritchett for having done this—was the Provost’s Community Gathering, which as of an hour ago had 3,805 hits. We had an extraordinary number of people watch it in real time. As with many of the programs that we did in New Student Orientation, they’re available on our YouTube channel—a phrase I never thought I’d say at a meeting at Penn, but here I am saying it.

We also asked the students at the beginning of the Reading Project and at the end of the Reading Project to answer a question. At the beginning, we asked them to consider all of the materials that they looked at and talk about an idea that particularly spoke to them. At the end, we asked them how they would like to put that into practice because we saw that they were really—and this is the way I often phrase it—beginning with the Reading Project, not ending with it. With all of that said, I would like to now segue into the video that we made in partnership with Bowstring, which I think speaks to the year.

Beth Winkelstein

Thank you, David. I know you join me as we transition to the panel portion of this presentation. In thanking the panelists who we’ve just seen featured in the video, today we have in person three of those programs to talk through in more detail, and I’m very excited by the fact that we are joined by two of our students. I am going to introduce each of the panelists and then ask that they kick it off and then pass the baton to the next person.

We’re going to start with Michael Delli Carpini, the Oscar Gandy Professor of Communication & Democracy and the Faculty Director of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Paideia Program. After him, we’re going to hear from Herman Beavers, Professor of English and Africana Studies and Faculty Director of Civic House and the Civic Scholars Program. Then Ira Harkavy, the associate vice president and founding director of the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships. And, excitedly,
The third way in which we try to achieve our goals is through more specific initiatives. The first is the Red and Blue Exchange, funded generously by the Gamba family. This is a combination of speaker series, student forums, and the SNF Paideia-designated course Can We Talk to promote productive and effective dialogue across different ideological perspectives. The second initiative that I’ll highlight is the Penn Public Interest Technology initiative. This is part of a multi-university collaboration attempting to bring together issues of social justice and civil engagement with technology expertise so that technology can be used to serve the public interest, broadly defined.

Our fourth way of trying to achieve our goals is through the Paideia Fellows program that I mentioned. These are student cohorts that are provided with a more immersive experience through seminars that only Paideia fellows can take in their sophomore and junior years; three additional Paideia-designated courses that each fellow chooses in consultation with an advisor, based on his or her interests and major; an optional internship program; and a capstone project that connects a student’s major to some issue of wellness, service, citizenship and dialogue. We have our first cohort of sophomore fellows this year, and we’re very excited about working with them over the next three years. You can read more about them on our website. Finally, but equally importantly, we try to do what we do through collaborations and partnerships. Many of the groups you’re going to hear about today—Civic House, the Netter Center, the Andrea Mitchell Center, Penn in Washington, Wellness at Penn, the Fox Leadership—are all really important programs and centers that do great work in the area of civic engagement. What we strive to do is not only work with them, but serve as a way of networking these efforts together so that the great work that goes on at Penn in the area of civic engagement can be foregrounded and more effective because we are working as a group.

Let me end with a slide that shows the Paideia staff. We have a great staff, and great space in College Hall—renovated space—that unfortunately we have not been in as a group yet except to walk through it! We’re hopeful that when we’re back on campus, you will visit us there. You can also visit us in the meantime virtually by going to our website, by attending our events and courses, and by signing up for our social media. We really look forward to working with you and others over the course of the next years. Aspirationally, we hope that our program, in collaboration with the other programs you’re hearing about, will make Penn a place where students decide to come because they want to be part of the open exchanges, civic engagement, and diversity of thought, of people, and of conversation that our university is known for. Thank you very much. I will pass it on to my friend Herman now.

