

## MEMORANDUM

**To: Members of University Council**  
**From: Amy Gutmann, President**  
**Date: October 24, 2018**  
**Subject: Report to the University Council**

---

Penn continues to excel in fostering global conversations that matter. A few weeks ago, we hosted the second annual Perry World House Penn Biden Global Leaders Dialogue. In front of a capacity crowd in Irvine Auditorium, the 47<sup>th</sup> U.S. Vice President and Benjamin Franklin Presidential Practice Professor Joe Biden and former U.K. Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg discussed the international political landscape and the importance of building and maintaining strong democratic values abroad and at home.

The same day, as part of Perry World House's conference, "Competing Visions of the Global Order," former United States Ambassador to the U.N. and former National Security Advisor Susan Rice and General H.R. McMaster, another former National Security Advisor, both engaged in dynamic talks.

Just days before the conference, Penn also announced that former Florida Governor Jeb Bush joined the Penn community as a non-resident Presidential Professor of Practice. Governor Bush has committed his life to public service and civic engagement, and he will enrich our campus with the expertise he brings to timely and important conversations.

Our momentum in global engagement is matched only by Penn's globally recognized innovation. For the second year in a row, Reuters announced that Penn ranks among the top 4 of the 100 Most Innovative Universities in the World. Across our campus, every day, in our classrooms, labs, and creative spaces, Penn people are inventing the future. This recent recognition shines a well-earned spotlight on the incredibly broad range of research, discovery, and invention here that's speeding Penn ideas out into the world to improve lives around the world.

Prestigious recognitions and awards for the achievements of our students, faculty, and staff flood in every day, and I want to highlight just one. Recently, seven Penn researchers from four of our Schools were selected to receive highly competitive NIH Director's Awards from the NIH Common Fund's High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program. They join the 2018 Director's Awards recipients, which numbered fewer than 100 nationwide. Please join me in congratulating:

- Rajan Jain, assistant professor of medicine and of cell and developmental biology in Penn Medicine
- Matthew Kayser, assistant professor of psychiatry and neuroscience in Penn Medicine
- Michael Mitchell, the Skirkanich Assistant Professor Innovation in Penn Engineering
- Nicola Mason, associate professor of medicine and pathobiology in Penn Vet
- Aimee Payne, the Albert M. Kligman Associate Professor of Dermatology in Penn Medicine
- Mark Sellmeyer, assistant professor of radiology with a secondary appointment in biochemistry and biophysics in Penn Medicine
- Anna Wexler, a fellow in advanced biomedical ethics in Penn Medicine

## PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council - October 2018

At this time of year, we offer numerous opportunities to support members of our community in their outstanding work at Penn. First, I encourage all students to consider nominating a professor for a university-wide teaching award. There are three awards, all of which are awarded at a ceremony that I host in the spring: the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching recognizes eight members of the standing faculty, four in the health schools and four in the non-health schools; the Provost's Award for Distinguished PhD Teaching and Mentoring recognizes two faculty members for teaching and mentoring PhD students; and the Provost's Award for Teaching Excellence by Non-Standing Faculty recognizes two members of the associated faculty or academic support staff who teach at Penn, one in the non-health schools and one in the health schools. Any member of the Penn community – past or present – can submit a nomination by December 7; you will find the nomination forms and more details at: <https://provost.upenn.edu/education/teaching-at-penn/teaching-awards>.

The exciting new [Sachs Program for Arts Innovation](https://www.sachsarts.org/grants) offers grants each year to support innovative arts activities across our campus. Last year's first grants funded 23 projects designed to advance teaching, making, and presenting art at Penn and/or provide our students with increased access to the arts. Grants are offered in ten categories, including student projects, freshman seminars, visiting artists, performances, exhibitions, and more ways to integrate the arts into our courses and our life on campus. You will find detailed information about these diverse opportunities at: <https://www.sachsarts.org/grants>.

The [Campaign for Community](https://provost.upenn.edu/initiatives/campaign/grants), launched in 2015, aims to strengthen our Penn community by providing occasions to talk and learn more about essential issues that may appear to be the most difficult to discuss or intractable to resolve. Toward this end, the Campaign offers grants, typically ranging from \$250 to \$1500, to support events on campus that encourage dialogue and discussion and promote understanding of and respect for multiple points of view. You can learn more about Campaign grants and events at: <https://provost.upenn.edu/initiatives/campaign/grants>.

