

# THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE

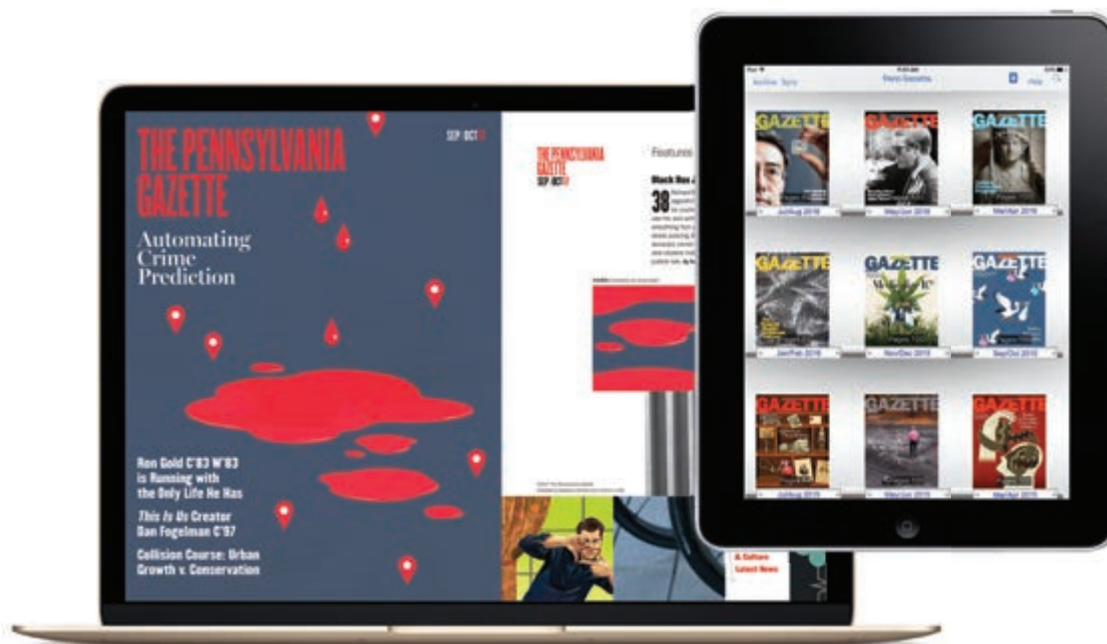
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## A New Road For Student Mental Health

Nursing's Year  
Homecoming at Home  
Spring Semester Plans

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Photo by Tommy Leonardi C’89

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# THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE

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# Talking and Listening

I'm both impressed with and grateful to the students who participated in associate editor Dave Zeitlin C'03's cover story for this issue, "Wellness Warriors." I'm grateful for their openness and honesty in talking here and in other forums about their own struggles with the perennial stresses of college life and young adulthood and the particular issues of navigating that stage in the midst of an ongoing once-in-a-century health crisis. And I'm impressed—and also a bit awed—by their thoughtfulness in articulating those challenges and their dedication to helping other students survive and thrive and share their own experiences without fear of any lingering stigma around mental health.

As Dave's story lays out, a tragic series of suicides from 2013 to 2017—in which 14 Penn students took their own lives—was the spark for an outpouring of student interest and involvement in peer-to-peer counseling organizations, along with a revitalized and expanded administrative response to mental health. New and existing student groups with a range of approaches mobilized to serve a variety of audiences; hours and staff were added in the University's Counseling and Psychological

Services (CAPS) office; and a campus-wide wellness initiative was launched encompassing students, staff, and faculty.

The biological and psychological factors affecting suicide and severe mental illness are complex and in many ways have an unpredictable relationship to things like academic and social pressures,

**Having someone to talk to, and knowing that others are facing their own challenges, has an enormous value.**

and the students in Dave's story are very clear on the fact that their efforts are part of a broad spectrum of services aimed to help students. But having someone to talk to, and knowing that others are facing their own challenges—including plenty of people who outwardly appear to be mastering the whole college experience effortlessly—has an enormous value. And that goal of acceptance about feel-

ing bad and needing help is a big part of what these groups are about.

(In fact, in addition to grateful and impressed, I'm also a little envious. Or not exactly that—but although it's been many years now, I can still remember times of loneliness and dejection, the sense of coming up short at some fundamental level compared to others at getting the most out of college life, and never once considering sharing those thoughts with anyone else.)

It comes up in a few contexts in frequent contributor JoAnn Greco's article, "In Nursing We Trust," that no worker in healthcare has a closer relationship with patients than do nurses, who spend more time with them than anyone else. That's been true since the early days of nursing, often symbolized (including in our illustration for the story) by the image of Florence Nightingale. But while that element—what Nursing School Dean Antonia Villarruel G'Nu'82 calls the "heart" of nursing—continues to be an essential component, the possibilities for the profession and the available career paths open to nurses have expanded in a variety of ways beyond the bedside. (There was also more to Florence Nightingale than a caring presence, which the article considers in passing.)

The initial impetus for this story was the WHO's designation of 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife. Nightingale's 200th birthday was the motivating factor for that timing; that the year

should coincide with the COVID-19 health crisis played havoc with some of the planning to mark the occasion, but was grimly appropriate in emphasizing the centrality of the profession.

Penn Nursing has an outsize impact in its field, rated the top nursing school internationally and securing the most in NIH grant funding for several years running. JoAnn spoke with Dean Villarruel, former dean Claire Fagin Hon'94, and nursing graduates pursuing a range of careers at Penn and elsewhere to assess how the profession has been dealing with the pandemic and what the future of nursing looks like.

We're coming close to full circle in the round of annual events affected by the novel coronavirus. This year's Homecoming Weekend was the latest ritual that had to be rethought in light of it. And while (again) there's nothing like being on Penn's campus, the all-virtual Homecoming@Home, spread over six days from November 9 to 14, offered a wide-ranging showcase for alumni joining in from around the globe. In "Heard at Homecoming," we've pulled exchanges from just a few of the panel discussions. Complete versions of those, and all the (20 or so!) presentations offered can be found at the Alumni tab on Penn's home page.



# A New Year of New Opportunities

A turn of the calendar offers us the welcome hope and soulful inspiration to reconnect and reengage.

By Amy Gutmann

On one particularly dark day, famed University of California system president Clark Kerr quipped in exasperation that universities are merely “a series of individual entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance about parking.” My own experiences of 16 years leading Penn puts the lie to that myth of the atomistic academic community. I would call Penn anything but atomistic! Over and over at Penn, I have witnessed the power of the possible: “*Here is the opportunity—what can we make of it?*”

A small but meaningful example comes from our beautiful campus that so many have missed and dreamed of returning to during the long months of 2020. Periodically and very carefully over the years, the University has added to the outdoor art collection permanently displayed here. Two advisory committees review proposed gifts, purchases, commissions, and public art at the University. New sculptures are chosen and placed with the utmost care, following a deliberate protocol in which experts assess where individual pieces best fit and belong within the overall aesthetic of the campus. Their job—which they perform magnificently—is to advise me on the right place and context for great art to reside. Once the sculpture resides on campus, the Penn community decides what to make of this new opportunity, which so often they do through some unknowable but emphatically assured collective intelligence. No one person decides. Everyone does.

We all know, for instance, that the Button—the iconic sculpture *Split Button*

by husband-and-wife team Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen—is the place for children to play and people to meet before getting lunch or grabbing coffee. Nearby, John Boyle’s 1899 bronze sculpture of a seated Ben Franklin is where overseas visitors stop for group portraits, and Kite and Key Society campus tour leaders jump up on the lower pedestal to give starry-eyed high school students and their families the real inside scoop about what is truly most special about Penn. Further up Locust Walk, George Lundeen’s 1987 bronze *Benjamin Franklin*—that we all know simply as “Ben on the Bench”—is the spot for post-graduation portraiture, preferably in full academic regalia. While in the small, grassy triangle fronting Cohen Hall, Robert Indiana’s world-renowned *LOVE* sculpture is where Penn graduates, newlyweds, and the newly engaged snap selfies, and the entire Penn community also gathers to find solace in one an-

other in times of tragedy. It is, in a sense, the heart of Penn’s campus, manifesting love in its many dimensions.

