

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of University Council
From: Wendell Pritchett, Interim President
Date: April 27, 2022
Subject: Report to the University Council

Last week, the Penn community enjoyed the 2022 David and Lyn Silfen University Forum featuring renowned documentary filmmaker Ken Burns. Annenberg Dean John H. Jackson, Jr., set the stage with a wonderful and insightful introduction, and Burns shared a number of clips from his new film on Benjamin Franklin. This deep, humanizing dive into the larger-than-life figure who founded our University served as an entertaining and enlightening forum for exploring critical issues that we still reckon with today. I am grateful to our honored guest, who returns next month as an honorary degree recipient and Commencement Speaker for the great Class of 2022. I am also grateful to the many people who made this special event possible.

Earlier this month, Penn and GSE joined with the Henry C. Lea Elementary School, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, and the School District of Philadelphia to celebrate the next step in our long-running commitment to support the West Philadelphia K-8 school. First announced in January, our new \$4.1 million agreement is going to help all of us realize our vision for accelerating progress underway at Lea.

A few days later, Perry World House hosted an extraordinarily timely event featuring Ukraine's ambassador to the United Nations, Sergiy Kyslytsya. The plight of the Ukrainian people is appalling, but the event with Ambassador Kyslytsya also served to highlight Ukrainian bravery. It was an enormously valuable opportunity for the Penn community as we do what universities do best: seek to better understand the great challenges of our times and contribute to solutions.

To that end, Penn faculty, students, and staff continue to earn high distinction for their world-improving work. To mention only a few:

Four Penn faculty have been awarded prestigious Guggenheim Fellowships. Congratulations to Daniel Barber of the Weitzman School for Design; Kimberly Bowes of SAS; Guthrie Ramsey of SAS; and Paul Saint-Amour of SAS.

We also celebrate and commend the 2022 President's Engagement, Innovation, and Sustainability Prizes winners. Join me in congratulating:

President's Engagement Prize recipients Rowana Miller, Manoj Simha, Seungkwon Son, Max Strickberger, and Sam Strickberger.

President's Innovation Prize recipients William Kohler Danon and Lukas Achilles Yancopoulos.

And inaugural President's Sustainability Prize recipients Saif Khawaja, Sarah Beth Gleeson, Shoshana Weintraub, Julia Yan, and Eli Moraru.

As Penn heads toward the end of the spring semester and all of the joyous milestones and celebrations that mark this time of year, I want to thank you for your time, leadership, and engagement as members of Council.

PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council - April 2022

I join Interim President Pritchett in congratulating the winners of this year's President's Innovation and Engagement Prizes. We extend a special thanks to the faculty advisors and the advisors in the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships who are these students' invaluable partners in developing their exciting projects. I am also delighted to congratulate the newly elected leaders of the [Undergraduate Assembly](#) – President Carson Sheumaker, a third-year student in Wharton and International Relations, and Vice President Alexander Eapen, a second-year student in CAS who is also a fellow in our great [Paideia Program](#) – and the [Graduate and Professional Student Assembly](#): President Robert Watson, a second-year Law student who is also pursuing a Masters degree at GSE, and Vice President Jaydee Edwards, a second-year doctoral student in Earth and Environmental Science.

This is also the time of year at which we honor the exceptional teachers who make Penn such a dynamic place to learn. On April 25, we will honor the faculty teaching award winners at 5 pm in the Penn Commons Tent. This year, the Lindback [Awards for Distinguished Teaching](#) are awarded to Profs. Jill Fisch (Law), Boon Thau Loo (SEAS), Katherine Milkman (Wharton), and Amish Patel (SEAS) in the Non-Health Schools, and Profs. Bart De Jonghe (SON), Minghong Ma (PSOM), Joseph St. Geme (PSOM), and Susan Taylor (PSOM) in the Health Schools. Profs. Itay Goldstein (Wharton) and David Kazanjian (SAS) will receive the Provost's Awards for Distinguished PhD Teaching and Mentoring, and Profs. Nadia Bennett (PSOM) and Sarah Pierce (Law) will receive this year's Provost's Awards for Teaching Excellence by Non-Standing Faculty. On April 14, we similarly celebrated the ten winners of this year's Penn Prize for [Excellence in Teaching by Graduate Students](#) at a reception at the Graduate Student Center: Erin Anderson (SEAS), Katie Copley (PSOM), Nicholas Dias (ASC/SAS), Lilia Escobedo (SEAS), Olivia Hu (SAS), Katey Mari (SAS), Ethan Plaue (SAS), Bruno Saconi (SON), Yosef Washington (SAS), and Stephanie Wesson (SAS). We are enormously grateful to their teachers and advisors, as we are to all the students and colleagues who took the time to nominate both the faculty and graduate student winners of these important awards.