**Michael X. Delli Carpini**

Thank you Beth for the opportunity to talk about the SNF Paideia Program. I wanted to start off by saying it’s been a great pleasure and an honor to work with you, with David, with Herman, with Chaz, with Ira, and with the many others who have worked hard on the Year of Civic Engagement. The Paideia Program was established just last year through a five-year pilot grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation with the hopes that it will become a permanent part of Penn’s educational mission. Its central goal is to provide Penn undergraduates with the skills, knowledge, ethics, and motivations to engage in informed, robust, but respectful dialogue across the many ideological, demographic, identity-based, and regional divides that exist at Penn, in Philadelphia, in our nation, and across the globe. Doing so in a way that marries individual wellness with community wellness; that is, to educate the whole person and to educate citizens in the broadest and most inclusive sense of that term, which are the meanings of the ancient Greek concept of Paideia.

The program is still evolving and is intentionally experimental, but overall, we attempt to achieve the goals that I just mentioned through the following: Paideia-designated courses that are open to all Penn undergraduates; Paideia-sponsored or co-sponsored lectures, forums and workshops focusing on wellness, service, citizenship and dialogue; initiatives that address these issues in more focused areas; a Paideia fellows program, in which, beginning in their sophomore year, cohorts of 20 Penn undergraduates can have a more structured and immersive experience; and other collaborations, partnerships and network-building with the many other Penn entities whose missions focus on one or more aspects of wellness, service, citizenship and dialogue, with the goal of making the whole more than the sum of its individual parts. Let me talk very briefly about each of those five components.

While each course is unique in form and content, the overall purpose of the Paideia-designated courses is to examine deliberative democracy, civil discourse, and issues of conflict negotiation and cooperation to equip our students with ways to engage with diverse perspectives; to provide practical application for using these skills; to explore ethical approaches to engaged citizenship and civic leadership; and to investigate the relationship between individual wellness, civic engagement, and the community.

This next slide shows you a few examples of the courses that we have or will be offering soon. I want to mention though that we have many other courses listed on our website. But I want to mention in particular that while these are credit-bearing courses, we are also working with other groups on a new preceptorial non-credit bearing course titled Racism and Anti-Racism in Contemporary America. This course will consist of 13 interdisciplinary panels featuring faculty, mostly Penn faculty from across the University, addressing the different ways in which race affects our health system, our educational system, our economic system, our political system, and so on. These panels are open not only to undergraduates, but to staff and faculty and to even interested people outside of Penn. The first of these panels will take place this coming Monday (October 26) at 5 p.m. I hope you have seen how to register for this course or individual panels through the many emails that we’ve sent out. But if you haven’t, please just go to the SNF Paideia website or the Year of Civic Engagement website to see how you can register. But that’s another example of the type of programming that we do through courses.

A second way in which we try to achieve our goals is through lectures, forums and workshops. Here is a list of a few that we have sponsored or cosponsored in the recent weeks and months. I just want to highlight one, the 2020 Silfen Forum that we cosponsored, which was a panel discussion on civil discourse in what are clearly uncivil times. It featured Jeb Bush, Julián Castro, Donna Brazile, Peggy Noonan, and Ashley Parker in a bipartisan discussion that was viewed live by over 1,000 members of the Penn community and has been viewed by over 10,000 people, I think, at last count, in its video form. If you’ve not seen it, it’s a great example of civil dialogue and you can access the video of it on the Silfen Forum website.

One thing that I will say is that we’re happy that this is the Year of Civic Engagement. But at Civic House every year is the Year of Civic Engagement for us. One of the challenges for us this year was to figure out how we could continue to partner with our community organizations affiliated with the program in a way that continued to foreground their concerns and their agendas even as we participate in the Year of Civic Engagement. What has been a really wonderful thing to experience is the way that our Civic Scholars have come to internalize vocabulary of community engagement and the vocabulary of liberatory praxis.

We try very hard to immerse our students in conversations about privilege and oppression and power, and that would be particularly relevant in this moment, where students are really interested in pressing against the
idea of systemic racism. But, to do that, we try and get at the root causes of social issues. And so we try very hard to have a conversation in the house as a whole about what are the ways that our individual organizational and institutional identities contribute to some of the root causes. And then we try and develop a praxis through which to enhance critical thinking that leads us to begin to undo the damage caused by the root causes of social issues.

