$11 Million PCORI Grant to PSOM’s Scott Halpern Research Team

A research team led by University of Pennsylvania professor of medicine, epidemiology, and medical ethics and health policy, and LDI senior fellow Scott Halpern has received an $11 million grant from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to develop the largest study ever done comparing different strategies to help lung cancer screening patients to stop smoking.

The project was one of three, selected from 91 applicants, to receive funding from PCORI’s pragmatic clinical studies to evaluate patient-centered outcomes’ program. The trial will include 3,200 current smokers from underserved populations who are referred for lung cancer screening at Penn and three other health systems: Geisinger Health System, Kaiser Permanente Southern California and Henry Ford Health System. “These patients are particularly likely to smoke and have historically not benefited as much from programs designed to promote quitting,” according to PCORI. “This study will also evaluate if different interventions work better for specific groups; for example, for people of different races, ethnicities, incomes and degrees of tobacco dependence.”

Dr. Halpern is the founding director of Penn’s Palliative and Advanced Illness Research (PAIR) Center, which generates evidence to advance policies and practices that improve the lives of all people affected by serious illness. He is also the founding director of the Fostering Improvement in End-of-Life Decision Science (FIELDS) program, the nation’s only program that applies behavioral economic principles to understand and improve upon the health decisions made by seriously ill patients, their caregivers and their clinicians.

Among Dr. Halpern’s dozens of awards are the Greenwall Foundation Faculty Scholar Award in Bioethics, AcademyHealth’s Alice S. Hersh New Investigator Award and the Young Leader Award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Penn Medicine and BioNTech to Combine Efforts to Develop New mRNA Vaccines for Infectious Diseases

Penn Medicine has entered into a new strategic collaboration with BioNTech, a German biotechnology company, to research and develop mRNA vaccines for various infectious diseases.

The goal of the multi-year partnership is for researchers from both the Perelman School of Medicine (PSOM) at the University of Pennsylvania and BioNTech to exchange their in-depth knowledge and experience in mRNA research and development to advance the discovery of novel vaccine candidates for up to 10 infectious diseases.

At Penn, the research will be conducted by Drew Weissman, professor of infectious diseases at PSOM, as well other investigators, including Gary H. Cohen, professor of microbiology at Penn Dental, and Harvey Friedman, professor of infectious diseases at PSOM.

While most commercially available vaccines for infectious diseases involve a lab-grown inactivated or attenuated virus that is injected into the body to elicit an immune response for future protection, mRNA vaccines work by delivering nucleotide sequences that code for specific cell surface antigens found on pathogens. Once the mRNA vaccine enters the body’s cells, it uses cellular machinery to produce the cell surface antigen protein encoded by the mRNA. The antigen is then recognized as foreign by the immune system, eliciting a strong response for protection against the target pathogen.

“Nucleoside-modified mRNA vaccines offer promising advantages over conventional vaccines: They have the potential to encode any antigen for almost any pathogen and allow for higher levels of neutralization and durability of the response and a capacity for faster production at a lower cost,” Dr. Weissman said. “Combining Penn’s strengths in immunotherapy, molecular biology and mRNA expertise with BioNTech’s technology platforms could lead to the development of highly flexible vaccines that provide protections against a wide-ranging list of infectious diseases.”

Recent research led by Dr. Weissman has demonstrated the potential of mRNA to elicit potent immune responses against pathogens, including influenza and the Zika virus, making it a viable, attractive platform for prophylactic vaccine development. A study published in Nature Communications in August 2018 by Dr. Weissman and colleagues showed how an mRNA vaccine elicited a strong antibody response to a structure on the surface of flu viruses, called the hemagglutinin stalk, and protected mice from infection by distant and mutated flu strains.

The new vaccine research will focus on infectious diseases with a large unmet need, a growing epidemic potential, or that have remained inaccessible to conventional vaccine approaches.

“Entering into a strategic R&D alliance with BioNTech expands the infectious disease research efforts at Penn,” said James W. Bowen, the executive director of Corporate Alliances at the Penn Center for Innovation. “This alliance builds on a strong foundation of mRNA engineering and vaccine development knowledge and aligns this Penn expertise with the mRNA manufacturing, mRNA product development and translational science capabilities of BioNTech. We welcome collaboration and innovation that improves vaccine development with a goal to develop new and improved ways to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases.”

Pritzker Prize for PSOM’s Virginia Lee

Virginia Lee, the John H. Ware 3rd Endowed Professor in Alzheimer’s Research at the Perelman School of Medicine at The University of Pennsylvania, received the 2018 Robert A. Pritzker Prize for Leadership in Parkinson’s Research (MJFF). The Pritzker Prize has been awarded annually since 2011 by MJFF to recognize researchers who make an exceptional contribution to Parkinson’s research and exhibit a commitment to mentoring the next generation of Parkinson’s scientists. Dr. Lee is the first female researcher to be selected for the Pritzker Prize. She was presented the prize at a Foundation event in New York City in November.

Dr. Lee will receive a $100,000 grant, which she will use to continue advancing Parkinson’s research breakthroughs.

Dr. Lee, a biochemist, began investigating misfolded proteins that accumulate in the brains of people with neurodegenerative disease in the 1990s. In 1997, she and her colleagues identified alpha-synuclein protein as the key component of Lewy bodies, the hallmark protein clumps found in people with Parkinson’s disease.

Dr. Lee continues to study subtypes of alpha-synuclein; this research is aimed at explaining the diversity of clinical symptoms of Parkinson’s and the relationship of Parkinson’s to diseases such as multiple system atrophy and Alzheimer’s. She also is a partner in MJFF’s flagship Parkinson’s Progression Markers Initiative, helping to develop and test ways to measure biomarkers in people with Parkinson’s.

The Robert A. Pritzker Prize for Leadership in Parkinson’s Research was established by Karen Pritzker, daughter of Robert A. Pritzker, and her late husband, investor Michael Vlock. The prize is named in honor of the late Robert A. Pritzker, a renowned industrialist, entrepreneur and philanthropist. The award is designed by renowned artist and Parkinson’s patient Tom Shannon.

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Deaths

Mildred Brill, School of Education and Wharton

Mildred (“Milly”) A. Brill, longtime employee at Penn’s School of Education and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, died on November 1. She was 98.

Ms. Brill was born in Marlinton, West Virginia, and graduated from Marlinton High School. She attended Fairmont State College, the University of Pennsylvania College for Women in 1938 and Peirce School of Business Administration (now Peirce College) in Philadelphia.

In 1941, Ms. Brill joined Penn as a stenographer in the School of Education. She went on to become chief clerk before transferring to Wharton in 1965. She served as assistant for the S.S. Huebner Foundation for Insurance Education (the program transferred from Wharton to Georgia State University in 2012). In 1974, she became assistant to the chair of the Foundation, and then business administrator in 1984. She retired from Penn in 1987.