This inner unscripted beat of Penn’s campus was very much with me in November, when I donned a mask and went to view the installation of the newest addition to the University’s public sculpture collection. *Brick House*, a nearly three-ton, 16-foot-high bronze sculpture by contemporary American artist Simone Leigh, now stands sentinel at the corner of 34th and Walnut Streets, the gateway to College Green and the welcoming entrance to so many of Penn’s visitors [“Arts,” this issue]. For this we owe special thanks to Penn alums Glenn Fuhrman W’87 WG’88 and Amanda Fuhrman C’95, who advocated for bringing it to our campus. This sculpture needs to be experienced first-hand to be fully appreciated. A stunning Black woman’s head atop a domed form that suggests a skirt or possibly a building, Leigh’s sculpture brings

**To effect positive change, resources count, but funding alone is never sufficient. Real change comes only when you add dedicated and visionary leadership.**



to a central crossroad of our campus a striking presence of strength, grace, and beauty—along with an ineffable sense of mystery, agency, and resilience.

*Brick House* is the perfect symbol of Penn's academic Year of Civic Engagement. We mark this year through extensive programming and activity meant to encourage us all to consider what community engagement is and how we can foster it. The events of 2020, and in particular the spontaneous power of civic protest through the Black Lives Matter movement, made clear the need for us to redouble our collective efforts to confront issues of racial justice.

Recognizing our community-wide challenge, Provost Wendell Pritchett Gr'97 and I announced in June the creation of Penn Projects for Progress, a set of collaborative and innovative projects that will be initiated and led by our students, faculty, and staff to propel progress in our University, city, and society toward a more engaged and inclusive university community. We begin with an initial fund of \$2 million that may be augmented by receiving additional resources.

Penn Projects for Progress is one important new civic engagement initiative among many Penn has undertaken recently. Before the pandemic, Philadelphia suffered a healthcare blow with the closure of Hahnemann University Hospital. When we learned that Mercy Hospital may soon follow, Penn Medicine led an area partnership in saving it, keeping urgently-needed beds and frontline healthcare heroes working at the moment Philadelphians need them most. Soon after, we celebrated Penn Dental's new Care Center for Persons with Disabilities, the only such resource in a region where 16 percent of our local family, friends, and neighbors face barriers to good dental care due to a disability.

From millions of dollars in grants to support local businesses in the pandemic to inviting Philadelphia high school students to participate online in Profes-

sor Angela Duckworth Gr'06's Grit Lab this spring, Penn proves that to effect positive change, resources count, but funding alone is never sufficient. Real change comes only when you add dedicated and visionary leadership.

In this, Penn is fortunate to have the enormous depth of talent and willing advocacy of so many to call upon. Less than two weeks after initiating the Projects for Progress effort, we were delighted to make the additional announcement that our University chaplain, Charles L. "Chaz" Howard C'00, would assume the role of Penn's first Vice President for Social Equity and Community ["Gazetteer," Sep/Oct 2020]. Since assuming this title August 1, Chaz has been hard at work organizing initiatives that promote communication, support collaboration, and foster research and innovative programming within the Penn community. His focus serves to deepen awareness and help advance the University's mission of fostering social equity, diversity, and inclusion while helping to overcome historical and structural barriers to advancing that vitally important mission.

I was thinking about the positive civic impact of such changes and programmatic initiatives—past, present, and future—as I watched a mobile crane and skilled crew carefully hoist *Brick House* into place on her specially constructed concrete platform. Significantly, she looks not inward toward the Penn campus, but outward to our neighbors and community members in a vibrant and confident West Philadelphia. "We see you," she says, "and we know we are one."

A week later, I was thrilled to join Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney, School Board President Joyce Wilkerson, and Superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia William R. Hite Jr., in unveiling Penn's \$100 million pledge to the School District of Philadelphia, an unprecedented commitment to the city and its public schoolchildren and the largest private contribution to the School Dis-



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trict in its history ["Gazetteer," this issue]. Penn will contribute \$10 million annually for the next 10 years to the School District to help remediate environmental hazards in the city's school buildings. This major commitment to our city seemed like the perfect christening—far better than any bottle of champagne—to launch *Brick House* on its future course in the life of Penn.

How then will Simone Leigh's magnificent sculpture come to be woven into the fabric of campus life? In the midst of a devastating pandemic, this new year of 2021 offers us the welcome hope and soulful inspiration to reconnect and re-engage. My fondest wish for us all is that this new decade marks the renaissance of our national spirit of connecting and engaging across divides. May the presence of Penn's newest woman—this towering, magnificent woman who is *Brick House*—keep this foremost question in all our minds: *Here is the opportunity—what will we make of it?*

Doctors and data entry, animal love and loss, what cities need—and don't—to “reset,” march of time.

## We Welcome Letters

Please email us at [gazette@ben.dev.upenn.edu](mailto:gazette@ben.dev.upenn.edu). Please note, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gazette offices are closed until further notice and we cannot retrieve postal mail at this time. Letters should refer to material published in the magazine and may be edited for clarity, civility, and length.

### Art Programs Won't Rescue Ailing Doctors

The article “The Museum Prescription” [Nov|Dec 2020] merits recognition that help is needed for the ailing medical profession, but in fact it is analogous to applying Band-Aids to stanch the blood flow of a hemorrhaging patient.

The stressors are well enumerated, but it is the electronic health record (EHR) that deserves the most attention.

Psychiatrist Stephen Bergman (writing as Samuel Shem) in his recent book *Man's 4th Best Hospital* compares EHRs to “texting while driving.” Rightly so, he also denounces the term *physician burnout*, which he states is rather *physician abuse*.

In the span of 15 minutes or so, major complaints, review of lab results, preventive measures, physical examination, and responses to infomercials and Dr. Google must be addressed. By the end of the day the doctor is totally drained. He or she is like the lobster in the boiling pot of water: trapped! Most often due to financial pressures.

They are too tired to go to art museums or to say we chose medicine to care for people not to be data entry technicians. We want to bond with our patients and know we are really helping our patients get or stay well.

So until we stop the clicking on the EHR, things won't improve and visual arts programs, although well intentioned, will not rescue the ailing doctor and his profession.

Mayer L. Horensten C'61, Tucson, AZ



**“Until we stop the clicking on the EHR, things won't improve.”**

### The Right Decision, But Painfully Hard

“How could you put your own dog to sleep?” When that question was put to me, my response was simply: if I couldn't do it for mine, I wouldn't be able in good faith to do it for others ... but it was never easy.

I had a solo small animal practice—through the years I got to know my clients (and patients) quite well. There was one client who, whenever he called to schedule an appointment, my staff knew to allot a half an hour rather than the normal 15 minutes. We would attend to “business”

for the first half—and just kibitz for the remainder (the joy of my own practice).

When faced with the reality of a patient's lessening quality of life, we often collectively made that fateful decision. Knowing that relationship—aware of the many years the family had bonded with that loved one—and while in time there would be wonderful memories—now was the appropriate time; that very difficult choice to perform euthanasia was something we all knew to be painfully hard—but the right one. Albeit, my sadness lingered. On my last day of practice before entering retirement, I asked my receptionist one favor: please don't schedule a euthanasia. I need a lighter, more happy day to end my career.

I admire Brad Bates V'10 [“Lapping Up a Final Act of Love,” Nov|Dec 2020]. He's found a way to perform a necessary function of our profession—in a gentle and thoughtful manner—without adding to his pain by establishing long relationships with the client.