We’re very interested in pushing our students to think about the different ways to achieve justice. In some instances, that is sitting in a room with our community partners listening. In other instances, it’s sitting with our community partners and offering input. But what is always the case is that we are always about trying to achieve mutually beneficial collaborations with community members.

One of the things that I think we are going to try and pull off this year is a discussion about systemic racism, but also about what my staff likes to call performative activism, and what’s the difference between really authentically-engaged partnerships and what are performative partnerships.

Our collaborators in the community include a very diverse group of organizations, including the School District of Philadelphia, but also HIAS Pennsylvania, which originally stood for Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, but now they focus on any immigrants coming to the City of Philadelphia and the State of Pennsylvania. Asian Americans United is an organization that attempts to foreground the concerns of the Asian-American community in the Philadelphia. And then the Public Citizens for Children and Youth is an organization that really attempts to facilitate programming that helps children thrive in Philadelphia. And then the Public Citizens for Children and Youth is an organization that really attempts to facilitate programming that helps children thrive in Philadelphia. And then the Public Citizens for Children and Youth is an organization that really attempts to facilitate programming that helps children thrive in Philadelphia.

What I will say is that in the brief time that I’ve been faculty director at Civic House, we already have had really provocative conversations about what it means to be civically engaged. Our goal is produce students who

The Year of Civic Engagement

Ira Harkavy

First, I want to say how pleased I am to be here today. It has been a pleasure to work with David Fox, Michael Delli Carpini, and Herman Beavers. I actually miss our meetings on Friday. I looked forward to those 11 a.m. meetings. I understand, David, there’s one coming up next week, and I’m glad to hear that. They have been terrific, and the conversations have been stimulating. Working together on the Year of Civic Engagement has strengthened and solidified our long-term friendships.

I would like to do three things today: provide a very brief overview of the Netter Center; summarize what we’re doing in a remote environment, and show a video conversation that occurred between President Gutmann and me in 2017, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Netter Center.

The Netter Center has approximately 24 programs. We have a primary mission and that is creating democratic mutually-beneficial partnerships between Penn and the West Philadelphia community. We do that through three approaches. One approach is academically based community service (ABCS). These are credit-bearing courses, involving undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, that connect the University with the community. Currently there are approximately 75 courses offered per year with about 1,700 students participating. Although not all our programs work with schools, a large number do; and the approach we use is to develop university-assisted community schools (UACS). We work very deeply with nine schools in West Philadelphia. The idea is that we can provide comprehensive supports for those schools, supports that combine academic and volunteer resources. Approximately, 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students engage with the Netter Center. This includes over 350 students in work-study and other paid internship positions, more than 900 volunteers, and 1,700 students in academically based community service courses. Most of these students work at university-assisted community schools to provide a program in which the schools are hubs and centers of neighborhoods, serving not only children but adults. We aggregate and integrate Penn resources to have maximum impacts on Penn student learning and academic work in general, as well as on the community.

We see academically based community service and university-assisted community schools as part of a larger strategy. One where Penn functions as a democratic anchor institution, which means combining the range of university resources, volunteer, academic, and institutional and economic, to work in democratic partnerships with our neighbors. We’ve been very fortunate to have an exceptionally strong relationship with Craig Carnaroli and the Executive Vice President’s Office, where we work together on issues of employment, purchasing, and community improvement. This work has been beneficial, we believe, both to the University and the community. And with all our work, we share what we do across the country and around the world so Penn serves as a model for how universities can work democratically with their communities.