Ms. Brill was a deacon at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, where she was active in the Older Adults Council, the Fine Arts Council, Senior Choir and Congregational Care Council. She was a member of the Board of Managers of the Chadbourn C. Knox Retirement Home in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania for many years and also served on the Board of Meals on Wheels as well as acting as one of its delivery persons.

Ms. Brill is survived by five nieces and four nephews.

Murray Murphey, History

Murray Griffin Murphey, emeritus professor of history in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania, died December 6. He was 90.

Dr. Murphey was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He earned his BA from Harvard University in 1949, studying with C. I. Lewis, Perry Miller and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. He went on to earn his PhD from Yale in American studies. During a fellowship year from 1943 to 1944, he worked with R.B. Braithwaite, the famed positivist philosopher of science at Cambridge University in England. He returned to New Haven in 1954 to complete his dissertation under the direction of the renowned linguist Rulon Wells.

Dr. Murphey had received a two-year appointment at Penn as a Rockefeller Fellow, and he was appointed an assistant professor of American Civilization in 1956. In 1959, Penn established 20 new Faculty Awards for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching at the Opening Exercises on September 25 and he was one of the inaugural recipients of the awards, valued at $1,000 each, rendered for outstanding service in undergraduate teaching. He moved up the ranks to a full professorship in 1966. He served as chair of the department for long periods, and for a time edited the journal of the American Studies Association. Murphey was survived by his three children, Kathleen, Christopher and Jessica; and six grandchildren.

Penn had one of the first departments of American Civilization with tenure-track lines. Although initially a combination of literature and history, the department was re-structured by Dr. Murphey to treat American Civilization as a “discipline.” Dr. Murphey’s basic idea was to systematically apply the concepts of the social sciences to the data of the history of the United States. That data included conventional sorts of historical evidence from politics but also literature, material culture and what is now commonly referred to as social history. Graduate students over the years were trained in the structural-functionalism of sociology, the statistical and quantitative methods being primarily developed in political science and the cultural approaches of anthropology. Dr. Murphey did not neglect the undergraduates in his thriving major.

In 1979, the College of General Studies honored him with the Distinguished Teaching Award. He initiated a successful year-long lecture course on the American South, which was later taught by such luminaries as Drew Faust, Sheldon Hackney, Stephanie McCurry and Steven Hahn.

Dr. Murphey wrote several essays and two books in the philosophy of history, Our Knowledge of the Historical Past (1973) and Philosophical Foundations of Historical Knowledge (1994). His vision of history derived from his comprehensive understanding of the trajectory of philosophy in the United States. His dissertation became his first book, The Development of Peirce’s Philosophy (1961). The book was honored 50 years after its publication in a special session of an international meeting of the Charles S. Peirce Society, by which time the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy had also recognized Dr. Murphey’s career-long accomplishments that the extraordinary book on Peirce had initiated. In 1977, he co-authored, with Elizabeth Flower, who was the first woman to be a full professor at Penn, The History of American Philosophy (1974), a two-volume A History of Philosophy in America, which became a standard in the field.

But in his retirement his commitment to philosophical biography became most clear. He wrote C. I. Lewis: The Last Great Pragmatist (2000) and The Development of Quine’s Philosophy (2011). In early 2018, after two months in the hospital and shortly after his 90th birthday, he published Thorstein Veblen: Economist and Social Theorist.

Dr. Murphey’s students have headed American Studies programs all over the United States, and he also trained a number of important academic administrators, including Robert Corrigan of San Francisco State University, Drew Faust of Harvard and Richard Freeland of Northeastern. According to Bruce Kuklick, the Nichols Professor of American History Emeritus at Yale, Dr. Murphey never took credit for the decades-long impact he had on many scholars. One of his students, Michael Zucker, Penn professor emeritus of history, commented at one point that Dr. Murphey’s chief characteristic was his “impenetrable modesty.”

Henry Cecil, CHOP

Henry Shulford Cecil, former director of child development at CHOP and medical director of Children’s Seashore House, died December 7 of Parkinson’s disease at the Hill at Whitemarsh in Lafayette Hill. He was 97.

Dr. Cecil was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina. He graduated from Wofford College in Spartanburg in 1942 and served in the Navy Reserve from 1942 through 1946. He then earned his medical degree from Vanderbilt University in 1950, went to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital for an internship and then became a pediatric resident at CHOP. From 1953 to 1955, he participated in a fellowship in developmental pediatrics at Children’s, which was not yet a subspecialty. He went on to open an office in Paoli, Pennsylvania, where he practiced pediatrics until 1959. Meanwhile, Dr. Cecil taught outpatient pediatric care at CHOP.

In 1959, Dr. Cecil was appointed assistant professor of pediatrics in the School of Medicine, and he went on to become an associate professor. In 1959, he also embarked on what would become his signature achievement: he was appointed director of child development at CHOP. With support from the William T. Grant Foundation, he established the Division of Child Development and Rehabilitation for children with physical disabilities, learning difficulties and developmental problems. Residents who studied under him learned child development, how to be part of a multidisciplinary team and how to counsel parents.

In 1969, Dr. Cecil was named CEO and medical director of Children’s Seashore House in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the first pediatric rehabilitation hospital in the nation. Founded in 1872 as a summer getaway for several dozen city children suffering from various maladies, it grew under his leadership into a respected medical center. Dr. Cecil spearheaded the relocation of Children’s Seashore House to a site adjacent to CHOP in the late 1980s; it is now part of CHOP. He became an emeritus associate professor of pediatrics in 1986, then the Henry S. Cecil, MD, Endowed Chair in Rehabilitative Medicine was created; Susan Levy, a CHOP attending physician, is its first and current occupant.

“In the early 1980s, he was a leader in providing care for children with special health-care, disability, and rehabilitation needs,” said Dr. Levy. “He was a forerunner in deciding that children with these needs needed special treatment. He was a man who was ahead of his time with a commitment to this very special population.”

Dr. Cecil is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Marvin Bryson Cecil, children, Rebecca, David and Andrew; stepdaughters Jennifer Alderman and Elizabeth Beers; two grandchildren; and four step-grandchildren.

To Report A Death

Almanac appreciates being informed of the deaths of current and former faculty and staff members, students and other members of the University community. Call (215) 898-5274 or email alumni@upenn.edu.

However, notices of alumni deaths should be directed to the Alumni Records Office at Room 517, Franklin Building, (215) 898-8136 or email record@ben.dev.upenn.edu
Honors & Other Things

Adedotun Adefare, Johnathan Chen and Zhongyuan Zeng: Schwartzman Scholars

University of Pennsylvania seniors Adedotun Adefare and Johnathan Chen and graduate student Zhongyuan Zeng have been awarded Schwartzman Scholarships, which will fund a year of graduate study leading to a master’s degree in global affairs at China’s Tsinghua University in Beijing.

The Schwartzman Scholars program is designed to prepare future global leaders to meet the geopolitical challenges of the 21st century. Founded by Blackstone co-founder Stephen A. Schwarzman, the scholarships aim to create more effective connections between China and the rest of the world. There have been five previous winners from Penn.