Moe Lipson V'68, Sarasota, FL

### The Price We Pay for the Gift of a Dog's Love

Even though Sammie was my cousin's son's dog, I never met her until the day she died. I was introduced to Sammie by Dave Zeitlin's moving eulogy in “Lapping Up a Final Act of Love.”

All of us who have ever loved and lost a dog can relate to the heart-wrenching decision that an old friend's time has come. But veterinarian Brad Bates's thoughts on how he deals with people on



their worst days and Zeitlin's reflections on "the day" should give comfort to anyone who has also faced that sad day. A dog's life is cruelly short, but that is the price we pay for the gift of a dog's love.

*Mitchell Albert W'76, Palos Verdes Estates, CA*

### **In a Puddle of My Own Tears**

When I opened up this issue, I had the strange experience of finding a familiar face staring back at me. It wasn't a classmate, but rather it was the face of Sammie, Dave Zeitlin's late giant beagle mix, and the subject of his beautiful article. Having known Sammie for all of her 11 years and having shared a long and close friendship with her owners, I was able to vividly "see" every detail of this story as I was reading it—from the front window facing their very narrow street, to the faces of their two inquisitive children reacting to this difficult event. While I always find Dave's writing to be compelling and poignant (he sometimes even gets me to care about sports), this particular article left me in a puddle of my own tears. Thank you for sharing this story with us, Dave; I'm sure it pulled at the heartstrings of many readers. Rest in peace, Sammie.

*Amy Cohen C'05, Bryn Mawr, PA*

### **Family of Blessed Memory**

The Nov|Dec 2020 issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* with Dave Zeitlin's article "Lapping Up a Final Act of Love" arrived at a very opportune moment for me. On October 26, I had to have my beloved Shih Tzu Mercedes euthanized at home. Although the veterinarian, Dr. Katherine de Jong, was proficient and sympathetic, it was still a disturbing moment for me. My Mercedes was 13-and-a-half years old, and a healthy dog until she developed bladder cancer. Her condition declined very rapidly afterwards.

Reading the article, I relived all the sad emotions of my recent experience with Mercedes. Her death was especially hard to take since she had been cured of a serious eye infection this past January

by the excellent doctors at Penn's Ryan Veterinary Hospital. Here's what Dr. Keiko Miyadera, the canine ophthalmologist, wrote to me after treating Mercedes: "*Mercedes is a very sweet little Shih Tzu and it was a pleasure to work with her! Feel free to contact us with any questions you may have. Take care!*"

Mercedes' ashes are now on my mantle along with those of my cats Candy and George and photos of my deceased relatives. They are all my family of blessed memory.

God bless the staff at the *Gazette*, Penn Vet, and Dave Zeitlin. It's comforting to know there are many people who share my love for our animal friends.

*Bill Gagliardi CGS'90, Aston, PA*

### **Quality Public Education Is Essential for Cities**

There is another major factor in the reset of major cities ["A Reset for Cities?" Nov|Dec 2020] that needs to be added on to the list outlined by writer JoAnn Greco: quality of public education. Education is one of the most important services cities deliver, something clearly documented by Penn's recent large gift to the School District of Philadelphia ["Gazetteer," this issue]. The total level of education funding involves all three levels of government, thereby opening up the allocation of the funds to the political divisiveness that has swept the country.

A recent Brookings Institution study shows that the largest cities in the country have the lowest test scores. That leads affluent urban families to use private schools or to live elsewhere—thereby reducing the urban tax revenues. Middle-income families also settle elsewhere, leaving low-income families to be the ones whose children attend public schools.

It is up to all three levels of government to approve budget allocations that reflect the handicaps of a child coming from a low-income home. If those formulas reflected that, and if teacher unions were cooperative, more employees and residents who pay taxes would live and work

in the city. The economy would be stronger, the population would be healthier, and the crime rate would decline.

*Anita A. Summers, faculty*

### **Impact of Emerging Transportation Technology Must Be Considered**

I have been a professional transportation planner for 40 years, and was excited to see the article "A Reset for Cities?" My practice has been primarily in metropolitan areas, and I know how much urban planners from Penn and elsewhere have to offer. As we face an ever more uncertain future, the value of planning is very certain.

An important issue that was not addressed in the article is the role of emerging transportation technology. Transportation planners have been considering the implications of automated, connected, and shared transport on our cities long before the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. The impacts are not just on the mobility of people and goods, but on urban form, equity, and public health. The pandemic has increased concerns about using public transit, but also Uber, Lyft, and every shared mode. Will those services be more or less acceptable when they use AVs without a driver?

E-commerce was already growing, and is now fueled by those who stay at home and order restaurant meals for delivery, or do not want to shop in stores. Systems that replace delivery drivers with robots that operate on the street (Nuro) and the sidewalk (Starship, Amazon, FedEx) are in use in pilot tests around the country. CVS and UPS have teamed on testing drone delivery of pharmacy orders.

Cities are witnessing ever more competition for the public right-of-way—streets, curbs, and sidewalks—for ride-hailing pickups and drop-offs, delivery vehicles, e-scooters and bikes, robots, and yes, pedestrians of varying abilities. City governments, planners, business owners, and residents all need to be thinking about this aspect of a post-pandemic world.

*Steven Gayle C'71, South New Berlin, NY*

## Same Old Liberal Tropes

“A Reset for Cities?” goes a long way toward reinforcing the stereotype of urban planners as out-of-touch elitists, unaware and unconcerned about how their prescriptions might affect people in the real world.

Examples are numerous.

The article touts turning hotels into homeless shelters but ignores the impact that these—what might be euphemistically called “socially maladapted”—homeless people have on the surrounding neighborhoods. Eliminating zoning for single-family housing is seen as a “welcome corrective,” completely ignoring the fact that such housing is an aspirational choice for millions of Americans. Overlooking the needs of marginalized communities is (rightly) regarded as tone-deaf, but one supposed corrective is the issuance of business grants that explicitly exclude white business owners—something that would be loudly (and correctly) condemned as racist if it were done against any other group.

Particularly vexing is the issue of mass transit, which unarguably serves a vital need but at the same time has been hemorrhaging ridership as people work from home and avoid situations in which they cannot maintain physical distancing. Now is truly the time for the planning experts to put their heads together and figure out how to provide this essential service without breaking the bank.

But focusing on the notion that cracking down on fare evasion is a “criminalization of poverty” serves only to erode any support that might have been gained from people who play by the rules, pay for the services they use, and expect others to do so as well—and who would be loath to subsidize a service that they perceive as catering to free-loading lawbreakers.

Lastly, and perhaps most egregiously, the article notes, in approving tones, the currently *en vogue* trend to “defund” (reform, reallocate, etc.) urban police forces. No mention at all that crime

trends have turned sharply upward after years of decline, steadily erasing the hard-won gains that turned formerly dangerous, crime-ridden cities into safe, desirable places to live, work, and play. If urban planners really want to save the cities, and if the *Gazette* wants to encourage this endeavor, they need to ensure that the programs they tout won’t turn the cities back into unsafe places from which people flee.

As a former resident of Philadelphia, I eagerly want to see it, and other great cities, not only survive but thrive. But the people whose job it is to figure out how to save them need to do more than just regurgitate the same old liberal tropes they’ve been dishing out for years, while expecting those who dislike their plans to just shut up and take it.

*Glenn Hoge W’88, Ellicott City, MD*

## Maybe We Should All Have Pets

As often happens, I again noticed the interesting ways in which contents of the *Gazette* relate to each other—from “Letters” to “Views” to bylined articles.

My copy of the Nov|Dec 2020 issue propitiously arrived in my mailbox on Election Day—the end point of a rancorous political campaign and the beginning point of an unprecedented rejection of the results of the Election Day vote. Both sides of this political/social divide in our country between two about-equal halves of our society were reflected in different sections of the *Gazette*.