And what’s happened when we’ve gone remote? We have 39 academically based community service courses, including four new courses, this term. These impressive numbers are the result of extraordinary work on the part of the Penn faculty, the students, and the Netter Center staff as well as our community partners. We also adapted a summer program that’s been going on since the early nineties to a virtual university-assisted community school program for youth in West Philadelphia in grades K to 12. We worked with 435 young people in a remote environment. The program also engaged 60 Penn undergraduates (some of whom were in academic internship programs doing research), who provided invaluable assistance. The summer program as well as the remote program that began during the spring term were quite successful. Two teachers commented that some of the best learning they’ve seen occurred in the spring and summer remote programs. We’ve also developed a program called Nonprofit Connects. The Netter Center has for many years operated a free Nonprofit Institute for community members. Over the summer and into the fall, Wharton students have been working with 18 non-profit organizations. And I also should note that in an adult program, University-Assisted Community School Nights, we have implemented virtual programming that, in some cases, has had greater attendance than the program had when it was in-person.
It has been the Netter Center staff that made all this possible. They’ve always worked with unusual dedication, seriousness of purpose, and a deep value-oriented practice. But during this period, since we’ve gone remote, their work has become even more outstanding. I want to thank the 50 Netter Center full-time staff for their indispensable contributions.

Penn Leads the Vote—you’ll hear about them shortly—has also done terrific work over the spring and summer developing effective digital outreach. Thanks Harrison and Eva for your leadership; and thanks to Cory Bowman, the associate director of the Netter Center, for his great work with the PLTV students.

I’m going to turn now to the video. I should note that the video in part features the work of Larry Gladney, former professor of physics at Penn. As many of you know, Larry is now at Yale. However, there are many other Penn colleagues who engage in this work (some of whom are attending this meeting, including Herman Beavers and Melissa Wilde) who also have compelling stories that would have provided a similar message to that conveyed by Larry’s outstanding work.

Thanks very much for watching the video and thank you, President Gutmann. It was a pleasure to be interviewed with you and have that conversation; and it’s a pleasure to be able to show the video to University Council.

I want to turn now to Harrison Feinman and to Eva Gonzalez, the two exceptional student co-chairs of Penn Leads the Vote.

Harrison Feinman

Eva and I are very grateful to have an opportunity to speak briefly about the work we’ve been doing this semester and we’re happy to answer any questions at the end. I’m Harrison and Eva is also with me and we are the co-directors of Penn Leads the Vote. We both have been involved with the organization in different forms since it was reestablished in 2018.

Penn Leads the Vote was reestablished in 2018 under the Netter Center, and our primary goal is to promote civic voter engagement on campus among students, faculty and staff, and all campus stakeholders, as well as census engagement in the rare one in ten years that is relevant. We believe that civic engagement is a crucial part of learning at Penn; not just among students, but faculty and staff as well.

Eva Gonzalez

Penn Leads the Vote was reestablished after the problem of Penn voter turnout in 2016 and before then, which was slightly lower than the average rate, as these data show. As Harrison mentioned, Penn Leads the Vote was founded in 2004 but it was dormant from 2014 until 2018, when the Netter Center reestablished PLTV to solve this problem.

Since 2018, we’ve made significant progress in improving civic engagement on campus and we’re hoping that we can continue this trend this fall. Two things I’ll point out is that we increased on-campus voter turnout by 484 percent in the fall of 2018, and we are hoping that we can increase this number even more in November. Also Penn is the only Ivy League school to be designated a voter friendly campus by NASPA and the Campus Vote Project.

Penn Leads the Vote has a team of 12 paid student-staff members and we have a few new positions this year that we’ve been really happy to include, which includes a diversity and inclusion coordinator, a communications fellow and a graduate student coordinator. This highlights that we’re really trying to engage with the whole Penn community. Beyond this staff, we also have 95 trained volunteers this semester.

