

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of University Council
From: Amy Gutmann, President
Date: October 23, 2019
Subject: Report to the University Council

On October 3, the Penn community celebrated the official naming of the Stuart Weitzman School of Design with a day of festivities, including a keynote conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning architectural critic, Paul Goldberger. We also revealed designs for the new Stuart Weitzman Plaza, which is being spearheaded by legendary Penn Emeritus Professor of Landscape Architecture Laurie Olin and his team at OLIN. Design is essential to crafting better lives for all of us today and shaping a better world for the future. We are tremendously grateful to Stuart Weitzman for his passionate commitment to Penn and his belief in the promise of our School of Design to do exactly that.

That same week, students gathered in Irvine Auditorium for a *Stand Up and Vote!* concert and comedy show headlining none other than international superstar and Penn alum John Legend. This important initiative complements the critical work of our own student-organized Penn Leads the Vote, aimed at registering and educating as many young voters as possible. It was wonderful to see Legend join our students once more in support of civic engagement and making the world a better place.

Making the world a better place must include making it a greener, healthier, and more sustainable home for us all. Last week, we announced the next phase of Penn's plan to achieve those necessary goals, our *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 3.0* (CSAP 3.0). As part of CSAP 3.0, Penn commits to the 100x42 carbon pledge of being 100 percent carbon neutral by the year 2042 – fully eight years before the International Panel on Climate Change calls for meeting this goal. We will continue building on Penn's comprehensive efforts by expanding the scope of sustainability research in Penn's academic centers and connecting students to Penn's abundant resources in this field; continue to reduce carbon emissions and explore expanded use of renewable energy to mitigate the impacts of climate change; embrace circular economy principles to reduce waste and single-use products; make sustainable choices in transportation, purchasing, and business operations; and inform, educate, and empower the Penn community to participate in Penn's climate change and sustainability goals.

At this meeting of Council, EVP Craig Carnaroli and VP Anne Papageorge will present further on the range of actions Penn is taking to meet the challenge of climate change.

We have made significant progress to date. Since we embarked on our first Plan in 2009, our net building-related carbon emissions have been reduced by 30 percent, putting us nearly a quarter of the way towards our 2042 zero emissions goal in that area. Nearly half of Penn employees who participate in commuter programs now commute sustainably by cycling, carpooling, or using mass transit. Penn adopted a LEED Silver minimum certification for all new construction or major renovation and more than two dozen buildings on campus have already achieved designation. Penn's campus has also been certified as a Level II Arboretum, enhancing and preserving our urban forest for the entire West Philadelphia community. With deep commitment, unwavering focus, and our combined talents and resources, Penn will meet its goals.

Among Penn's highest priorities is Penn student safety. We recently shared with the Penn community the results of the AAU's latest Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct, in which

Penn participated. Sexual misconduct and violence on campus or anywhere is absolutely unacceptable. Penn has taken numerous steps to protect and support our students, including strengthening our policies, educating for prevention, and increasing our resources to provide education and respond to reports. We had a much higher survey response rate this year than in 2015, which offers us a much fuller understanding of our students' experiences. More than 40 percent of Penn students responded, compared to just under 27 percent in 2015 and an overall AAU response rate for this survey of just over 20 percent. Despite our best efforts, sexual assault and misconduct continues to be pervasive. There was little change in the prevalence of non-consensual/unwanted sexual contact reported by our students. Penn's figures are almost exactly at the median of our peers.

Even one instance of sexual misconduct is one too many. It is our collective responsibility to create a shared campus environment in which every student can fulfill their fullest potential. Together, we will redouble our efforts.

While meeting head on the complex challenges our campus and our world face, it is also important to celebrate the world-changing achievements of our alumni, faculty, students, and staff.

Dr. Gregg Semenza is a joint recipient of the 2019 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. A proud Penn M.D./Ph.D. graduate of the Class of 1984, Dr. Semenza is currently the director of the Vascular Program at the Johns Hopkins Institute for Cell Engineering. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for his transformative discoveries in how cells sense and adapt to oxygen availability.

Dr. Virginia Lee, who is the John H. Ware 3rd Professor in Alzheimer's research and director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research, won the prestigious Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences, a \$3 million Prize for transformative advances that improve and extend human life. Only six laureates were chosen this year.

Dr. Emily Wilson, professor of classical studies and chair of the Program in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory, won one of the McArthur Foundation's coveted "genius" Fellowships for her work, including her pioneering translation of *The Odyssey*, the first English translation done by a woman.