Firooz Aflatoonian: NASA Grant

Firooz Aflatoonian, the Skirkanchi Assistant Professor of Electrical and Systems Engineering in Penn’s School of Engineering and Applied Science, has been awarded a NASA Early Stage Innovations grant to design and implement arrays of signal antennas that can enable laser communication in near-Earth satellites, which will be more efficient and carry far more information than microwaves.

This NASA Early Stage Innovation grant of $500,000 aims “to accelerate the development of groundbreaking, high-risk/high-payoff space technologies to support the future space science and exploration needs of NASA, other government agencies and the commercial space sector.”

When a ground station fires microwaves to a near-Earth satellite, the microwaves lose a lot of energy and diverge before arriving at the intended satellite. Aiming at a relatively tiny, constantly moving target from thousands of miles away, only a small amount of the microwave signal reaches its intended destination. This limits the range and the amount of information microwaves can carry. Soon, microwaves may not be able to transmit data fast enough to keep up with rapidly evolving consumer demand.

Dr. Aflatoonian aims to improve this system and will design precise laser emitters capable of sharing up to 10Gbps of data per second between satellites. His research will be conducted in Penn’s Electronic Photonic Microsystems Lab.

One of the many benefits of this technology will be the ability to send videos in less than a fraction of a second thanks to the high data rate capabilities. This can potentially speed up everything from ultra HD streaming to cloud and distributed computing.

Foster Baah: NINR Award

Doctoral student Foster Osei Baah has received the National Institute of Nursing Research F31 award for his proposal, “A mixed methods study to understand the relationship between social determinants of health and self-care in community dwelling patients with heart failure.” Mr. Baah’s project purports to understand the relationship between social determinants of health and heart failure (HF) self-care in hospitalized, community-dwelling patients with HF using a convergent mixed-methods design.

Dan Huh: Lush Prize

Dan Dongeun Huh, Wilf Family Term Assistant Professor in the department of bioengineering in Penn’s School of Engineering and Applied Science, and his BIOnet research group were recently recognized with the Science Award in the 2018 Lush Prize for work on microfabricated devices that mimic the function of various organs using living cells. These organ-on-a-chip devices, which include an eye-on-a-chip, a placenta-on-a-chip and several others, allow for rapid toxicity and drug-delivery testing as well as the simulation of various diseases.

The cosmetics company Lush awards the Lush Prize to scientists, organizers and communicators that develop or campaign for animal-free alternatives. The Lush Prize comes with a £50,000 (approximately $62,846) award and was presented at a conference in Berlin in November. Dr. Huh provided a keynote address.

Maria Jasin: Basser Global Prize

The Basser Center for BRCA at Penn Medicine’s Abramson Cancer Center announced Maria Jasin as the recipient of the sixth annual Basser Global Prize. Dr. Jasin is a member of the development biology program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and a professor at the Weil Graduate School of Medical Sciences at Cornell.

The Basser Global Prize recognizes a leading scientist who has conceptually advanced BRCA1/2-related research. Individuals with mutations in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes are at an increased risk of breast, ovarian, pancreatic and other cancers.

Dr. Jasin’s research has helped define the roles of BRCA1 and BRCA2 in DNA repair. Her discoveries have led to numerous investigative efforts worldwide, resulting in a greater understanding of how cancer develops and in new therapies that can lengthen the lives of cancer patients.

According to Johnathan Chen, executive director of the Basser Center for BRCA, “[Dr. Jasin’s] work has resulted in insights into the mechanisms by which BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations lead to cancer. This knowledge has been essential in considering how to target tumors with BRCA1/2 mutations.”

The award presentation will be accompanied by Dr. Jasin’s keynote address at the seventh annual Basser Center for BRCA Scientific Symposium in May. The Prize provides $100,000 in unrestricted support of the winner’s BRCA1/2-related research, a Basser trophy and a $10,000 prize, which will be awarded at the symposium.

Yasmin Kafai, Orkan Telhan and Karen Hogan: NSF Grant

Yasmin Kafai, the Lori and Michael Milken President’s Distinguished Professor and chair of the teaching, learning and leadership division in Penn’s Graduate School of Education, and co-principal investigators Orkan Telhan, associate professor of fine arts in emerging design practices at PennDesign, and Karen Hogan, a lecturer in biology at Penn and CEO of Biorealize, have received a $99,855 grant from the NSF. The grant will support “Learn.compute with bio: A Workshop for Connecting Computational Thinking with Synthetic Biology Applications in K-16 Education.”

Kang Ko: AAP Educator Scholarship

Penn Dental Medicine periodontics resident Kang Ko (D’15, GD’20) was selected by the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) Foundation as a 2018 recipient of the AAP Educator Scholarship. The selection committee presented the award during the AAP Annual Meeting, held October 27-30 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The competitive AAP Educator Scholarships were created to stimulate the development of periodontal educators and are open to periodontal residents intending to pursue an academic career in periodontology upon graduation. The $25,000 scholarship goes toward financial relief for student loan reduction. All past recipients are teaching within periodontal programs throughout the country as full-time junior faculty members.

Dr. Ko is pursuing a DScD degree and has been conducting research in the lab of Dr. Dana Graves, professor of periodontics. The focus of Dr. Ko’s research is on investigating the mechanism behind diabetic complications on stem cells that participate in hard and soft tissue healing.

Dr. Ko was also a recipient of the 2018 Nobel Biocare Student Member Annual Meeting Scholarship, receiving a $500 scholarship toward travel costs associated with attending this year’s AAP annual meeting. He was one of 10 selected recipients.

Rochelle Lindemeyer: Access to Care Grant

A grant awarded to Penn Dental Medicine and the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia will help create a new program that focuses on providing dental care to children and adults with a rare genetic disorder, Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS). Since many children with CdLS have cognitive issues, dental care is often performed under sedation and requires experienced pediatric specialists to deliver proper dental care.

Rochelle G. Lindemeyer, associate professor emeritus of pediatric dentistry at Penn Dental Medicine and CHOP and the Center’s consulting dentist, is the grant’s principal investigator. Co-investigators on the project are Ian D. Krantz, director of the Center for Cornelia de Lange Syndrome and Related Diagnoses, and Sarah E. Raible, a genetic counselor and clinical director of the Center.

The $30,000 grant, awarded by Delta Dental as one of its Access to Care grants, will help create a program within CHOP’s Center for Cornelia de Lange Syndrome and Related Diagnoses to support dental care for children and adults with CdLS and similar diagnoses. All outpatient CHOP dental care is performed at Penn Dental Medicine within the School’s division of pediatric dentistry, while patients requiring general anesthesia are treated at CHOP.
First Robotic Bilateral Breast Reconstruction

A team of surgeons from Penn’s Perelman School of Medicine are the first in the world to use a surgical robot to assist with a bilateral free flap breast reconstruction—a procedure in which tissue is taken from the lower abdomen (similar to a “tummy tuck”)—and used to rebuild the breast. The robot enables surgeons to make a much smaller incision into the abdominal wall muscles, allowing patients to recover and be discharged more quickly and without the use of addictive narcotic painkillers. Sundial Kanchwala, an associate professor of plastic surgery, led the team that performed the procedure, which took place at Pennsylvania Hospital in December. Dr. Kanchwala partnered with Ian Soriano, a clinical assistant professor of surgery who specializes in minimally invasive procedures, to develop the technique.