Harrison Feinman

One thing I’d like to add here is this is by far an unprecedented high number for us, which we’re really ecstatic about, and it is part due to New Student Orientation. We’ve been really grateful that we were able to be a part of that this year. So Penn Leads the Vote focuses on a bunch of different areas. We kind of break them up into strategies. Our first one is when we are serving as the direct agent only. We’ll host in-person campus-wide events every year; National Voter Registration Day is our main one, an Election Day celebration and then various tabling. But everything this year has been digital. To address the needs in this digital environment and on social media or our website, Pennvotes.org, many schools have decided to launch a Canvas class, which is based off the content on our website. So it is easily accessible for students where they go every day—almost every hour—to access their courses. We also have partnered with a group called Motivote, which is a platform that allows us to support voting and create competition, which I will talk about. The goal here is to communicate with students through their various affiliations and just meet them where they are. Through that, we have built a lot of great partnerships.

Penn is a catalyst. Our primary method of reaching students is through the strategy called the first door knocking, which is where we support leaders to reach out to their peers and meeting folks where they are instead of having them come to us. A lot of this strategy comes from the data that Eva was speaking about. At least in 2016, the best predictor of whether or not a student would vote was actually their major. As you may imagine, political science students tended to vote at higher rate than most students. That informs everything we do. This year, we have three main buckets where we are a catalyst. The first one is through the Quaker Vote Project where we partner with student organizations to make sure they have the tools they need to encourage voting, such as hosting events. We have about 50 organizations so far and we also provide money so groups can put on their own civic engagement events. Most recently we gave $500 to the Muslim Student Association. We also have the more involved VEC, where we have student leaders from across campus and large student organizations help steer our mission to make sure that we are engaging everyone in the most effective way and our reaching all corners of campus, and then Motivote, which I mentioned is the gamification of voting. We have partnered with undergraduate schools and every undergraduate is participating in a competition. So the schools are competing to see who can get the most amount of points, which is basically based on how many folks are in the platform and in the competition. And athletics is running their own as well and the College Houses are hosting a friendly competition, I think the school one is a little more competitive.

Penn Leads the Vote is also the advocate and we work a lot to make sure voting can be as accessible as possible. We work a lot with the Office of Government Affairs and other groups that are doing this work in Pennsylvania nationally to try to make voting more accessible to everyone. Some of the stuff we have advocated before in the past includes primary day changes, early voting, a streamlined down process. A lot of changes we’ve advocated for have been laterly enacted by the state but there’s definitely some room to get out and we are paying attention to the results of this election to see how that can affect our work in this bucket later.

Eva Gonzalez

Our fourth strategy is Penn Leads the Vote as the connector. This is where we forge and strengthen a local network of organizations in universities, both in the West Philadelphia community, Pennsylvania at large, in addition to the greater Ivy League community. I’ll point out our work with the Pennsylvania Student Voting Coalition, which I’ve helped to develop this past semester, and is really crucial for statewide advocacy work.

Our fifth strategy is Penn Leads the Vote as an academic partner, which includes our work with ABCS courses. Another really great initiative in this area is our partnership with Professor Emily Falk in the Falk Lab to do more psychology-based research this semester. We’ve also worked with the Year of Civic Engagement programming and the Paideia Program.

Lastly, we hosted an event with PORES on National Registration Day and hope to further these partnerships.
13th Annual (Virtual) Schoenberg Symposium on Manuscript Studies in the Digital COVID-19 Age: November 18-20

In the early spring of 2020, as the world shut down, scholarship and teaching were thrown into a virtual, online world. In the hands-on world of manuscripts studies, students, teachers, researchers, librarians, and curators lost physical access to the very objects upon which their work centered. But we were ready. Thanks to world-wide digitization efforts over the past twenty years, scholars at all levels and around the world have, by all counts, virtual access to more manuscripts and manuscript-related metadata than ever a generation ago and are benefited by a broad array of digital tools, technologies, and resources that allow them to locate, gather, analyze, and interrogate digitized manuscripts and related metadata.