In the “Letters” section, I first encountered the schism in the starkly different responses to President Gutmann’s article, “Science and Solidarity” [“From College Hall,” Sep|Oct 2020]. The letters almost equally applauded and deplored Gutmann’s point of view as to the relationship between science-based public health concerns and the political pressures that arise in resistance to the responses suggested by these concerns. These reactions echoed the societal divisions clearly evident during the political campaign and clearly continuing

based upon the initial political reaction to the election results.

Then I came to Dave Zeitlin’s article, describing Brad Bates (Dr. Brad) and his experiences as a palliative care veterinarian specializing in in-home euthanasia of pets. This article restored a little bit of my hope for our country in these divisive times. At the core, we are human beings and the same in important ways. As Zeitlin writes, quoting Dr. Brad on his interactions with people dealing with the loss of a loved pet: “‘They grieve the same. They live the same. The way they comfort their loved ones is the same. The way they teach their kids is the same.’ ... [I]t doesn’t matter what politicians they like or what cable news channel they watch.”

As we work our way as a society through our current differences, we need to keep in mind our sameness as to our basic humanity. And maybe we should all have pets to help do this. As Dr. Brad observes: “There’s something to be said about people who love animals—they tend to be compassionate.”

*Jim Waters WG’71, Pearl River, NY*

## Great Fun Then, Renewed Joy Now

Thanks so much for “Let Them March” [“Gazetteer,” Nov|Dec 2020], Dave Zeitlin’s retrospective celebrating the golden anniversary of women marching with the Penn Band. As a cheerleader and mascot, I remember well that the Penn Band members were by far the most engaged (and wonderfully loud) fans for Quaker football. Even when the Penn team was well behind its opponent’s score, the stalwart band members like Lynn Leopold, her sister Anne, and Peggy Schnarr still rendered themselves hoarse with their encouraging shouts. The partnership between our cheer squad and the band was a source of great fun for me and—even though one might consider this fond recollection trivial, considering all of life’s challenges we’ve endured through the succeeding half century—still, the article brought renewed joy to me.

*Reeve Chudd W’73 C’73 WG’74, Los Angeles*



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# In Memoriae

A name spoken is a life renewed.

By Kara Daddario Bown

I brought a new life into the world this year and it has me thinking a lot about death. Specifically, my own impending and undefined end. When you leave the hospital with a new baby, parents who have gone before often trot out the cliché “they don’t send you home with a manual.” I would argue there are plenty of parenting manuals, judging by the baby book category on Amazon. The topics vary: some address baby hygiene and common colds; others advise on how to make your own organic baby food; and a great many might be classified as “how to not land your kid in therapy for the next 30 years.” I can save everyone some money and time by distilling this latter category of omnivorous parenting advice into a Michael Pollan-esque mantra: *Play. Not with digital things. Mostly outside.* In my search for parenting wisdom, however, I have yet to find the book that explains what to do when you are a parent who had cancer in your early 30s, your child is the miracle you were hoping for, and you fear a recurrence, or worse, leaving her behind.

Perhaps death permeates my thoughts since I gave birth during a global pandemic. The ticker displaying coronavirus victims rises each day on CNN, heightening my awareness of mortality. When the daily COVID death count became predictable, the universe sent me an unforeseen signal about the fleeting nature of life. Unexpectedly, my best friend's father died of a heart attack after spending a Sunday morning with his grandsons. His daughters wrote in his eulogy that they grieve for the time their children will not have with him. A succinct thought, which crystallizes my worst fear: being unknown to my child.

While my impermanence has recently left me feeling upended, I find some solace in my experiences with loss. Ancient Egyptian pharaohs had their names carved deeply into the stone of memorial temples, so whenever their name was read or spoken, their life was renewed. I think spoken memories have a similar reviving quality. My grandfathers died before I was born, yet if we were to meet on the other side, I would know

them. Their pictures rested on an upright mahogany piano in my parents' den in the home where I was raised. From the piano bench, I memorized the faces of deceased loved ones more lastingly than the notes of *Für Elise*. My parents acted as seanchaí, sharing an oral history of my grandparents: staccato stories that punctuated my childhood. My mom spoke of her father's green thumb and of the roses he pa-



tiently cultivated outside of their home in the city. If I listen closely, I can hear the Irish music he played on the weekends while he drank a cup of tea. I see the two papers he read during breakfast every morning neatly stacked next to him, because “it is our duty to be well informed.” I know where he came from, in Roscommon, Ireland. I know where he is buried, in Philadelphia. I often smile at a story my mom told me, about how my grandfather would appear outside her school on rainy days, standing near the entrance with galoshes in his hand to walk her home. The loving tenderness of his gesture overshadows her youthful embarrassment.

Memories can also spur action, providing a blueprint for how to live. My dad’s father died suddenly before my dad turned 12. It was a loss from which he never recovered and one that profoundly affected his life. My dad lived in the present, always listening more intently than I could ever appreciate. He never conceded to the purchase of a burial plot, even after he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer. This wasn’t unbridled optimism but a choice to be fully alive in a moment. He shared with two daughters the pastimes of his father. We learned to tie fishing knots and unhook sea bass from tangled lines. We walked in the sorghum fields of central Pennsylvania, flushing pheasant. He cooked dinner each night, sometimes poring over family recipes, sometimes inventing something new. We learned what it meant to invite people to a table: to listen, to gather, to welcome.

I decorate a mantle in my home with pictures—my husband’s family on a boat; my husband and me standing in a stalagmite cave in Mexico; me with my parents on the day of my college graduation. Everyone is still living, except for my dad. My daughter studies his picture, encased in a red frame. He is wearing a blue-and-red-striped tie. It’s the one he wore to my poetry readings at Kelly Writers House and, on that graduation day, when he was

proudly standing on Sansom Street. As she looks at the picture, I whisper memories into her ear. I tell her about the time he tried to perfect a crème brûlée recipe for three years, using my sister and me as eager taste testers. I let her know that when she is older, I will teach her how to sail like my dad taught me, so she can identify the names of the lines, the tiller, the centerboard. When we walk on windy days, I peer into the stroller and repeat his mantra when the conditions are right for sailing: “It’s a good day to be on the water.” I don’t know when or how I will explain the illnesses that have torn through her lineage like wildfire, creating both destruction and regrowth.

My daughter sits upright in her bouncing chair in the kitchen and watches me cook. I let her smell a carrot, an onion, a pickle, though she cannot eat them yet. She laughs hardest at the pickle. I hold her tenderly while I sing her Irish lul-

labies at night. I read *Where the Wild Things Are* to her, though she may not understand the words. We look at flowers outside of our home and I identify the ivory crepe myrtles, the periwinkle hydrangeas, and the red shrub roses. I share these things with her, so she knows where she comes from, so she knows who I am. I share with her the gifts of my parents, and their parents, and generations who came before them. I don’t know the hour when I will be called home, which perpetuates a lingering fear that it will always be too early. My antidote is to remain steadfast, present, cultivating memories my daughter can carry with her. I do this so one day she will speak my name and tell my stories, as if reading from hieroglyphics imprinted on her heart.

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Kara Daddario Bown C’08 is a freelance writer who lives outside of Philadelphia.

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# American Window

A song of the open road.

By Ethan Pines

**We** needed to get out. July 2020, Year of the Pandemic, housebound and restless, our baby knowing only our living room, us about to turn 50, work slow, air travel off limits ... we needed a road trip. We sketched a route with another virus-free family, scrounged up an RV and embarked on a 4,500-mile odyssey through Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, Utah, and back to California.