“We’ve been using a minimally-invasive, laparoscopic technique to reduce pain and get patients home more quickly without using narcotics for more than a year. The addition of the surgical robot allows for greater precision and is the next step in our evolution,” Dr. Kanchwala said.

Women who have chosen a mastectomy, either to remove cancerous breast tissue or as preventative measure due to genetic risk, have several options for reconstruction. Traditionally, using a patients’ own tissue results in a more natural appearance and is a more permanent solution when compared to implant-based reconstructions, which often require additional surgeries. Penn surgeons perform more than 700 tissue-based reconstructions yearly, making it the largest center for this form of reconstruction in the world.

“Our experience is what allows us to innovate, and adapting minimally invasive approaches to breast reconstruction allows patients to have the same recovery of implant reconstruction without the downsides of having an implant, such as the risk of infection or the need for further surgery,” Dr. Kanchwala said.

The minimally invasive flap procedure virtually eliminates the need to cut into a patient’s abdominal muscles to remove the skin and fat of the lower abdomen to use in the reconstruction of the breast. That incision in the muscle is the main source of pain and other potential complications. Dr. Kanchwala called the laparoscopic technique, which he has now used in more than 120 cases, “game changing.” He also noted that in 70 percent of those cases, his patients did not require any narcotics, even while under anesthesia. Instead, patients received over-the-counter medicine like Motrin or Tylenol for pain.

“Many of these patients wake up as if they haven’t had a surgery, and we’ve seen patients who would normally be in the hospital for five days go home in just one or two days,” Dr. Kanchwala said.

Much like with the laparoscopic technique, the surgical robot allows the surgeon to avoid larger cuts to the muscle while also collecting blood vessels more easily. The smaller incision also limits the risk of hernia and other complications.

Pain management is another unique aspect of this technique. Research has shown that one out of every 20 breast reconstruction patients who have never had a narcotic before their surgeries are still on those narcotics five years later. Dr. Kanchwala said this technique addresses this reality head-on, and it requires a team approach. All patients are enrolled in a coordinated Enhanced Recovery Protocol, which means from the minute they enter the hospital the focus is on their recovery and getting them back to normal as fast as possible.

“We’ve paired our surgical innovations with similar progressive ideas in anesthesia and postoperative care,” Dr. Kanchwala said. “Nothing I do now is the same as it was even a year ago, and knowing what I now know, I could never go back.”

Gaining Strength in Treatment of Spinal Muscular Atrophy

Lauren Elman, an associate professor of neurology, has spent part of her career caring for a group of patients with no treatment options. The genetic disease, spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), can strike beginning at birth and robs patients of their ability to walk, eat and breathe. SMA is the leading genetic cause of death for infants and the second most common autosomal recessive disease—a disease inherited through two mutated genes—occurring in about 1 in 10,000 people. But now, there’s hope in a new treatment option.

The United States Food and Drug Administration announced the approval for Spinraza (nusinersen) in December 2016, making it the first-ever FDA-approved therapy for SMA. The clinical trials for the drug showed improved motor function in young patients with the most severe forms of SMA. While there is only limited data on the effectiveness of the drug in adults, the FDA approved its use for all patients who are confirmed to have the gene mutation which causes SMA.

That approval started Dr. Elman on her quest to bring the therapy to patients at Penn Medicine.

“As soon as the FDA approved this therapy, our patients were asking for it,” explained Dr. Elman. “It took hard work to create an SMA treatment program here for adults, but I’m proud to say that we’ve been up and running since August 2017. We were the first center in Philadelphia to offer treatment to adults and we’re the largest program in the area.”

There are four types of SMA, characterized by the severity of disease symptoms. SMA type 1 is the most common and occurs within the first six months of life. Babies typically have difficulty breathing, sucking and swallowing. Children with type 1 are unable to sit without support and most only live a few years due to complications with breathing. SMA type 2 has onset between the age of 7 months and 18 months. Children with SMA type 2 may reach motor milestones such as sitting independently, but few are able to stand or walk unaided. SMA type 3 occurs in older children and teens who learn to stand and walk, but lose the ability later in life. SMA type 4 affects full-grown adults, with onset typically in the second or third decade of life.

Thanks to the new therapy, some children are learning to stand and many are sitting unassisted—abilities unheard of before treatment. Many others may not experience any further loss or deterioration of skills. For adults, the effect of the drug is less clear with possibilities including improvement in or stabilization of symptoms, with the hope that no additional function will be lost.

“When I learned about SMA in medical school it was untreatable. We were just starting to learn what caused it. Now, there’s a treatment that’s truly remarkable,” Dr. Elman said. “Stopping progression in a neurodegenerative disease is a home run. And any improvement—that’s a
First Robot-Assisted Spinal Surgery

Noah Pernikoff is back to his life in New York City after becoming the first patient in the world to undergo a complex three-part, robotic-assisted surgery. The robotic arms made it possible for the multidisciplinary team at Penn to successfully remove a rare tumor from his neck, where the skull meets the spine. The groundbreaking surgery was completed by a multi-surgeon team, led by Neil Malhotra, associate professor of neurosurgery, at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in August 2017 over a span of two days and more than 20 hours.

Chordoma is a rare type of cancer that occurs in the bones of the skull base and spine. A chordoma tumor usually grows slowly and is often asymptomatic for years. In the case of 27-year-old Mr. Pernikoff, a 2016 car accident revealed his surprising diagnosis.

Among his injuries from the accident, Mr. Pernikoff—who was working in New York City for a commercial contracting firm—tore his rotator cuff and had several herniated discs. More important, however, was his post-accident nagging neck pain, which led to an x-ray that revealed a concerning lesion in his neck, on his cervical spine. The lesion was clearly unrelated to the accident, and far more concerning than the minor injuries he had endured. After making a recovery from the accident, Mr. Pernikoff’s father, a physician, encouraged his son to see a neurosurgeon for evaluation of the injury. The neurosurgeon Mr. Pernikoff saw ultimately recommended a biopsy of the spot, which resulted in a diagnosis of chordoma.

“I’m lucky because they caught mine early. For a lot of people, if it’s not found and treated early, it’s lethal,” Mr. Pernikoff said. “The doctor said if I hadn’t discovered it through the car accident it probably would have kept growing until it came to a point on my spinal cord where it caused paralysis or death. I feel very lucky in that regard.” Unfortunately, the neurosurgeon explained to Mr. Pernikoff, while surgery is known to be the best option for chordoma, Mr. Pernikoff’s would be too difficult to resect and he would have to try the second option, radiation with proton therapy.