And for the second year in a row, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have selected seven Penn researchers to receive highly competitive Director's Awards from the NIH Common Fund's High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program. They are:

- James Eberwine, the Elmer Holmes Bobst Professor of Pharmacology
- Rajan Jain, assistant professor of medicine and of cell and developmental biology
- Maayan Levy, assistant professor of microbiology
- Arjun Raj, professor of bioengineering
- Sydney Shaffer, assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine and of bioengineering
- Ophir Shalem, assistant professor of genetics
- Christoph Thaiss, assistant professor of microbiology

PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council

October 2019

I would like to invite all members of Council to attend – and encourage others to attend – the Community Conversations organized this year by Dr. Benoit Dubé, our Chief Wellness Officer. These eight events, held once each month from September through April, provide an opportunity to hear from other members of the Penn community about their personal challenges with resilience, success, and failure and then to participate in a discussion about those vital issues. The speakers represent a wide range of areas of our campus, including such campus leaders as Prof. Angela Duckworth, author of *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*; Chaplain Chaz Howard; Associate Vice Provost for University Life Tamara King; Marc Lo, Executive Director of our new Penn First Plus Program; and Prof. Justin McDaniel, who teaches our well-known course on “Living Deliberately.” The events will be widely advertised as the year continues.

Prof. Anita Allen, who has been a transformative leader of our campus as Vice Provost for Faculty, will conclude her current term at the end of June 2020. Prof. Allen, as many of you know, has been an invaluable partner in advancing our wide range of critical initiatives for faculty development, diversity, and equity, among many other essential elements of her position. I have appointed a committee of senior faculty members, representing a range of Schools and disciplines, to advise me on the appointment of a new Vice Provost for Faculty, chaired by Prof. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Population Health and Health Equity Professor in the Perelman School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, and the Wharton School. The committee actively seeks nominations of and applications from currently tenured faculty members at Penn who have extensive knowledge of the University and its policies and practices, as well as experience addressing sensitive issues in an effective and principled manner. Applications are due no later than November 15. I encourage you to read the full position description at: <https://almanac.upenn.edu/#consultative-committee-for-the-appointment-of-a-vice-provost-for-faculty>.

The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation has been one of the most exciting new initiatives at Penn. It was founded three years ago to advance the role of arts on our campus, and a large part of its mission therefore includes providing grants to arts activities. Grants are available in eleven categories, ranging from small grants of \$100 to more ambitious support of larger projects, and they often encourage projects that are collaborative or cross traditional boundaries of arts activities and disciplines. The Sachs Program has now opened its grants process for this year. I encourage all members of the Penn community – whether or not you think of yourselves as engaged strictly in arts activities – to learn more about the available forms of support at: <https://www.sachsarts.org/grants/how-to-apply/>. Grants are specifically designed to encourage teaching, making, and presenting art in all areas of campus life, as well as activities that offer increased access to the arts to students and other members of our community.

Wendell Pritchett
Provost



PPSA – Penn Professional Staff Assembly

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**Status Report – Penn Professional Staff Assembly
October 2, 2019**

*The theme for the PPSA is **Connect @ Penn**.* The board has decided to use this as a continuing theme for the years to come.

- PPSA is continuing its member-led book club initiative this year. This summer, members read The Tattooist of Auschwitz and discussed this book on September 10, 2019 at Van Pelt Library. Our next read is Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend*, the novel is also the foundation for the popular HBO series of the same name. The next book club meeting will be held on Monday, November 4th.
- On September 20, 2019, PPSA hosted a tour of the rare books collection at the Fisher Fine Arts Library. The event was limited by the space inside the library, but its popularity with members has led to us planning more events at the Fisher Fine Arts Library.
- On October 1, 2019 (yesterday!), PPSA co-hosted the Annual Employment Resource Fair in partnership with the WPPSA. The fair was a resounding success, attracting more vendors and visitors than last year's event. Kris Forrest and Cydnee Bryant did a wonderful job as PPSA and WPPSA leads for this event.
- This Fall, PPSA together with Jack Heuer, Vice President of Human Resources, will continue the small group discussions platform known as "Chats with Jack." Three to four staff members are invited to meet with the Vice President to create lines of communication and foster open dialogue around issues of staff concern. The first Chats with Jack is scheduled for Tuesday, October 29th.
- In November 2019, PPSA will be hosting a sustainability-themed event for staff.
- In December 2019, PPSA will host its informal meet and greet event, Coffee and Cookies (or Bagels).
- In January 2020, PPSA will be hosting two events: our annual Clothing Drive to benefit local organizations and our annual membership meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadir Sharif
Chair

Stephanie S. Yee
Past Chair

Kris Forrest
Chair-Elect