

To: Members of University Council
From: President Liz Magill
Date: March 29, 2023
Subject: Report to the University Council

We were very pleased to announce that Penn's 2023 Commencement Speaker will be Tony Award-winning actress, singer/songwriter, producer, and author Idina Menzel. She joins a phenomenal cohort of honorary degree recipients this year: Abhijt Vinayak Banerjee, Jocelyn Bell Burnell, Penn's own Jean Bennett, Esther Duflo, and Brent Staples. My thanks to the members of the Trustee Honorary Degrees & Awards Committee and the Office of the University Secretary for helping bring together this spectacular group of honorees. They will help make Commencement even more memorable and special for our graduates.

In fact, one of this year's honorary degree recipients, Dr. Brent Staples, recently visited campus as guest speaker for the inaugural W.E.B. Du Bois Lecture in Public Social Science, which I was very pleased to help open. Dr. Staples was joined by Penn's Dr. Tukufu Zuberi, giving our community another excellent opportunity to recognize and amplify Du Bois as one of the leading intellectuals of his time, as well as to continue building on his important legacy. Congratulations to the Department of Sociology, the Annenberg School, and the Center for Africana Studies on this successful inaugural event.

Another important recent event was the 2nd Annual Distinguished Lecture in African Studies. I proudly joined Dr. Camille Charles in welcoming Dr. Mokgweetsi Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana, to Penn. Through the Botswana-UPenn Partnership, we enjoy a decades-old relationship with Botswana that helped reverse the HIV/AIDS epidemic there. Penn was honored to host President Masisi, providing yet another invaluable global engagement opportunity for our students, faculty, and staff.

As we welcomed these public figures to campus, we also celebrated some of our leading faculty in Penn Medicine. This year's Penn Medicine Endowed Chairs Celebration took place at the Penn Museum. There, I joined Kevin Mahoney, CEO for the Health System, and Dr. Jon Epstein, Senior Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer for the Health System, in recognizing faculty who hold professorships as well as the visionary donors who endowed their chairs. An endowed chair is the highest sign of a faculty member's excellence. It's also a gift that fuels the creation of knowledge at Penn for the benefit of people everywhere.

Soon after this event, we embarked on the latest leg of the Penn Forward Tour, where I travel to meet with alumni, parents, and friends out on the road. So far, I've visited New York City, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Our most recent stop was in London at the British Museum. I had the opportunity to meet many alumni from the UK as well as volunteer leaders from across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. We enjoyed an excellent crowd at the British Museum, and I'm happy to report that everyone I spoke with

is energized and engaged, excited about Penn today and eager to see where our University goes from here.

Back on campus, I joined Interim Provost Winkelstein in congratulating Karu Kozuma on being named Penn's next Vice Provost for University Life. I also reiterate our deep appreciation for Tamara Greenfield King, who has served as Interim Vice Provost for University Life. Penn is fortunate to have such exemplary leaders who are wholly committed to the success and wellbeing of our students.

I'll conclude by recognizing just a sample of recent honors earned by Penn people. First, congratulations to Dr. Carl June. We recently learned he will receive the Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research from the American Association for Cancer Research, the oldest and largest professional association for cancer research in the world.

Congratulations as well to Penn's 2023 recipients of the coveted Thouron Award. As Thouron Scholars, these seven Penn seniors and one recent graduate will be able to pursue graduate studies in the United Kingdom. They are Alisa Ghura, Shivani Nellore, Winston Peloso, Gabriella Rabito, Srinidhi Ramakrishna, Thomas Russell, Oliver Stern, and Elena Tisnovsky.

And at this year's Women of Color at Penn (WOCAP) luncheon—the 36th annual celebration of this important event—six inspiring women were honored with WOCAP Awards. Hats off to Mya Gordon, Kyabeth Torres-Rodriguez, Sharon Irving, Valerie Dorsey Allen, and Diane Waff.

I hope you all enjoyed a restful spring break, and, as always, I am grateful for your service to Council.

PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council

March 29, 2023

I encourage all faculty members to learn more about the new [Spark Grant Program](#) in the [Online Learning Initiative](#). This program supports new online learning projects, such as a new online course or program, new educational technologies, or new instructional design for an existing online course or program. The grants are open to both individual Penn faculty members and online teams working with at least one Penn faculty member, and they will include extensive support and resources from the Online Learning Initiative throughout the project. You can [contact the Online Learning Initiative](#) directly to learn more about the program and access the application.