Chordoma is extremely rare; it affects only one in 1 million people each year. Mr. Pernikoff’s specific type of chordoma, located on his C2 vertebrae, is even rarer, making treatment a challenge. Mr. Pernikoff’s neurosurgeon immediately referred him to Penn, where a multidisciplinary team reviewed his case, and his options, and began crafting a treatment plan—not through radiation, but a complex surgery that had never been performed before.

Neil Malhotra, an assistant professor of neurosurgery and orthopaedic surgery and the vice chair of operations in the department of neurosurgery, gathered a multidisciplinary team of physicians to treat Mr. Pernikoff’s chordoma. Dr. Malhotra planned to remove the tumor through a rare and complex spinal surgery approach. Bert W. O’Malley, Jr., professor and chairman of the department of otorhinolaryngology: head and neck surgery, planned to aid Dr. Malhotra and improve Mr. Pernikoff’s recovery by using a trans-oral robotic (TORS) approach for the second part of the surgery. TORS is the world’s first group of minimally invasive robotic surgery techniques, invented at Penn, to remove benign and malignant tumors of the mouth and throat.

“This would be a first-ever use of a robot in this manner—a rare approach to an already rare and complex case,” Dr. Malhotra said. “Our team needed to reconstruct the removed area of Mr. Pernikoff’s spine using bone and rods, and that was only the beginning.”

The stakes were high. Because of the placement of the tumor, Dr. Malhotra said removal could compromise the structural integrity of Mr. Pernikoff’s spine, causing permanent paralysis. There was also a risk of complications such as bone and tissue breakdown, loss of sense of smell and fine motor skill issues. And, he added, “if we couldn’t remove the entire tumor, it would likely grow back, perhaps more aggressive than before.”

The surgery was performed in three parts. First, the neurosurgeons went through the back of Mr. Pernikoff’s neck and cut the spine around the tumor to prepare for the second stage, removing the tumor through his mouth. The key to this stage would be to make ultrasonic bone cuts—removing a piece of bone—around the tumor without touching it, and without injuring the spinal cord that lay between the neurosurgeon and the tumor/spinal column. With stage one success, Dr. O’Malley and a team of three head and neck surgeons used the surgical robot to clear a path so Dr. Malhotra could remove the tumor, and part of the spinal column, in its entirety through the mouth. Finally, the team reconstructed Mr. Pernikoff’s spinal column, which was now missing an important bone in his neck, using some of Mr. Pernikoff’s own bone from his hip and rods to stabilize the newly built portion of his spine.

“The capability of this technology and procedure is revolutionary,” Dr. O’Malley said. “This surgery was groundbreaking and it’s a wonderful example of how versatile TORS is for tumors in the head, neck, and now spine.”

Nine months after surgery, Mr. Pernikoff was back to work and said he’s forever grateful for the car accident that revealed his diagnosis and the life-saving care that he received at Penn Medicine.
Cat-tastrophe

At only two months old, Bridget the kitten has had a lot of close calls. She was thrown from a stranger’s car off the South Street bridge in Philadelphia—where she landed, miraculously unharmed—and was rescued and fostered by Ariel Smith, who named her after the ordeal. After a few weeks in the safety of Ms. Smith’s apartment, though, Bridget ran headfirst into yet another death-defying situation.

“She and my two cats had become buddies by then, and liked to chase each other at breakneck speeds back and forth across the room,” said Ms. Smith. “They came bolting by and I heard a crash, then looked over and saw a gaping window. My heart just stopped. It was a horrifying moment.”

Bridget had somehow managed to dislodge the open window’s screen, tumbling four stories to the pavement below. Ms. Smith and her partner frantically searched for her and eventually found her panting underneath a parked car, bleeding from her mouth. “We knew we had to get her checked out, and that every second counted,” Ms. Smith said.

She rushed her kitten to Ryan Hospital’s emergency service, where veterinarians stabilized her and searched for broken bones before admitting her to the Intensive Care Unit overnight.

“Bridget suffered from classic ‘high rise disorder’,” said Lori Waddell, clinical professor of emergency and critical care, who monitored Bridget in the ICU. “We see this a lot in the warmer months. Cats fall off of balconies or windowsills, and have a range of injuries to their upper bodies. They come in with cranial and oral fractures, internal bleeding, abrasions, broken ribs, that sort of thing.”

X-rays taken at Ryan Hospital showed that several of Bridget’s ribs were indeed broken. Tiny tears in her lungs had also caused air to leak into her chest cavity, making it difficult for her to breathe. The hospital immediately removed the trapped air with a needle, freeing up space for her lungs to expand, put her on fluids and pain medication and placed her in an oxygen cage to help slow her rapid breathing. After three days of monitoring, she was eventually released back to Ms. Smith’s care.

“That’s pretty amazing given the amount of trauma she could have had,” said Dr. Waddell. “Other cats aren’t as lucky. It’s really important for owners to secure windows and keep cats away from terraces or balconies where we could see them fall. They’re amazingly curious animals, so if they see a bug or bird going by, they’ll jump for it. In a city environment, that can be really dangerous.”

Bridget made a full recovery, and was back to chasing her foster brothers around Ms. Smith’s apartment. “At less than a year old, she’s already been through a lot, but she has an unbreakable spirit. She’s a sweet girl with energy and love to spare,” said Ms. Smith.

Despite her rough beginnings, Bridget’s story has a happy ending. In early September, Ms. Smith and her partner found a “forever” home for Bridget—with a loving family that plans to keep their windows securely closed.

Surprise! It’s Twins!

Excitement over a first pregnancy turned to concern for owner Adel Dukes Melson when her pregnant Holsteiner, Treasure, began showing signs of premature foaling. Weeks before the mare’s March 13 due date, her mammary gland started to develop and secrete milk, a typical indication that her body was preparing to soon give birth.

On February 19, Ms. Melson and Treasure traveled two hours from their home in Bethany Beach, Delaware, to Kennett Square, Pennsylvania arriving at New Bolton Center’s Emergency & Critical Care department at 8:30 p.m.

There, they met Michelle Linton, staff veterinarian, neonatal intensive care specialist and part of Penn Vet’s High Risk and Healthy Mare Foaling programs. That night, Dr. Linton and her team performed a physical exam, transrectal ultrasound and fetal heart rate test. The next morning Treasure received an abdominal ultrasound to assess the fetus, uterus and placenta.

Dr. Linton was expecting to find placentitis, the most common reason for premature mammary gland development and a potentially life-threatening condition for mare and foals.

Treasure came in as a likely placentitis case, and we treated her as one,” Dr. Linton said. “But her uteroplacental measurements were normal, suggesting we were maybe dealing with something more.”

Although the ultrasounds showed one fetus and one heartbeat, Dr. Linton suspected Treasure might be carrying twins, which could also explain early udder development—and which, surprisingly, can be easy to miss in prenatal exams. She admitted the mare—317 days pregnant at this point—to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for monitoring and rest. Over the next few weeks, Treasure grew bigger and bigger but didn’t go into labor.