But in a COVID-19 Age, have these resources and tools been enough to continue manuscript research and study? Has scholarship and teaching been supported by these resources and tools in the ways that those who created them intended? Has access to these artifacts of our shared intellectual heritage become more open and equitable or are there still hurdles for scholarship around the world to overcome? Has a forced reckoning with digital tools, technologies, and resources spurred new questions or avenues of research or thrown up barriers? As creators and users of digital tools, technologies, and resources, have we learned anything since March about the success or failure of such projects? We will consider these questions and the opportunities and limitations offered by digital images and manuscript-related metadata as well as the digital and conceptual interfaces that come between the data and us as users. Our goal is to offer a (virtual) space to discuss lessons learned since March and how those lessons can push us to better practice and development of strategies in the future.

The symposium will occur Wednesday, November 18 to Friday, November 20. Each day will consist of a 90-minute session with papers in the morning, followed by a 90-minute panel discussion led by invited moderators in the afternoon. All sessions will be recorded and made available after each session.

Two events will be held in conjunction with the symposium:

Scholarly Editing, COVID-19-Style: Laura Morreale will lead a 3-day crowd-sourcing effort to transcribe, edit, and submit for publication an edition of Le Pelerinage de Damselles Sapience, from UPenn MS Codex 660 (f. 86r-95v). Sounds crazy? Well, that’s 2020! For more information and to sign up, click here.

Virtual Lightning Round: Pre-recorded 5-minute lightning round talks featuring digital projects at all stages of development, from ideas to implementation.

The conference is free and open to the public but registration is required. Click here to register. A Zoom link for all three days will be provided upon registration.

A New Wharton Online Course for High School Students

Have you heard about the Wharton Global Youth Program? This division mobilizes the extensive opportunities of the Wharton academic community to educate and inspire pre-college students to explore business practices. They recently launched a new online and self-paced course for high school students—Understanding Your Money. Topics include economics, finance and banking. Participants earn a Wharton Global Youth certificate while still taking their high school classes.

In addition to online video lessons, this course includes links to related readings, activities and glossary terms, as well as quizzes to test students on the learning material.

The course is open to students in grades 9-12. No prerequisites or application materials are required to enroll.

Now through November 30, 2020, Wharton Global Youth Program offers Penn staff a 10% off discount. Use the code STAFF10 to enroll your children or grandchildren.

https://globalyouth.wharton.upenn.edu/academic-year-programs/understanding-your-money/ to learn more.

Adobe Flash – Time to Start Saying Goodbye

Adobe Flash is software used by web browsers to display animation and video content on web browsers and is also used by many applications and websites to deliver multimedia content. Unfortunately, Flash has been difficult to maintain—it requires frequent security updates and can be a vulnerable software target, frequently exploited by hackers when it is not kept up-to-date.

Because of these issues, Flash is being phased out. Major web browsers such as Firefox, Opera, Microsoft Edge and Apple Safari are curtailing support for Flash by disabling it by default or ending support for it altogether. As of December 2020, Adobe will no longer offer Flash updates for download.

These upcoming changes mean that University resources will gradually be moving away from using Flash. As a content user, you need not do anything; changes to existing Flash content will be implemented without your active intervention. Information about these changes will be announced as resources transition away from supporting Adobe Flash.

To secure your operating system and browsers, make sure to run all updates (especially browser updates) and plugins. Check with your IT support group if your computing devices are managed by your School or Center, and for any IT support questions.


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

A Virtual Veterans Day Flag Raising Ceremony featuring Penn’s NROTC Midshipmen and the Presentation of Colors at Holf兽en Hall Center will take place Wednesday, November 11, at 9 a.m. Visit https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/kjbpwxkb The event is presented by OAA-EOP, The Penn Veterans Collaborative and The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic.

Under the direction of Vietnam Veteran and accomplished actor Michael Toner, veterans will design and perform a virtual program of dramatic readings centered on the theme of “Homecoming.” The virtual performance will be held on Wednesday, November 11, at 6 p.m. The workshop is free and open to all veterans. Visit https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/pjxdhvvz

The event is sponsored by OAA-EOP and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.
Each year, we see the outpouring of kindness and generosity from Penn’s faculty and staff in supporting the many worthy causes represented by the Penn’s Way campaign. Our partner organizations (The United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, Philadelphia Alliance for Change and Penn Medicine) work closely with us to ensure that the Penn community’s contributions are used to address needs across our region.