If I wanted to generalize with light snark, I'd say we saw holstered pistols, Trump paraphernalia, and very little mask-wearing. And it would be true. But it wouldn't be the whole truth. In fact, what we saw belied the stereotypes: No



one begrudged us our masks. Lots of ATVs, but even more cyclists. People were welcoming. Americans like craft beer and crispy Brussels sprouts across the political spectrum. Deadwood, SD, honors its Jewish frontier history with placards around the city. This is an endlessly complex country. That's what we really saw.

I shot my latest project, *American Window*, along the way. The images still don't tell the whole truth, but I think they





convey what it was like. When a bison crosses your path in Yellowstone, it's like watching a slow-moving alien that might kill you. Rocky Mountain goats in Glacier loiter stoically as endless cars pass. Crazy Horse Memorial moved and awed us far more than nearby Rushmore, which is surprisingly small.

Beyond all that, to me the juxtapositions feel bittersweet. The bison with asphalt. The deer between satellite dish and saw-



mill. The goat and the Harley, each encroaching on the other's territory. The grizzled store owner among his treasures. The prehistoric bison and his prehistoric sauna, ignoring the tourists. Crazy Horse, only a fraction complete after 72 years.

And bittersweet is how the country feels to me now: flawed, yet I love her still. There's majesty out there despite us.

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Ethan Pines C'92 is a photographer whose work can be found at [ethanpines.com](http://ethanpines.com).



# Point, Counterpoint

How debate instruction can bolster public education and revive democracy.

By Robert Litan

If there is one takeaway from the history of presidential debates that is beyond dispute, it is this: these are not real debates, but a series of well-rehearsed sound bites, a low standard that this election year's debacle did not come even close to meeting.

In real debates, the participants offer reasoned positions, backed by evidence, in *civil* discussion, without name-calling, in speeches that last longer than 60 or 90 seconds. Competitive debaters in high school and college not only learn how to do this well, but to argue multiple sides of a topic in different “rounds,” which

forces debaters to appreciate that most issues are far more complicated than they appear on social media or cable TV.

I know, having debated competitively in high school and at Penn 50 years ago, that learning how to debate can be a life-changing experience. It was the only thing that ended my stuttering, while greatly improving the research and reasoning skills that have benefitted me throughout my career.

But it did not occur to me until two and a half years ago—when I read a newspaper article about high school students from my home state of Kansas winning the national high school debate championship—that the lessons learned in debate could be used to improve the quality of education more broadly, with some important side benefits: reducing the political polarization that threatens to tear our society apart while enhancing important workplace skills that can lead to higher-paying job and career trajectories.

Although it is not realistic to expect every student to become a competitive debater, everyone can learn at least how to speak clearly, logically, and with evidence in front of others, and do so with equal proficiency on two or more sides of any topic. They can acquire these skills by learning debate techniques, not as an after-school activity, but as an in-classroom device in nearly all subjects in middle and high school.

This isn't just a dream. It's actually been happening in over a dozen middle and high schools serving primarily minority students in Boston and Chicago through the pioneering efforts of former debaters Mike Wasserman and his colleagues at the Boston Debate League (BDL) and Les Lynn in Chicago. Both independently have been teaching and mentoring teachers in “debate centered instruction” (DCI) for about a decade.

Here's how it works. Typically, classes are broken up into small circles of six or eight people; asked by the teacher to consider a “claim” from literature, history, or science; and then charged with



marshalling evidence and reasoning, drawn from assigned reading or elsewhere, to support or refute the claim. The teacher roams the room, listening to each group. Eventually, everyone in the class is required to participate orally in the discussion, and ideally to be able to refute critiques. Name-calling and ad hominem attacks are verboten. Students learn to speak respectfully, clearly, with evidence and reason.

I've seen how all this plays out in schools in both cities. The classes buzz with excitement, students enjoy the give-and-take, and even the most hesitant or shy ones eventually come out of their shells. Both BDL and Lynn have data showing that both test scores and measures of student engagement have risen substantially since the adoption of DCI.

Of course, more rigorous evaluations would be useful. A team led by University of Virginia education professor Beth Schueler is now conducting such a study of the hundreds of students who have passed through approximately a dozen schools, assisted by the Boston Debate League, over the past five years.

There are several reasons why more formal statistical studies should confirm the “before-after” improvements in student performance that the BDL and Lynn report. One reason is that learning by debating is a lot more fun for many students than listening passively to lecturers.

Another reason is that people of any age are more likely to understand and retain information that they must master and be able to communicate orally to other people than by regurgitating it on a test.

Studies of competitive debaters in Baltimore and Chicago show academic improvement, even controlling for “self-selection” (the stronger inclination of better students to engage in competitive debate). Moreover, because these studies concentrate on minority students, the same populations that are currently benefiting from DCI in Boston and Chicago, they suggest that broader exposure to debate in the classroom should help nar-

row persistent Black-white educational performance gaps.

There is also ample reason to think that the benefits of DCI would extend past formal schooling. Knowing how to speak with confidence, backed up by evidence, is a skill that employers consistently say is lacking in students coming out of high school and college. DCI would directly address that problem. Debate training would also be valuable for future entrepreneurs, who must be able to pitch their ideas to a variety of audiences—investors, lenders, potential employees, and customers.

Moreover, a citizenry trained in debate techniques would be very different from the one we have now. Imagine a nation of voters who can see through campaign slogans and misinformation, and appreciate the nuances of public policy challenges because they have been trained to seek out facts and advance reasoned arguments in defense of conflicting positions on multiple subjects. A body politic trained like this at a young age in turn would demand more of those seeking and holding elected office than the simple slogans or labels that show up relentlessly in political ads (most of them negative) and on social media. I believe our nation would be far less politically polarized, our politics would not be so mean-spirited, and our elected officials would be more inclined to compromise and get things done.

School districts throughout the country need not wait for all the evidence to come in before experimenting with this simple but powerful instructional technique, since enough is already evident. Even some basic college courses can benefit from the approach—with debates conducted in breakouts of large lecture classes led by graduate teaching assistants.

To be sure, many teachers, school superintendents, and local school board members are suffering from “reform fatigue” and may be hesitant to adopt yet another method of learning. But DCI instruction is not hard for teachers to learn. Initially, teachers without debate experience can be

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taught how to use the claim-evidence-reasoning paradigm in their classes through one week of summer instruction, using funds already earmarked for professional development. Once initial cohorts of teachers are trained, they can train others in their schools. If a school has a debate coach, he or she, with modest additional compensation, can provide ongoing assistance to teachers throughout the school year, as can the teachers interacting with each other in breaks during the school day, as I witnessed in both Boston and Chicago.

Our highly polarized democracy is in trouble. Our schools must do a better job of educating students—especially disadvantaged minorities and students from low-income families. And all students need a “want-to-learn” mindset, which they are much more likely to acquire if school were a lot more fun and engaging, so that they will want to continuously upgrade their skills to meet constantly changing employer demands. Debate centered instruction can help meet each of these challenges.

If you are the parent of a school-aged child, you can advocate for DCI before your local school board or your state education officials. By doing so, you can give the next generation the skills they can use throughout their lives, for themselves and to help save our democracy.

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Robert Litan W'72 is a non-resident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, a partner at the law firm of Korein Tillery, and the author of the new book, *Resolved: Debate Can Revolutionize Education and Help Save our Democracy* (Brookings Press, 2020), from which this essay is adapted.



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## Inching Back to Normalcy

While remote instruction and other COVID-19 restrictions will mostly remain in place, college housing will reopen for the spring semester.



**T**yler Kliem C'24 started college in the fall but has yet to truly feel like a college student.

With on-campus housing closed for the fall semester to all but a select few students to combat the COVID-19 pandemic ["Gazetteer," Sep/Oct 2020], Kliem remained home with his parents in New Jersey. And as an introvert, he found it difficult to make new friends or find a structured routine. "I feel like being on campus would really open me up to a lot more people," he says. "Interaction right now is not the greatest."