Finally, on March 13, Dr. Linton’s suspicions were confirmed. At 3:38 days of gestation, Treasure began foaling. At 9 a.m, the mare gave birth. Not once, but twice.

“As soon as I saw the legs, it was obvious the foal—a filly—was very small,” Dr. Linton recalled. “And pretty much straight away this first set of legs was followed by a second set of legs belonging to a colt.”

Treasure successfully delivered twins—Ms. Melson named the filly Cherish and the colt Cache.

“Twins can be hard to diagnose during late gestation,” explained Dr. Linton. “When I got to Treasure, I saw the two amazing little foals. Treasure was absolutely beaming and thrilled with herself. I was shocked.”

Treasure and her duo is a rare case. In horses, twin fetuses are uncommon. Carrying them to term is even more unusual, and birthing healthy twin foals is especially unlikely.

“Twin pregnancies are extremely undesirable in horses, as they almost always have a bad outcome,” said Dr. Regina Turner, associate professor of reproduction and chief of the Reproduction & Behavior Service. “If allowed to progress through gestation, twin pregnancies almost always end in late-term abortion of both foals, or the birth of small, growth-retarded foals that either are born dead or severely compromised.”
With twins, our immediate concern is the strength of their lungs and kidneys—are the organs mature enough and functioning properly?” explained Dr. Linton. “We also worry about whether their carpal (knee) and tarsal (hock) bones have ossified completely. The cuboidal bones, which are small bones located in those joints, are the last to make the conversion from cartilage to bone. Incomplete ossification of cuboidal bones can lead to collapse of the joints and degenerative joint disease.”

Cherish’s and Cache’s organs checked out fine. The main problem, explained Dr. Linton, was the foals’ size. “Even though Treasure carried them to term, they had in utero growth restriction. Initial X-rays confirmed incomplete ossification of the carpal and tarsal bones in both foals.”

The foals had to be kept quiet and off their feet to encourage proper bone growth. Strictly confined, they remained with Treasure at New Bolton Center for two months. The three horses were under the careful, round-the-clock watch of the NICU team and foal sitters, volunteers who assist clinicians and staff in caring for mares and foals during the foaling season.

Slowly but surely the twins’ bones ossified, and they increased their activity, such as having supervised nursing sessions with Treasure. They gained weight and got stronger every day. Playful from almost day one, it wasn’t easy to keep the feisty twins calm while they grew.

“They have become so rambunctious, up and down all the time,” said Ms. Melson at the time. “Initially, we had to discourage them from standing, but since they worked out how to stand, the care team has had its hands full!”

In the meantime, Ms. Melson’s shock at having twins has now given way to pure joy and gratitude that Treasure delivered two thriving foals. (Ms. Melson started a Facebook page to share their growth and antics.)

“Treasure and the twins are receiving excellent care from a wonderful team. At every stage, the veterinarians, students and staff have been very hands-on. Everyone cares so much about mom and her foals,” Ms. Melson commented. “New Bolton is very special place.”

Now Cherish, Cashe and Treasure are back home and doing very well.
The University of Pennsylvania has named Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2014-2018), the Distinguished Global Leader-in-Residence at Perry World House (PWH) for spring 2019. In addition to his residency at PWH, Penn’s global policy research institute, Dr. Al Hussein will also co-teach a class at the Penn Law School during the spring semester.

Dr. Al Hussein, a former Jordanian diplomat, served as ambassador to the United States and then at the United Nations in New York before being selected as the sixth High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2014. During a tenure that saw human rights abuses in Syria, Myanmar and elsewhere, he earned a reputation for being courageous and outspoken. “At a time when the world is more fractured and more isolated, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein has devoted his life of public service to making the world more just and more humane,” said Penn President Amy Gutmann. “At Perry World House, Zeid will help students better understand the relationship between progress in human rights, international institutions and new technologies. At the same time he serves as an example for everyone at Penn of how knowledge and understanding across divides can be used to advance good in our world.”

Dr. Al Hussein will be the second Distinguished Global Leader-in-Residence, which is part of the Perry World House Visiting Fellows program. Like the inaugural Distinguished Global Leader-in-Residence, former Mexican President Felipe Calderón, Dr. Al Hussein will become a part of the University community in bespoke programs that put them at the middle of a vibrant interdisciplinary exchange of ideas with Penn scholars and students. These visits typically include public addresses open to the Philadelphia community, smaller panels with Penn experts and policymakers from Washington and around the world, and interactions with undergraduate and graduate students.

Mr. Lemon’s work often challenges institutional parameters, which has led to him being invited to create projects for spaces where dance rarely happens. In 2012, he curated a three-week program of dance performances for The Museum of Modern Art’s atrium, putting a focus on choreography at an institution that traditionally showcases static objects. Scaffold Work (2014), a complex performance/installation work by Mr. Lemon, became part of the collection of the Walker Art Center. “We’ve been working on a time-based acquisition” despite the enormous challenges of restaging the work in the future.

At PennDesign, Mr. Lemon will be engaged with students pursuing an MFA through a research group, which will meet both on campus and in New York City. He will also give a public lecture at Penn in the spring.
Accreditation for Wharton Online Continuing Education Courses

The International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) has awarded Wharton Online, the School’s digital learning platform, its prestigious Accredited Provider status. As the first business school in the world to receive this gold standard accreditation, Wharton may now offer certified Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to adult learners who wish to advance their careers through Wharton Online’s business education curriculum.

Launched in 2013, Wharton Online has expanded access to Wharton’s high-quality business courses to more than 150,000 online learners around the world. As an IACET Accredited Provider, Wharton Online may now issue credentials allowing learners to signal to current and future employers competencies gained and skills earned.

To obtain this accreditation, Wharton Online completed a rigorous six-month application process, including a site visit by IACET. As of December 1, all Wharton Online learners who complete a course will receive a digital badge through Credly. These badges can be shared via social networks, including LinkedIn, as well as via personal websites and resumes.

While Wharton Online will initially issue CEUs through their Leadership and Management four-course certificate program, they plan to expand the list of qualified programs in the coming year. Since many companies reimburse employees for the cost of earning CEUs, this new accreditation will make Wharton Online appealing to a far wider audience of learners, including managers, analysts, strategists, entrepreneurs and marketers.

“We are proud to receive IACET accreditation since it is widely acknowledged as one of the highest achievements in continuing education,” said Anne Trumbore, senior director of Wharton Online. “We’re confident that digital credentialing is the future of learning and, as a result, anticipate attracting half a million new users to the Wharton Online platform in the next two years.”

Penn Law’s Pilot Program: Incorporating Attorney Well-Being

In January 2019, Penn Law School will launch a groundbreaking pilot program that will incorporate a session on attorney well-being into every section of the mandatory Professional Responsibility course. The first such program at a top law school, this curricular module will expose students to the latest data about risks to health and career satisfaction among practicing lawyers, and equip them with tools to promote awareness and well-being in their future careers.