This year is a time of unprecedented hardship at every level: families, nonprofits, and local businesses are struggling to stay afloat. Community organizations and foundations, are being called upon to help people who have lost their jobs, health care, homes, etc., and the charitable organizations that used to assist people, are themselves struggling. The Penn community has demonstrated year after year that we can, and will, rise to meet the challenge.

The theme for this year’s campaign is Caring for Our Community. We encourage the Penn community to bring home the message of caring, in this very challenging year, by contributing to organizations that support the three “Pillars of Need” identified by the Penn’s Way Campaign:

- Health Care Disparity
- Food Insecurity
- Social Justice

This week we are highlighting organizations that focus on Food Insecurity:

- Food for All https://foodforall.com/ (02300)
- Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission https://sundaybreakfast.org/ (C1075)
- MANNA https://mannapa.org/ (C1102)
- SHARE Food Program https://www.sharefoodprogram.org/ (C1019)
- Rise Against Hunger https://www.riseagainsthunger.org/ (C0921)
- Feed the Children https://www.feedthechildren.org/ (C0182)
- Caring for Friends (formerly Aid for Friends) https://caringforfriends.org/ (C1072)
- Share Our Strength (No Kid Hungry) https://www.nokidhungry.org/ (C0792)
- Feeding America https://www.feedingamerica.org/ (C0780)
- Food Bank of South Jersey https://foodbanksj.org/ (06529)
- Philadelphia Orchard Project https://www.phillyorchards.org/ (C0417)

If you have an organization within the campaign that you would like to support, whatever their mission, you can be sure that they need your contribution this year more than ever.

Login www.pennsway.upenn.edu to care for your community.

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.

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A Message to the Penn Community:

We write to provide you with the University’s current plans for the spring semester, which will begin on January 20, 2021.

The current fall semester has given us essential information and insights into how best to manage campus life as the pandemic continues its worldwide spread. With a limited number of students on campus and in West Philadelphia this fall, we have been able to successfully minimize risk to our community through effective testing and tracking systems, rigorous enforcement of the guidelines enacted to protect the health of our community and, most importantly, the conscientious commitment of students, faculty and staff, for which we are grateful.

As we approach the spring semester, we have been working with Penn Medicine to dramatically expand our testing capacity. With additional testing available, we are confident that we can support increased numbers of students returning to campus in January. While we will not be able to house as many students as we would have pre-COVID, we will be opening on-campus housing, subject to certain limitations to enable proper social distancing. Students will be in single bedrooms with shared bathrooms at no more than a 6:1 ratio. Priority will be given to first-, second- and fourth-year undergraduates who still wish to live on-campus college housing, and we also expect to be able to accommodate third-year undergraduates who still wish to live in on-campus college housing. Those who have signed up for on-campus housing will receive specific details directly from Residential Services. A limited number of rooms may be available for graduate students in Sansom Place East for the spring semester. If so, the application will be made available in early December. Students who signed up to live in Greek sponsored housing will receive more specific details from the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

Students who choose to return to campus will be able to engage in a variety of small-group interactions and have access to library study space, outdoor athletic facilities, and other extracurricular activities, all subject to public health guidelines and our Student Campus Compact. (A decision on spring athletics from the Ivy League has not yet been made.) While we are welcoming students back, we also know that campus life will not be as it was prior to the pandemic. Strict public health protocols will remain in place. Students, faculty, and staff will continue to be required to wear face coverings when on campus or in facilities other than their personal residences, practice social distancing, avoid large gatherings, and follow additional specific requirements as appropriate.