As in the fall, the spring semester will present a different and challenging kind of college experience for Kliem and other undergraduates—though Penn is slowly trying to inch its way back toward normalcy.

In late October, the University announced its plans for the spring semester, which will begin on January 20 (one week later than originally scheduled) and reopen on-campus housing to more students, "subject to certain limitations to enable proper social distancing." In large part due to a partnership "with Penn Medicine to dramatically expand our testing capacity," Penn President Amy Gutmann, Provost Wendell Pritchett Gr'97, Executive Vice President Craig Carnaroli W'85, and Perelman School of Medicine Dean J. Larry Jameson wrote that they were "confident that we can support increased numbers of students returning to campus in January." Most

classes, meanwhile, will remain virtual, as they were in fall—with the possibility for a "modest increase in in-person instruction," which will be determined by the deans and faculty of each school.

Kliem acknowledges that Penn's announcement was "obviously good news, and a lot of people are very excited" because freshmen in particular "really want to be on campus." But he still requested an exemption to Penn's first-year housing requirement and plans to remain home the rest of his freshman year. "And my only reasoning, really, is the transmission of the virus," he says, citing the rising COVID infection rates that led Pritchett and Carnaroli to send a follow-up message to the Penn community on November 18 to announce that there would be no imminent change to the spring semester plans while urging students to follow enhanced safety guidelines. Now, Kliem is worried about the disconnect that might arise between students living on and off campus. "I think it will be challenging to find a place for me, being that I will be online [this] semester again."

For the undergraduates who do move into dorms—and a limited number of graduate students at Sansom Place East—they'll have to get used to a much different daily routine and living arrangements. According to the University's reopening guidelines, all students will be in single bedrooms with shared bathrooms at no more than a 6:1 ratio. And "students returning to campus in January will be

## All undergraduates will be required to be tested for COVID-19 twice per week upon their return to campus.

expected to participate in a quiet period for two weeks, limiting their contact to those in their immediate 'pods' and leaving their residence only for essential reasons."

Students will also be required to adhere to the Student Campus Compact, which outlines several behavior expectations, including a mandatory flu shot. And all undergraduates will be required to be tested for COVID-19 twice per week upon their return to campus, while all graduate and professional students engaged in research activities on campus or living in the area need to be tested once per week. Eight sites across campus will administer these saliva-based tests.

For students who lived in off-campus University City housing in the fall, like Sukhmani Kaur C'22, the spring semester might not look too much different from the fall, when the Student Campus Compact, a symptom check app, a contact tracing system, and testing sites were already in place, along with a mostly remote mode of instruction. And that's the hard part. "I have felt overwhelmed just being trapped in one place," says Kaur, a biology major who rarely ventured from her studio apartment,

except to do research in a lab. And because of eyesight problems, "doing classes from one place and just staring at a screen all day actually kind of hurt my eyes a lot," she says, adding that it discouraged her

from engaging with clubs and other social events held over Zoom.

Ryan Collins W'22, who also lived in Philly last fall, agrees that it's been hard to have a social life, which won't necessarily change for students in the spring given the rules against large gatherings and other non-virtual forms of activity. He'd like to see Penn find a way to safely grant more access to gyms and libraries during the spring semester (depending on the state of the pandemic) just so students have another place to work, exercise, and improve their mental health. He even crafted a letter to the administration about this, before deciding not to send it once the City of Philadelphia temporarily reclosed indoor dining, gyms, and museums in mid-November due to rising COVID cases.

"Obviously, no one is asking for the normal comeback," Collins says. "But even just getting those limited interactions where you see someone you haven't seen in a while on the stairs or by the bookshelf, those little jolts of happiness from experiencing those spontaneous interactions have been proven to reduce depression."

In their message to the Penn community, Gutmann and the

## Penn Gives \$100 Million for City Schools

In November, the University announced a \$100 million gift to the School District of Philadelphia. The money—\$10 million annually for 10 years—will go toward remediating environmental hazards like asbestos and lead in public school buildings in the perennially cash-strapped district, which has an estimated \$4.5 billion in unmet capital needs overall.

“Nothing is more important than the health and welfare of our children, and few things are more crucial to a community than the safety and quality of its public schools,” Penn President Amy Gutmann said in a statement on the gift, the largest private donation in the district’s history. “We are proud to be able to partner with our city and school district to significantly improve the learning environment for Philadelphia’s schoolchildren in a way that will have a long-lasting impact on the health, safety, and wellbeing of our entire city.”

Since 2018, 54 school buildings have had existing lead paint fully stabilized and 25 have been certified as lead safe, while \$23 million has been spent on asbestos-related projects. An additional program of safety and inspection measures was approved last fall, with \$41 million allocated for asbestos testing and abatement and other remediation expenses in January 2020.

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney commended the University for its “historic gift,” which he said would “go a long way in accelerating the district’s aggressive environmental remediation work”—and hoped would inspire other local institutions to offer their support as well. District Superintendent William Hite said the gift “will be a great support as we move forward to address the immediate environmental conditions in all of our schools,” allowing the district to focus on “creating 21st-century learning environments for all students.”

This latest gift adds to the University’s longtime commitment to the Penn Alexander School in West Philadelphia (going back to its construction and totaling some \$25 million over 15 years) and its partnership with the nearby Henry C. Lea Elementary, as well as some 500 educational activities operated by Penn affiliates serving schools throughout the district.

other University leaders acknowledged that “campus life will not be as it was prior to the pandemic.” But after first closing campus last March and twice backing away from a more in-person semester last fall, they pledged to make the most of things this spring.

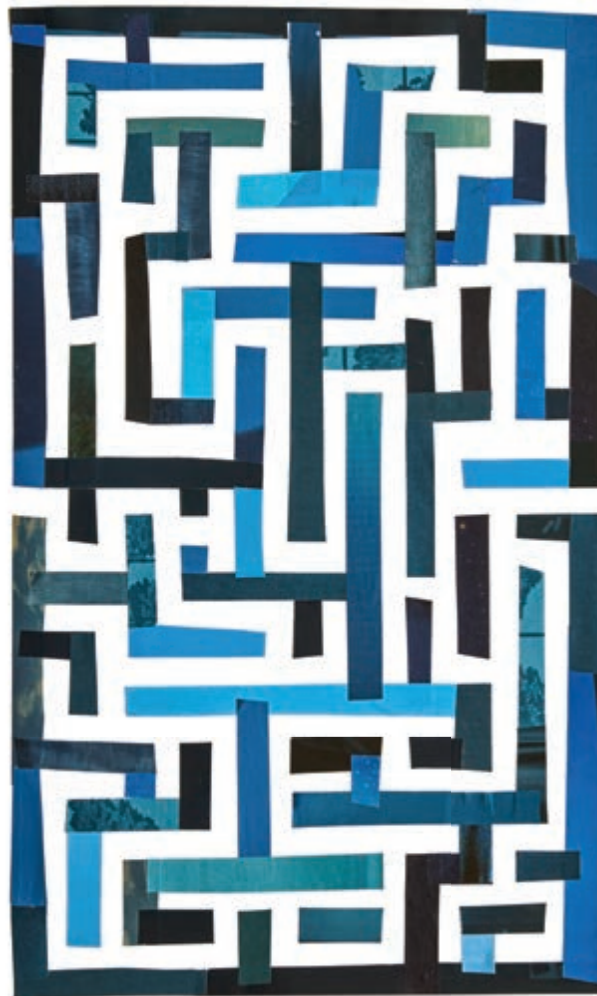
“We recognize what a difficult year this has been for everyone,” they wrote. “At

difficult times like these, character really matters. The grace and determination of the entire Penn community has been inspiring. Continuing to work together, we are confident that the spring semester will be a good and productive one.” —DZ

*Beatrice Forman C’22 contributed to this report.*

## Choice in the Time of COVID

The Wolf Humanities Center rethinks decision-making.