There is also still time for faculty members to apply for a grant this year from the [Excellence Through Diversity Fund](#), which is accepting applications through April 15. The Fund provides resources for innovative projects by Penn faculty members (Assistant, Associate, or Full Professors in any track) that advance faculty diversity, equity, and inclusion, especially proposals that seek to improve the recruitment, retention, promotion, and leadership development of faculty members from underrepresented groups and/or improve mentorship and other support for junior and mid-career faculty members from underrepresented groups. In particular, the Fund seeks proposals that promote collaborations across disciplines, departments, and/or Schools and foster new understandings of the structures, policies, and programs that can best advance our shared mission to further faculty diversity, equity, and inclusion at Penn. You can learn more in the full [Call for Proposals](#) and address any questions to [Connie Chang](#), Executive Director of Faculty Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

As many of you know, Penn recently hosted two important student events. The [1vyG conference](#), the largest gathering of first-generation and low-income students from across the country, brought more than 100 students and administrators from 32 schools for three days of events at Penn last month. This was only the second time it was hosted at Penn – and also the first time it met in person since 2020. I am grateful to [Penn First Plus](#) and the students who organized this highly successful event, especially Ashwarya Devason and Victoria Garcia, the Penn seniors who co-chaired the conference committee. We also just had a very productive [First Generation Graduate Student Week](#). This full week of programs – supported by GAPSA, Career Services, the Graduate Student Center, the cultural centers, and ISSS, among others – was open to all graduate students, professional students, and postdoctoral scholars at Penn. It offered valuable panels, talks, and discussion on five daily themes, including graduate student life, campus resources, life skills, future paths, and professional identity. I am grateful to everyone who participated in these great events or helped to organize them.

Beth A. Winkelstein
Interim Provost



Undergraduate Assembly

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Status Report for University Council

March 2023

The UA's 50th session will come to a close on Sunday, March 26th. This year the UA focused on improving internal funding structures and focused on advocating for our long term policy goals. A bulk of our session has been focused on improving the route for funding allocations and finding meaningful ways to spend over \$1 million dollars accumulated due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some of the projects passed include a One-Year Fund for Independent Performing Arts Groups, Free Menstrual Products in Bathrooms, a Grant for the Social Life and Inclusion Fund, a Sustainable Water Bottle Giveaway Event (happening Thursday), a Grant to the Intercultural Fund (ICF), a Grant to SPEC Fully Planned, a Grant to the Bridge to Math Program, an establishment of a Mentor Meal Pilot Program for Under and Upper Class Students, a Photobooth for Free Headshots to be Housed in Career Services, and more.

Outside of funding, the UA has concentrated its advocacy work to improve all parts of campus. This year the UA Cabinet alone has met with over 20 different University administrative offices. UA Members at large have held seats on over 40 different University Wide advisory boards. We have focused on surveying violations of academic policy such as work and exams being held on secular and religious Holidays. To further protect student's well being we have put forth a proposal through the Council of Undergraduate Deans to disallow work to be assigned or exams held during Academic Breaks.

UA Steering has had a resurgence this year by allowing UA Steering representatives to propose large, long-term funding projects, some of which were previously mentioned. Outside of funding, UA Steering has allowed groups to come together to discuss their issues and has helped spring board ideas such as the Mentor Meal Pilot Program. These meetings have served to rebuild the foundation of Steering so it can continue to grow and thrive in the coming years. The University Council delegation has also been quite strong this year with Council becoming a pivotal space for mis- and underrepresented student groups to advocate on behalf of their constituents to our university's highest administrators.

Finally, the UA through its services have helped over 1200 students get to the airport, many students be connected to legal services and all students to utilize Penn Lab's vast library of applications. A comprehensive UA Annual Report will be coming soon that will go into deeper detail about all our work this year. The new Undergraduate Assembly leaders will be elected in the beginning of April. As always, if you have any questions, email at exec@pennua.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Carson Sheumaker
Undergraduate Assembly President
president@pennua.org

Alex Eapen
Undergraduate Assembly Vice President
vp@pennua.org

Xavier Shankle
Undergraduate Assembly Speaker
speaker@pennua.org