

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of University Council
From: Amy Gutmann, President
Date: January 31, 2018
Subject: Report to the University Council

More exciting news has come to us on further advances in developing drugs that target the underlying genetic causes of a cancer, an approach pioneered here at Penn. On January 12, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first drug aimed at treating metastatic breast cancers linked to the BRCA gene mutation. This announcement joins previous approvals of a revolutionary gene therapy used to treat inherited blindness and Carl June's breakthrough advances in cancer immunotherapy, CAR-T cell therapy. This is a tremendously exciting new era in genetic medicine and Penn is leading the way.

Since the close of last year, the Penn community has suffered the unexpected loss of three students and one of our faculty, all cherished members of the Penn family. As a community, we are all grieving in different ways. It is tremendously important that, as a community, we remind each other of this: Nobody at Penn need feel alone. All of us should reach out to one another and to University resources for consolation and support during challenging times.

Exceptional students, faculty, and staff across campus have been working diligently to be as supportive as possible. The health and wellbeing of our students and all members of our community continue to be my highest priority and constantly in focus among University leadership. Last week, Provost Pritchett and I shared a campus-wide update on our wellness efforts following last fall's Campus Conversation, including a new centralized wellness website, and we will continue to work to our utmost to sustain a campus community in which everyone can thrive.

The Provost and I also shared a message with the Penn community on the role of slavery in Penn's early years. In the wake of important Penn undergraduate research findings which revealed that approximately half of Penn's early Trustees owned slaves, Provost Pritchett will chair a working group that will further research and report on this critical issue. As we emphasized in our statement, the institution of slavery is a profoundly shameful and deeply tragic part of American history. It is important that we fully understand how it affected our University in its early years and that we reflect as a university about the current meaning of this history. We are grateful to our students and Professor Kathleen Brown for their work in broadening our understanding. We will report on the group's findings after their work has been completed.

We also recently announced this year's David and Lyn Silfen University Forum entitled "People and Policy Adrift: A 21st Century Framework for Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and Immigration Policy." As in previous years, this year's Silfen Forum will feature a distinguished panel of experts including the Honorable Joe Biden, 47th Vice President of the United States and Benjamin Franklin Presidential Practice Professor at Penn; the Honorable Jeb Bush, Sr., 43rd Governor of Florida; Michael Doyle, University Professor and Director of Columbia Global Policy Initiative at Columbia University; 2004 College alum Dau Jok, Founder of the Dut Jok Youth Foundation; and Anne Richard, Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration. From unprecedented numbers of people displaced by conflict, persecution, and climate change, to the shutdown of the U.S. government due in large measure to a Senate impasse over DACA, this is an incredibly important and timely topic for what promises to be an unforgettable Silfen Forum. I hope you will be able to attend.

With every hope for a bright, enjoyable, and productive spring semester, welcome back to University Council and thank you for all you do.

PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council

January 2018

I hope that all of you have visited the new Wellness at Penn website: <https://www.wellnessatpenn.com>. It represents our initial effort to bring together the wide range of resources, events, and programs that support wellness at Penn. In particular, as President Gutmann and I noted in launching the site, we want it to reaffirm that wellness is holistic and multi-dimensional. The site organizes resources and events into eight overlapping kinds of wellness: emotional, physical, mental, social, sexual, spiritual, financial, and occupational. Our overall wellness is affected by multiple factors, and we encourage you to explore the different kinds of wellness resources offered across the University. Above all, we encourage you to be active participants in advancing wellness at Penn. It is our collective responsibility to sustain the wellness of our shared Penn community, including both our own wellness and the wellness of those around us. I hope that all of you also take the initiative to organize new events and to let us know your ideas and suggestions for further advancements. We have established a [specific address for you to send your ideas and suggestions](#), which you will also find on the home page of the wellness website. I look forward to talking more about this vital mission with all of you in the months ahead.

The close mentoring relationships between students and their professors, mentors, and TAs are one of the most vital ways in which we can forge stronger ties across the Penn community. As we continue our focus on wellness at Penn, we therefore want to make sure that everyone is aware of our great Take Your Professor/Mentor/TA to Lunch program, which we have just expanded and streamlined to make it as easy as possible for both students and faculty to use. The program offers a range of options for free meals at a dining hall or the University Club, and professors/TAs can also be reimbursed to host their current classes for meals at their homes. I encourage everyone to participate in this invaluable program; you can sign up and learn more at www.takeyourprof.org.

Last year, as many of you know, the Penn History of Slavery Project – a group of undergraduates working with Prof. Kathleen Brown in the Department of History – revealed that a significant number of Penn's early trustees held slaves between 1769 and 1800 and had financial ties to the slave trade. After meeting with the students to learn more about their remarkable work, I will now be chairing a working group to explore this issue further. Its aim will be to improve our community's understanding of the impact and implications of slavery on Penn's past, to explore what this history means for the present and the future, and to offer recommendations for any next steps. The group includes Prof. Brown, David Boies Professor of History and Director of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies; Joann Mitchell, Senior Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer; Dorothy Roberts, Penn Integrates Knowledge University Professor and Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights; and Heather Williams, Presidential Professor and Professor of Africana Studies. We will work closely with the students in the Project, as well as with undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members across the university, and will report to the Penn community on our findings and recommendations after our work has been completed.

I hope that everyone continues to enjoy a stimulating and rewarding spring semester.

Wendell Pritchett
Provost



Undergraduate Assembly

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Status Report – Undergraduate Assembly

January 31, 2018

I. President & Vice-President Platform Update

The Platform update shows the progress on the key ideas that the President and Vice President of the UA ran on. This is not a comprehensive list of projects the UA has worked on. Rather, it highlights some of projects that pertain to the platform.