Penn Law is launching this pilot in response to series of 2017 recommendations from the American Bar Association, which addressed the burgeoning levels of stress, depression and substance abuse within the legal profession. The ABA report, “The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change,” announced the formation of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-being and quoted former ABA president David B. Reink, saying, “Lawyers, judges and law students are faced with an increasingly competitive and stressful profession. Studies show that substance abuse, addiction and mental disorders, including depression and thoughts of suicide—often unrecognized—are at shockingly high rates.”

Developed by Jennifer Leonard (L’04), Penn Law’s associate dean for professional engagement and director of the Center on Professionalism, and John Hollway (C’92, MAPP ’18), associate dean and executive director of the Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice, the class sessions will emphasize the importance of lawyers’ health and well-being and discuss how it intersects with their professional responsibilities and ethical obligations to employers and clients.

“We take seriously our obligation to prepare our students for the realities of practice and to graduate attorneys into the profession who are equipped to serve the many clients who will depend on them,” said Ms. Leonard. “We are proud to add to our already strong offering of educational modules which reflect the stressors inherent in our profession and to support their development of evidence-based behaviors to respond to that stress.”

“Penn Law has always been focused on helping our students thrive as law students and throughout their careers as lawyers,” Mr. Hollway said. “The ABA’s Report underscores that well-being and developing the skills to manage stress and setbacks are essential to the ethical practice of law. We view these as life skills useful to our students, their families and their clients today, tomorrow and for the rest of their careers and lives.”

These interactive sessions will begin with a presentation of data on lawyer and law student health, and then explore topics like work engagement versus burnout, stress, resilience and growth mindset orientation and substance abuse. The sessions will also prompt law students to reflect on their own stress responses in previous professional and personal situations.

With the support of Penn Law faculty and staff, students will develop personally tailored plans to support and sustain their health across eight dimensions—physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, intellectual, social, environmental and occupational—once they enter legal practice. Throughout the class sessions, faculty will emphasize lawyers’ ethical obligations to better care for their health and well-being so that they are fully competent and able to serve their clients and the public. The sessions will also learn how data-driven approaches to improving health and well-being can make them better lawyers by supporting better, effective focus, decision-making and problem-solving skills.

“At Penn Law we are committed to helping our students succeed both in their first job after graduation and throughout their careers,” said Ted Ruger, Penn Law’s Dean and the Bernard G. Segal Professor of Law. “To flourish in the law, as in life, we lawyers must be attentive to our own physical and mental health, and aim to develop awareness of risk factors that threaten our well-being as well as of solutions and techniques that can help.”

Dean Ruger added, “I am pleased that our Professional Responsibility faculty and my senior staff colleagues at the Law School are so enthusiastic in implementing and supporting this important curricular innovation, which forms a core part of a broader suite of programming on wellness and professional development at Penn Law. We stand with the ABA in believing that attorneys’ well-being is an important element of their professional responsibility to their clients and to the broader profession, as well as to themselves.”

One Step Ahead

Security & Privacy
Made Simple

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

Don’t Get Caught by Targeted Email Attacks

The autumn of 2018 saw an increase in targeted email attacks, or “spear phishing.” These attacks leverage a familiar name or job position, like that of a friend, coworker, supervisor, dean or some other authority to gain your trust, and are often aimed at members of a specific organization or group.

Targeted email attack messages have specific characteristics:

1. The message seems to originate from someone you know. The sender’s name and title looks or sounds legitimate (for example, the sender may appear to be a dean of a particular School or Center), but the email is actually sent from a non-University email address (that ends, say, in @gmail.com).
2. The message prompts the recipient to take action, such as asking the recipient to click on a link or download something, or purchase a gift card and send back the card’s code.
3. The message carries malicious code. Once the recipient clicks on a link or opens an attachment, malicious code in the form of malware, ransomware or spyware is installed on the computer. This malicious code may grant a hacker control over your computer or sit silently collecting keystrokes and information.

To prevent becoming a victim of targeted phishing, follow these basic tips:

• Verify—Check the sender’s email address to ensure the sender’s email address is correct, and if possible contact the sender or your IT department to confirm that the message was sent to you.
• Avoid clicking on links or attachments no matter how urgent the message sounds.
• Install antivirus software and run it at least once a week. Penn provides Symantec Endpoint Protection for no cost to Penn constituents.
• Keep your software up to date including your operating system, antivirus, firewall, and your browser plug-ins, e.g., Adobe Flash, etc.
• When using your personal computer or a computer not managed by your department’s computing support staff, install or turn on the firewall.

To help protect yourself and others, always report any suspicious email messages to your local computing support, or email the Office of Information Security (OIS) at security@isc.upenn.edu

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
Managing Up; 1/29; 12:30-1:30 p.m. In today’s busy work environment, creating a relationship of trust and open communication with your manager is critical to your success. In this course, learn to increase your ability to recognize your manager’s perspective and meet his/her expectations as well as fine-tune your communication skills to optimize your work with your manager, including providing and receiving feedback.

Human Resources Special Winter Vacation Hours

Please take note of the Division of Human Resources schedule during the upcoming winter break. Human Resources will be closed Monday, December 24, 2018 through Tuesday, January 1, 2019 for Penn’s Special Winter Vacation. However, during the break, some of our resources will still be available to faculty and staff as shown below. Have a safe and wonderful winter break!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Holiday Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee Solution Center</td>
<td>215-898-7372, <a href="mailto:hrsolutioncenter@upenn.edu">hrsolutioncenter@upenn.edu</a>, <a href="http://www.solvercenter.upenn.edu/">www.solvercenter.upenn.edu/</a></td>
<td>A comprehensive call center with answers to your HRI and Payroll related questions</td>
<td>December 21: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>December 24- January 1: Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penn Benefits Center</td>
<td>1-888-PENNBen (1-888-736-6236), <a href="http://www.hr.upenn.edu/benefits">www.hr.upenn.edu/benefits</a></td>
<td>Penn’s health and welfare benefits</td>
<td>December 25: closed January 1: closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement Call Center</td>
<td>1-877-PENN-RET (1-877-736-6738), <a href="http://www.hr.upenn.edu/retirement">www.hr.upenn.edu/retirement</a></td>
<td>Penn’s retirement plans</td>
<td>December 24: open 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>(Voicemails checked daily December 26-29)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee Assistance Program</td>
<td>1-866-799-2329, <a href="http://www.hr.upenn.edu/assist">www.hr.upenn.edu/assist</a></td>
<td>Personal and professional life issues</td>
<td>Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Advocate</td>
<td>1-866-799-2329, <a href="http://www.healthadvocate.upenn.edu">www.healthadvocate.upenn.edu</a></td>
<td>Free and confidential help with navigating healthcare benefits and services</td>
<td>Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a weekend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care.com</td>
<td>1-855-781-1303, penn.care.com</td>
<td>Temporary in-home dependent child and adult care services to help you manage your professional responsibilities</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Please register and schedule care in advance.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Care.com</td>
<td>1-855-428-6324, penn.staywell.com</td>
<td>Care services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StayWell</td>
<td>1-855-428-6324, penn.staywell.com</td>
<td>Penn’s wellness portal and Be in the Know helpline.</td>
<td>December 25: helpline closed December 31: helpline closes at 7 p.m. January 1: helpline closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Human Resources: Upcoming January Programs

Gentle Yoga; 1/10; noon-1 p.m. Let your body reward itself with movement! Join us for this Gentle Yoga session and explore the natural movements of the spine with slow and fluid movements and soft twists. During this session, you will flow into modified sun salutations that loosen those tightened muscles and joints of the lower back, neck, shoulders and wrists. And as an added bonus, you’ll get a workout in the process. Mats and props will be provided.