Finally, I encourage students and faculty to participate again this year in the great [Take Your Professor/ TA/Mentor to Lunch](https://www.nso.upenn.edu/take-your-professormentor-host-your-class-programs) program. Last year, to further our emphasis on campus wellness, we expanded this program and made it significantly easier to use. We were heartened by the strong response and increase in participation. Through this program, students can invite current or past professors, teaching assistants, and advisors to a free lunch at the University Club or a free lunch or dinner at a residential dining hall. Professors, TAs, and mentors can also invite students to lunch or dinner, and faculty/TAs can invite students in their current classes to dinner at their homes. This is one of our most valuable programs to help us all know and care for each other as one community. You can learn more about the different options at: <https://www.nso.upenn.edu/take-your-professormentor-host-your-class-programs>.

Wendell Pritchett, Provost



# Undergraduate Assembly

## UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

### **Undergraduate Assembly Status Report**

October 12th, 2018

#### **Organization Update:**

1. National Voter Registration Day
  - a. The Undergraduate Assembly (UA) partnered with the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA), Penn Leads the Vote, the Government and Politics Association, American Constitution Society (Penn Law), and other groups to coordinate a National Voter Registration Day event. The event featured giveaways, speakers, and performances.
  
2. UA Recommendations on the Implementation of the Second Year Experience
  - a. The UA is in the process of drafting a report on the new two-year living requirement for undergraduate students. The UA will present a three-part report featuring 1) background on the decision from an undergraduate perspective, 2) feedback from a diverse selection of constituents, and 3) official recommendations based on the overall findings.

#### **Resolutions Submitted:**

1. Resolution Concerning UA Endorsement of Removing Endowment Funds from the Coal and Tar Sands Industries
  - a. The Undergraduate Assembly urges the University of Pennsylvania Board of Trustees to commit to remove its endowment from investments in the top 100 companies involved in coal extraction and top 20 companies involved in tar sand extraction.

#### **Project Highlights:**

1. Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering Study Halls by Priya Bhirgoo
  - a. The Mechanical Engineering & Applied Mechanics major currently employs junior and senior mentors to staff study halls wherein they help their younger peers with assignments. Priya worked on implementing a similar model in other Engineering majors, and starting in Spring 2019, study hours will next be expanded to Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering.



## *PPSA – Penn Professional Staff Assembly*

<http://www.upenn.edu/ppsa>  
[ppsa@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:ppsa@pobox.upenn.edu)

### **Status Report- Penn Professional Staff Assembly October 17, 2018**

*The theme year for the PPSA is **Connect @ Penn.***

- On September 25, 2018, PPSA hosted a sold-out event titled "Parenting Down and Parenting Up" – Resources and Benefits for Caretakers. Sue Sproat, Executive Director for Benefits, and Karen Kille, Senior Work-life Consultant, joined us from Penn HR to discuss the benefits and resources that Penn provides to its employees as they relate to new and existing parents of minor children and resources for those of us who provide regular care for our aging parents and loved ones. Topics covered include the Paid Parental Leave policy (effective as of September 1, 2018), best practices for proposing Flexible Work Options, and Penn's "Health Advocate" service.
- On October 2, 2018, PPSA co-hosted the annual Employment Resource Fair in partnership with Penn HR and WPPSA. The fair was well-attended and hosted external and internal vendors along with organizations with volunteer opportunities for Penn staff.
- PPSA hosted the first "Chats with Jack" this academic year on Monday, October 15, 2018. PPSA together with Jack Heuer, Vice President of Human Resources, will continue the small group discussions platform on a monthly basis. 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.
- In November 2018, PPSA will host an event highlighting Penn's financial resources for Penn staff.
- In December 2018, PPSA will host our first "Coffee & Cookies" networking event. This event will expand on the PPSA Connection program, a free networking program that provides monthly random matching for staff members to connect with colleagues across campus. This is one of our most popular programs as there is continued demand by Penn employees to connect across schools and centers.
- In January 2019, PPSA will host two events: our annual open meeting and our annual clothing drive, benefiting local Philadelphia non-profits.
- In response to Penn staff interest, PPSA is launching the new PPSA Book Club this fall. A survey will be circulated to PPSA members to select the first book, book club meeting date, and location. The book club committee includes PPSA board members and PPSA members.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie S. Yee  
Chair, PPSA

Heather J. Kelley – Thompson  
Past Chair, PPSA

Nadir Sharif  
Chair Elect, PPSA