In a year of constricted options, the Wolf Humanities Center’s 2020–21 Forum topic, “Choice,” seems both apt and ironic. In deference to COVID-19, the forum—which launched in October and runs through March—is being presented entirely virtually for the first time. As in the past, most events are available to stream after their live premieres.

The topic of “Choice” was itself chosen about two years ago from a proposal by Sophia Rosenfeld, Walter H. Annenberg Professor of History, who was named topic director. Rosenfeld, an intellectual and cultural historian, is writing a book on the relationship between choice and modern conceptions of freedom.

“So much of our life is organized around the idea, espe-



cially in the contemporary United States, that choice is at the root of freedom, that the more opportunities for choice and the more options we have, the freer we will find ourselves as a result,” Rosenfeld says. The forum, she notes, will “look at the ways in which choice structures social, political, and cultural life—and also when choice isn’t important, when people don’t have choices, and when choice is not highly valued.”

The program includes talks and performances, all free, as well as a pay-what-you-wish complementary film series, presented by the Penn Museum, on the idea of cultural syncretism.

Inevitably, discussion of COVID-19 has found its way into the forum discussions—most prominently in a November 18 talk, “Choice in the Time of a Pandemic,” by Renata Salecl, professor of psychology and psychoanalysis of law at the University of London.

The pandemic necessitates a variety of choices and “produces divisions between those whose lives need to be saved and those who can be discarded,” Salecl said. Social and economic restrictions are shaping “not only people’s attitudes toward the pathogen” but toward themselves and others. Closing national borders, for instance, entails “the fantasy that one can leave bad people out and keep good people within the borders from becoming infected,” she said.

Also misleading is the notion that we are all “in the same boat”—given that “some people might be on yachts,”

others on barely seaworthy vessels. “Isolation has become a new expression of inequality,” Salecl said, with the wealthy retreating to country houses, while others, by choice or necessity, risk infection on the frontlines of the crisis.

In the case of medical care, Salecl outlined four approaches to the problem of allocating scarce resources such as ventilators: selection by lottery, the principle of “first come, first served,” helping the most critically ill patients first, and a utilitarian approach that attempts to rank the relative value of individual lives according to age and other factors.

When it comes to social choices, such as mask wearing, she said, some people are manifesting aggression, embracing denial, or, increasingly, “abandoning rational choice” altogether—a development about which “epidemiology says little.”

The forum began with an October 14 talk by Sheena Iyengar W’92 C’92, “Rethinking the Value of Individual Choice,” that also touched on the novel coronavirus. Iyengar, a business professor at Columbia University and author of *The Art of Choosing* (2010), emphasized the role that culture plays in choice. While Americans value individual rights, she said, Asians tend to look toward collective welfare in making choices—a perspective that has influenced the propensity to wear masks during a pandemic.

Iyengar is probably best known for a 2000 study that showed that, when confront-

## BUILDINGS

## Vagelos Laboratory to Rise on Walnut Street



Penn Trustees approved the design for the Vagelos Laboratory for Energy Science and Technology, a \$173 million, 110,000 square-foot, seven-story building that will be built at 3200 Walnut Street. Made possible through gifts totaling \$70 million to the School of Arts and Sciences from P. Roy Vagelos C’50 Hon’99 and his wife Diana T. Vagelos [“Gazetteer,” May/Jun 2019], the facility will bring together researchers from across the University and include a complement of collaborative spaces and offices with a new landscaped courtyard linking it to Shoemaker Green. Construction is anticipated to begin in March 2022 and be completed by fall 2024.

ed by too many choices, people succumbed to “choice paralysis.” In general, she said, “You have to be choosy about choosing. Don’t make every choice. You have to decide which choices are worth your time. I will only make the choices that I think are really, really important.”

Also ripped from the headlines was Alex Guerrero’s November 11 talk, “Lottocracy: A New Kind of Democracy,” previewing his forthcoming book by the same name. Speaking in the aftermath of the election, Guerrero, a philosophy professor at Rutgers University (who taught at Penn from 2012 to 2016), argued that our system of elected representa-

tives should be junked in favor of a lottery system.

He outlined several “pathologies that should trouble us” within the status quo, including public ignorance, financial barriers to participation, hurdles to registration and voting, gerrymandering, the capture of representatives by industry interests, the emphasis on emotionally resonant issues and short time horizons, the exacerbation of in-group/out-group thinking, and overrepresentation of a socioeconomic elite with insufficient concern for the disempowered.

His solution, relying on precedents that extend from ancient Athenian democracy to citizens’ assemblies in Can-

ada and elsewhere, would be to concentrate decision-making in several single-issue legislative bodies, with representatives chosen by lottery and generously compensated for their labors.

"There's a question about legitimacy," he said, "and maybe worries about how this would actually work in practice," particularly about how competent such representatives would be. The single-issue focus and a reliance on expert consultants would build competencies, Guerrero said.

"Random selection is going to prevent the influence that powerful interests have through elections," and would make it "hard to buy people off," he said. In addition, representatives chosen by lottery would be free to think long-term and would constitute "a more demographically representative sample" of the population.

Among the upcoming talks this winter are "Freedom of Choice in Art and Literature" (January 27), spotlighting the sculpture and installation artist Risa Puno and the novelist Margaret Wilkerson Sexton; "The Ethical Algorithm and the Future of Choice" (February 10), with Michael Kearns, National Center Professor of Management & Technology at Penn ["Moral Code," Nov/Dec 2020]; and "The Past and Future of Reproductive Choice" (February 24), with Linda Greenhouse, senior research scholar at Yale Law School, and two other legal scholars.

For a full listing of events, visit [wolfhumanities.upenn.edu/events/choice](http://wolfhumanities.upenn.edu/events/choice).

—Julia M. Klein

## When Boys Grieve

Exploring the emotional trauma of losing friends to gun violence.

Nineteen-year-old Elijah McFarland needs three hands to count all the people he's lost to gun violence since middle school. He lists off the names in a short documentary film, *Our Philadelphia*. A few are relatives, but mostly they're Black teenage boys from West Philly, like him, who were all

pushing it forward. Her dissertation at Penn focused on the subject, and in 2020 she produced two related short documentary films: *Our Philadelphia* and *Club with No Name*.

"Sometimes I don't think we give enough credit to the role of friendship in young people's lives," Gross says. "Losing a friend is a really big deal

"It made me depressed," McFarland tells the camera at one point. "Got to the point where I wanted to take my own life."

"I just wish we could have another moment together," says a teen boy, remembering his close friend who was murdered.

A second short documentary, which Gross directed and produced, gathers three Philadelphia moms around a dining table. The women in *Club with No Name* are still raw from the trauma of losing their young sons to gun violence—whose



shot and killed in the past six years. The list has grown longer since filming ended.

"How can you look forward to a lot of stuff when you got friends dying left and right?" he asks at one point in the film.

Studying the grief that boys like McFarland suffer after losing friends to neighborhood gun violence has been limited, but Nora Gross Gr'20 has spent the last few years

developmentally, and I don't think we even have language for what it means to be 19 and need three hands to count the number of friends you've lost."

Directed by McFarland and two of his former classmates, with Gross serving as producer, *Our Philadelphia* centers on students from an all-boys charter school in West Philly talking openly about their shock, sadness, fear, and pain.

deaths are featured in *Our Philadelphia*—but they've also found ways to channel their pain into purpose.

The film makes it clear that these bereaved moms are part of a grim and growing "club" throughout the city. Philly's homicide rate in 2020 was substantially higher than at any point since the early 1990s, and victims are skewing younger. In August, the *Philadelphia*



*Inquirer* reported that nearly one in 10 Philly shooting victims had been under age 18 in 2020, and almost all of those children and teens were Black.