Finally, I encourage all graduate and professional students to complete the [Graduate and Professional Student Survey](#), which is being offered for the first time since 2016. This is a critical way to provide confidential feedback about your experiences at Penn and to offer suggestions to enhance that experience in the years ahead. The survey is open until May 9, and all students who complete it will have the opportunity to win one of 20 AirPods, courtesy of GAPSA.

As we head into a joyous time of year, I offer congratulations to our graduates and to every member of our community on a successful and impactful year.

Beth A. Winkelstein
Interim Provost



University of Pennsylvania Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA)

Constituency Status Report for University Council – April 27, 2022

GAPSA is grateful for all the partnerships and bridges rebuilt this year as we return and evolve towards a new normal. We look forward to working with old and new partners, at Penn and beyond, in the next academic year towards our undying mission of improving the Penn experience for our peers.

- GAPSA passed restructuring amendments and bylaws on March 30, adding new leadership opportunities to better serve our constituents. The 2022-2023 executive officers were elected at our April 13 General Assembly and Council meetings. Applications for committee director positions are rolling until early May. Please welcome and congratulate the following newly elected officers:
 - President: Robert Watson (Law/Education)
 - Executive Vice President: Jaydee Edwards (SAS)
 - Vice President of Finance: Aalok Thakkar (SEAS)
 - Vice President of Operations: Helen Jin (SEAS)
 - Vice President of Programming: Shreyas Ramesh (SEAS)
 - Vice President of Advocacy: Hoang Anh Phan (SAS)
 - Professional Student Council Chair: Michael Krone (Law/Wharton)
 - Research Student Council Chair: Ludwig Zhao (SEAS)
 - IDEAL (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access, and Leadership) Council Chair: Jay Ortiz (Medicine - BGS)
- Policy/Advocacy:
 - GAPSA International Student Affairs continues to host coffee chats and Culture Crossing event series to bring together the international student community and listen to their needs
 - GAPSA IDEAL Council organized the spring pop-up food pantry and continues to work towards an institutionalized food pantry to help address food insecurity
 - GAPSA Wellness Committee has completed the inaugural G12+ Wellness report – now available on our website, the report outlines wellness priorities across the 12 graduate schools.
 - GAPSA Equity & Access Committee successfully held the inaugural event on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Best Practices in Higher Education.
 - GAPSA Research Council continues to advocate for doctoral stipend parity and transparency
 - GAPSA is helping to promote and incentivize responses to the Graduate & Professional Student Survey (GPSS), which will help better inform resources and support for our constituents.

We seek partnership, collaboration, guidance, and support from the University and your groups on these topics to help improve the Penn experience for all our community members.

- Our Programming division remains steadfast and diligent in organizing events to help promote community building and professional development for our constituents. These include Beyond Penn, virtual mixology series, Fight Night, Boat Cruises, and the Spring Olympiad, to name a few. Details are be publicized on our channels ([website](#), facebook, instagram, and newsletter) as they are finalized.
- Please reach out to collaborate and engage with us – our councils, committees, and general assembly meetings are open to all. Meeting details, agendas, and approved minutes can be found [here](#).

Thank you very much for reading! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions/comments. It's been my absolute honor and pleasure to have served as GAPSA president this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Paradorn (Joe) Rummaneethorn, *GAPSA President 2021-2022*
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Website: <https://www.gapsa.upenn.edu/>

Contact us: <https://www.gapsa.upenn.edu/contact-us>



Weekly Paid Professional Staff Assembly Status Report

- **Elections:** WPPSA is excited to announce our FY23 Call for Nominations! Board and University Council Committees positions are available. If you or a colleague you know are interested, please email Maureen Goldsmith at mgoldsmi@upenn.edu by **April 29th** with a brief bio and explanation of interest in open chair or committee seats. Elections will be held online/anonymously in Mid-May. Nominations for colleagues are also encouraged. To learn more about WPPSA, please visit our [website](#).
- Our 2nd Restorative Practices @ Penn hosted by WPPSA will be on **April 13th**. The focus is on communication, conflict skills and techniques with an emphasis on “managing up.” For more information: Click [HERE](#)
- WPPSA is hosting a Benefits Information session aligning with UPenn’s Open Enrollment in April. Our guest speaker is Susan Sproat, Executive Director Human Resources. The date is TBD.
- Our 2nd Voices with Jack is rescheduled to **May 25th**. Staff will be selected to participate and given the opportunity to ask career, policy and university-related questions. RSVP [here](#).
- Climate Survey: WPPSA is implementing an annual climate survey to understand our community, engagement and overall employee satisfaction. The purpose is to find solutions and strategies to improve positive workplace experiences.
- End of the Academic Year Celebration event will be held in-person at the end of May. We will provide light refreshments, prizes and social activities.
- **Job openings:** We have two open positions: Outreach Specialist and Digital Platform Specialist. If interested, staff should fill out the [contact us form](#).

Website: <https://wppsa.upenn.edu>

Contact Us: [HERE](#)



Best,

Amber Banayat, Chair of WPPSA