Indoor January Wellness Walk; 1/11; noon-1 p.m. The holidays are over, and the New Year has begun! For everyone who overindulged this holiday season (and even those that didn’t!), we invite you to get moving and kick off your 2019 with our monthly wellness walk. Each January, only roughly one-third of Americans resolve to better themselves in some way and even fewer follow through. This month’s New Year’s Resolution themed walk, held in the Palestra, will occur rain or shine. Whether you wish to lose weight, have more energy or just be healthier, remember to reach your goals one step at a time. Join us for this Human Resources and Center for Public Health Initiatives co-sponsored event. Bring your water bottle and don’t forget your sneakers and a co-worker!

—Division of Human Resources
**Learn about the Human Capital Management Transformation Initiative**

Penn’s Human Capital Management Transformation Initiative is a University-wide effort to improve how Penn manages the broad range of faculty affairs, human resources, payroll and related processes. More than just a technology-replacement project, it will transform how Penn delivers HCM-related services, such as recruitment, personnel and benefits administration, payroll, time management and more. Workday, an industry-leading, cloud-based platform, supports the initiative. For more information, go to www.workday.upenn.edu

In addition, two monthly newsletters provide project information. Workday Advance publishes robust information to help prepare HCM stakeholders for Workday@Penn. **HCM Flash** informs the Penn community members with high-level information on core concepts, milestones and events. You can subscribe to the newsletters from the Workday website.

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**Art and Physics: A Different Perspective Exhibition at Burrison Gallery**

Art and Physics: A Different Perspective is a treasure trove of paintings and photographs incorporating anything from glimpses of nature to creative portraits. These are creative expressions of 12 members of the department of radiation oncology at the Perelman Center for Advanced Medicine. Rob Mooij, Ping Jin, Elizabeth Gurver, Ali Kassaei, Andreea Dimofte, Tim Zhu, Lei Dong, Taoran Li, Michelle Kim, Cordelia Baffic, Richard Maughan and Dimitris Mihalidis will be on display (and for sale). A reception will be held on Friday January 11 at 5:30 p.m. in the Burrison Gallery. The exhibit challenges viewers to be adventurous and thoughtful at the same time, to explore the landscape and the interplay between the built and the natural environment.

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**Space Heater Amnesty Day: January 24**

On Thursday, January 24, in the Houston Hall Bistro (next to the Creperie), the Penn Eco-Reps will hold a Space Heater Amnesty Day event 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Participants have the option of a heated foot pad or a warm desk pad when they trade in their old space heater. Not only are space heaters considered fire hazards, but they consume a large amount of electricity. Join Penn’s energy conservation efforts by participating in Space Heater Amnesty Day.

Trade in your old space heater for an energy-efficient Carpeted CozyToes™ heated foot pad, Rubber Foot Warmer™ foot pad, or a Warm Desk Pad. Carpeted CozyToes™ heated foot pads are an alternative to space heaters, and only use 70 watts and up to 95% less energy than conventional space heaters. Fill out this form: bit.ly/Amnesty19 by Friday, January 11 to receive the heating pad of your choice. Instructions are included on the form. Questions? Email sustainability@upenn.edu

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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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**Almanac Schedule**

This is the last issue of **Almanac** for this semester. The January AT PENN calendar is now online along with this issue. The next issue is scheduled for January 8, 2019. The deadline for that issue is Wednesday, January 2, 2019.

**Accessing Almanac Online**

Subscribe now to Express Almanac (http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/expres.html) to receive each Tuesday’s issue in your inbox before it reaches your desk.

**Planning an Event? Email Almanac**

Mounting an exhibit? Orchestrating a concert? Planning a play? Showing a film? 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.** With a readership in print and online, a free listing in the AT PENN increases visibility and attendance.

Email us at almanac@upenn.edu with your event details, including the event date, time, topic, speaker information and sponsors. For more information, visit https://almanac.upenn.edu/deadlines-for-submitting-at-penn-information

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Penn’s President’s House, also known as Eisenlohr Hall, so named for the West Philadelphia cigar manufacturer Otto C. Eisenlohr who had the grandly classical mansion designed by Horace Trumbauer at the height of his career. This elegant French chateau is one of the gems of Trumbauer’s career. It was renovated into the University of Pennsylvania’s President’s House in the early 1980s first becoming the official home to the Hackneys and then subsequent Penn Presidents (Almanac December 2, 1980).

Penn Buildings Aglow for the Holiday Season

From English Tudor to French Chateau, from Georgian to modern, the one common denominator of these buildings at this time of year is that they are each decked out with twinkling lights outside or inside. These are just a few of the Penn buildings on campus that are aglow for the holiday season.

The Phi Gamma Delta (nicknamed “Phi Gam” or “FIJI”) fraternity house, designed by American architect Walter Mellor in the early English Tudor style, was built at 3619-21 Locust Walk in 1914. He earned a BS in Architecture from Penn in 1904 and was himself a member of Phi Gamma Delta. The Beta chapter, which was established at Penn on March 3, 1881, resided in this building from 1914 until 1999 and then from 2008 until the present day.

The Kappa Sigma (colloquially “Kappa Sig”) fraternity house was designed by architect Theodore Epps and built at 3706 Locust Walk in 1924. The Georgian style building houses the Alpha-Epsilon chapter of Kappa Sigma, which was established at Penn on January 20, 1892. Kappa Sigma currently has 320 active chapters and colonies across North America, making it one of the five largest international fraternities.

The Annenberg School is a good example of 1960s classic modern architecture, altered and extended by Mitchell/Giurgola Architects in the 1980s in a way that acknowledged the character of the original building, but with the richer urban flavor of the architect’s best work. Four audio-visual classrooms were added under the Annenberg Plaza as part of the $9.6 million renovation to the School (Almanac November 12 1985). In 2004, the Annenberg Plaza (above) was dedicated on June 17 with a ribbon-cutting by the Honorable Leonore Annenberg and then Penn President Judith Rodin, as Dean Michael X. Delli Carpini watched. With funding from the Annenberg Foundation, the Plaza received an upgrade including handicap access to the Annenberg Center, new granite paving and landscaping to soften the appearance.