The hybrid educational experiences for all students in the spring are likely to be similar to this fall: most classes will be delivered remotely, with limited exceptions, including courses with clinical experiences and in-person research required for graduation. We expect to see a modest increase in in-person instruction during the spring semester. Specific modes of teaching and course delivery will be determined by the deans and faculty of each school. The University is taking extensive steps to minimize risks associated with in-person instruction, and all core curricula classes will be made available for remote access to support those students who prefer to remain off-campus due to health concerns. Graduate and professional programs will continue to evaluate their own operations, consistent with public health limitations.

Students returning to campus in January will be expected to participate in a quiet period for two weeks, limiting their contact to those in their immediate “pods” and leaving their residence only for essential reasons. This has proven to be an effective way to minimize disease transmission upon entry. Adherence to the guidelines for conduct during the pandemic as outlined in the Student Campus Compact will continue to be required of all students. Among other conditions outlined in the Compact, students are required to receive a flu shot before their return. Proof of immunization to the flu will be a condition of attendance.

To maximize our ability to protect the community from the coronavirus, all undergraduates will be required to be tested for COVID-19 twice per week upon their return to campus, and all graduate and professional students engaged in research activities on campus or living in the area once per week. We will be utilizing a saliva-based testing system that will be administered at eight sites across campus to ensure easy access to the testing. The contact tracing system put in place this fall will also continue to be utilized.

In addition, in order to offer important additional protection for the Penn community, screening testing will be required for faculty, staff, and post-docs who are on campus for four or more hours each week interacting with other community members, or whose activities on campus involve teaching, or who are regularly in an aggregate setting of ten or more people in a single shared space on campus. All other faculty, staff, and post-docs who are engaged in any on-campus activities are encouraged to participate in screening testing. Penn Medicine faculty, housestaff, medical students on clinical rotations, and staff will continue to follow health system guidelines for screening using PennOpen Pass. A detailed testing protocol, designed to ensure a safe and efficient process, will be provided before the spring semester gets underway.

Everyone who comes to campus (faculty, staff and students) will be required to enroll in PennOpen Pass. PennOpen Pass is a daily symptom checker and exposure reporting system designed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading within the Penn community. Daily symptom checks or exposure reporting on PennOpen Pass are required of those who are on campus.

Administrative functions that can operate remotely will continue to do so during the spring semester. With students returning to campus in greater numbers, there will be a modest increase in essential student support staff available on campus. Faculty and staff are encouraged to consult with their deans and supervisors regarding their specific responsibilities and expectations for spring semester and to be familiar with the COVID-19 Return to Campus Guide for Faculty and Staff.

While we are confident in our ability to bring students back to campus in the spring, we are also mindful that the status of the pandemic can change, and we will continue to monitor all governmental and public health recommendations, lest there be a surge in transmission that requires a change in our planning and operations. Those who wish to monitor the state of the pandemic at Penn can always see the most current data at our Coronavirus Dashboard. Updated information about the spring semester and Penn’s response to the pandemic can always be found at the Penn COVID-19 website.

We recognize what a difficult year this has been for everyone. To students and families, we appreciate your patience as we do all that we possibly can both to provide a meaningful and uplifting educational experience and to protect the safety of those on campus. To faculty and staff who have worked so tirelessly to ensure the strong and seamless operations of our educational, research and clinical missions, we cannot thank you enough.

At difficult times like these, character really matters. The grace and determination of the entire Penn community have been inspiring. Continuing to work together, we are confident that the spring semester will be a good and productive one. Thank you all for making this possible.

We will be providing additional details in the weeks ahead, and will continue to keep you updated if there are any changes to our plans.

—Amy Gutmann, President
—Wendell Pritchett, Provost
—Craig Carnaroli, Executive Vice President
—J. Larry Jameson, Dean, Perelman School of Medicine and Executive Vice President for the Health System

Ed. Note: The updated Academic Calendar for the 2021 Spring Semester is available at https://almanac.upenn.edu/penn-academic-calendar