- a. Facilitating a Campus Culture that Emphasizes and Prioritizes Mental Wellness
 - i. Projects: Restructuring club recruitment guidelines, increasing awareness of Penn's wellness resources through NSO programming, including mental health resources on syllabi.
- b. Reducing the Costs Associated with Attending Penn
 - i. Projects: Reducing course costs and cost transparency, making class events such as Hey Day and Feb Club more affordable, reducing annual tuition increases.
- c. Ensure that Penn is a Safe and Inclusive Environment for all its Students
 - i. Projects: Partnering with PVP and SAC so more students receive education about interpersonal violence prevention, lobbying for resources for DACA students.
- d. Academic Initiatives
 - i. Projects: Publicizing the expansion of GAPSA and UA mentoring services, evaluating academic advising, supporting Asian American Studies.
- e. Meeting Students' Space Needs
 - i. Projects: Increasing performing arts spaces available to student groups by modifying currently underutilized space, creating an international student resource center.

II. Fall Airport Shuttles

During Thanksgiving break, the UA in partnership with Penn Transit was able to provide 628 Penn students with a shuttle service to Philadelphia International Airport. We will be providing a similar service for students leaving for Spring break as well.

III. ICARE and PAVE

The UA body went through ICARE on January 21st and will attend Penn Anti-Violence Educators (PAVE) training on January 26th.

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Shah, UA Vice President



**Status Report- Penn Professional Staff Assembly
January 17, 2018**

The theme year for the PPSA is Year of Growth

- On December 14th, we hosted a holiday open house and clothes drive from 12n-4pm in Houston Hall. We collected clothes, shoes and coats to fill about 30 garbage bags. These were donated to the Bethesda Project and Salvation Army.
- On January 30th, we will hold our open membership meeting and look forward to hearing from Provost Pritchett. This event will be held from 12n-1pm in the Terrace Room of Claudia Cohen Hall.
- We will soon have a date for our February diversity event and will update you when we have the details.
- We are thrilled to partner with WPPSA to co-sponsor an event during the Penn Teach-In. This event will be appropriate for staff, students, and faculty. The session, “Developing a Culture of Health on a University Campus,” will be held Wednesday, March 21, 2018 from 1pm-2:30pm and will include lunch and “be in the know” points for faculty and staff. Participants will leave encouraged that self-care and wellness are important (as demonstrated by research) and will also leave with some tips about ways to embrace a culture of health. The event will feature a panel with three speakers (two health researchers from the Penn community and one human resources professional to provide tips and resources). The speakers are:
 - Jasmine Blanks Jones, a PhD student in Education and African Studies at Penn and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholar.
 - Terri Lipman, PhD, CRNP, FAAN, Miriam Stirl Endowed Term Professor of Nutrition, Professor of Nursing of Children, Assistant Dean for Community Engagement, Interim Program Director, Pediatric Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program, Penn Nursing.
 - Chris Hyson, Sr. Health and Wellness Specialist, Penn Human Resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather J. Kelley – Thompson
Chair, PPSA

Kuan R. Evans
Past Chair, PPSA

Stephanie S. Yee
Chair Elect, PPSA



January 24, 2018

Weekly Paid Professional Staff Assembly (WPPSA)
<http://www.upenn.edu/wpsa/>
Status Report for January 2018

I. Recent Business:

- a. WPPSA has almost completed the revision of the bylaws, putting an emphasis on the organizational structure of the Assembly, the requirements for eligibility and service, and succession plans in the case of resignations and unexpected vacancies. In 2018-19 we will be invoking a tri-chair system, with a Chair, Chair-Elect, and Past-Chair, as well as adding 3 volunteer staff positions that will focus on outreach, maintaining the WPPSA listserv, and keeping our website updated.
- b. Marcus recently met with Denise Fitzpatrick of Penn Athletics (Assistant Athletic Director, Marketing & Fan Engagement) to discuss ways that WPPSA can collaborate with Athletics to show support for the student-athletes. One idea that seemed favorable is a “WPPSA Appreciation” day at an athletic event, particularly one that is during the work day (functioning under a similar purpose as the “Business Person Specials” that Major League Baseball hosts). Departments and programs would be given ample notice so that support staff can be given a break that work day to attend the game, support the student-athletes, and be recognized by Athletics. We will continue working on this idea, with the hope that something will be in place for the 2018-19 year.
- c. WPPSA has reached out to Human Resources regarding developing “best practices” for support staff who would like to incorporate online courses into their work day for the purpose of professional and career development. Ideally, these practices would help support staff understand what type of courses may be best for them, how to talk to their supervisor about integrating these courses into their work schedule, and how to organize them in such a way that the staff will be motivated to complete them. We are considering contacting the Online Learning Initiative and/or Arts & Sciences Online Learning at Penn to get their suggestions as well.
- d. We look forward to collaborating with PPSA for “Developing a Culture of Health on a University Campus” during the University Teach-in. We have several members of WPPSA Leadership who have already signed up to volunteer.

II. Next Steps:

- a. Finalize the revision of the bylaws and publicize to WPPSA General Membership and the University community.
- b. Host Provost Wendell Pritchett at our Feb. 13 monthly meeting and continue strengthening the relationship between WPPSA and the Office of the Provost.

Humbly submitted,

Marcus T. Wright
Chair, WPPSA

Rhonda D. Kirlew
Co-Chair, WPPSA