A few years into her dual PhD programs at Penn (education and sociology), Gross began to wonder how these victims' close friends were processing their individual grief, how entire school communities were affected, and whether schools could possibly provide enough support. "I found that there wasn't a lot of scholarship, especially ethnographic scholarship, around the way that grief and loss of friends to gun violence impacted young people in general and in their schools," she says.

By 2016, she was spending most of her week inside a school that had lost one of its students to gun violence over the summer. By the time she finished her research there in 2018, two more students had been murdered—including a boy who had been participating in Gross's research study.

She interviewed 65 students during her two years embedded in that school, but also spent time simply observing. "One big finding—which shouldn't have to be a finding—is that these boys are really experiencing all the complexities and nuances of grief, and it lasts a long time," she says.

Gross identified three stages of school-wide grieving: Easy-Hard, when the whole school unites after a loss; Hard-Hard, when some are more ready to move on than others; and Hidden-Hard, when grief becomes an un-

dercurrent around the school. You'll see it only if you look closely enough: on fresh tattoos of a friend's name, on pieces of jewelry that once belonged to that friend, on names of the lost scrawled onto shoes.

Gross also discovered the role that social media plays in the peer grieving process. "Instagram, and especially the temporary 'stories' posts, seem to create freedom," she says. "There are a lot of confessions and emotional sharing: 'I think I might be depressed. I think I might have PTSD. I'm having a hard time now and need support.' It's really different from what other research is suggesting about how teens use social media."

While *Our Philadelphia* echoes a number of Gross's research findings, she realizes the value of these thoughts coming straight from teens themselves, on camera for anyone to see. The film—which was funded by various programs and departments at Penn—was an official selection for the 2020 FirstGlance Philadelphia Film Festival and is publicly available to stream on YouTube.

"It's moving and powerful to see their faces and hear their voices," says Gross, who's currently adapting her dissertation project into a book. "My dissertation was 400 pages long, and hopefully the book will be a little shorter. Very few people are going to read that in comparison to who might be willing to watch a 15-minute film and how quickly the film can travel."

Gross has already spoken

#### APPOINTMENTS

## Emanuel Joins Biden COVID-19 Advisory Board

While campaigning for president, Joe Biden Hon'13 emphasized the need for a coordinated federal response to get control of the novel coronavirus—and promised to let science be his guide. One of his first acts after being declared the winner of the 2020 election over President Donald J. Trump W'68 was to appoint a panel of health experts to advise on how the Biden-Harris administration should respond to COVID-19.

Included among that group is Ezekiel Emanuel, Penn's vice provost for global initiatives and chair of the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy. An oncologist and bioethicist, Emanuel served as an advisor on the Affordable Care Act and health policy during the Obama-Biden administration and has chaired the Department of Bioethics at the Clinical Center of the National Institutes of Health since 1997. He's been widely sought as an expert voice at Penn and elsewhere since the pandemic began, and in September was the lead author (with 17 other authorities) of an article in *Science* magazine that proposed an ethical framework for global vaccine distribution.

When President-elect Biden was asked at an October town hall what he would do if he lost the election, he said he would go back to "being a professor at the University of Pennsylvania"—where since 2017 he had been the Benjamin Franklin Presidential Practice Professor and led the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement. As it turns out, he'll have other things to do, but Emanuel's governmental duties won't take him away from the Penn classroom. This spring he'll be teaching a philosophy course on Benjamin Franklin—and the ethical issues that the University founder confronted.

with a woman who helps the families of homicide victims, and who is planning to use *Our Philadelphia* as a training tool for others in her line of work. A local lobbyist also reached out about using the film to "put a face to this gun violence crisis" and push legislators and elected officials into action.

This arts-fused approach to scholarship is exactly what drew Gross to Penn for her PhD work. CAMRA, Penn's Collective for Advancing Multimodal Research Arts, "was just in its infancy when I accepted the offer in 2013," she says, "but it was clear from

the fact that it existed—and from the fact that [Annenberg Dean John L. Jackson Jr.] was spearheading it—that Penn would be welcoming of my interest in thinking about research beyond text."

Now a core fellow and visiting assistant professor of sociology at Boston College, Gross says her goal for all of this work is to "give people who work directly with Black teenage boys more insight into the layers of their emotional lives, in the hope that they don't rush past things when and if something happens."

—Molly Petrilla C'06

Dean and Deb Varvoutis have been operating Magic Carpet Foods since 1984. Due to pandemic losses, they recently turned to GoFundMe to stave off the popular food cart's closure.



## Running on Empty

From GoFundMe to grit, how campus food trucks are facing the pandemic.

**It's** a chilly Thursday in November during what used to be the lunch rush when Deb Varvoutis, co-owner of famed University City food cart Magic Carpet Foods, announces that she and her husband, Dean, will be closing up shop for the semester weeks early. The line outside their cart, which is a perennial presence next to the Stuart Weitzman School of Design, is two people deep—a once-strange occurrence for a team accustomed to serving 600 customers on any given

day. Now, it's a common sight. As Varvoutis hands over seven banana chocolate chip cookies to a student buying in bulk for her housemates, she reminds the customer that her treats freeze well and that they'll be back on January 20—"even if times are hard."

COVID-19 has certainly been hard for Penn's food trucks. The city halted their operations last March, and they've faced an uphill battle since being allowed to operate again in late May. The pandemic has bled campus of student life, leaving the business-

es that feed undergraduates in flux. Freshmen no longer pour out of the Quad looking for breakfast on weekday mornings, and there aren't any upperclassmen skipping class to grab lunch with friends. Reliant on diminished foot traffic for revenue, several food trucks, like 38th Street's cult-favorite Chinese food truck Yue Kee, are closing after decades of serving the hungry masses. And for those that choose to stay in business, it's less about making a profit and more about preserving tradition—and surviving.

"We're losing between \$10,000 and \$13,000 a month just by being open," says Varvoutis, whose Magic Carpet cart has been serving an eclectic mix of vegetarian and vegan Greek, Mexican, and

Middle Eastern cuisine for 36 years. "That's the nature of it. We're not alone, though. It's the whole country. It's probably half of the world. ... [Our losses] are not something you can take personally because they're not personal."

Magic Carpet is a relic of pre-pandemic times. Its menu of vegetarian meatballs, warm pita sandwiches, and thick, chewy cookies has been unchanged since its 1984 opening. All of its offerings are prepared in a 2,500-square-foot commercial kitchen located in South Philly, which has made navigating the pandemic especially hard. "We have all the overhead of a restaurant, but we only serve lunch five days a week," says Varvoutis, who had to trim the business's full-time staff



from eight to three and close a second cart, typically located outside the Quad's entrance, in order to limit costs.

Varvoutis estimates that they're seeing, at most, 50 customers a day, a fraction of their usual numbers. To put that in perspective: Varvoutis used to lug 14 12-quart containers of salad to campus. Now she only takes two. The trucks used to go through 10 trays of steamed rice and veggies. Now, they're barely finishing three.

Varvoutis says all of that influenced her decision to close for the season on November 20, about a month before their usual vacation. And while Magic Carpet has received a Paycheck Protection Program loan that's helped stave off closure, they've had to turn to other means to keep the business afloat—namely a GoFundMe hosted in partnership with the University City District's fundraising efforts.

Posted on October 4, the crowdfunding page has raised nearly \$20,000 of its \$100,000 goal so far. More than 400 donors have chipped in, many of them alumni who waxed nostalgic about the cart's food and camaraderie. "Magic Carpet was such a huge part of my Penn experience," writes Jess Chen on the GoFundMe page, "I miss your cookies every day still!"

Varvoutis is shocked and humbled by the outpouring of support. "Most of our customers are repeat customers, so we get to know them. I really love watching you guys come in as freshmen and grow up to get married, then come back with your kids," she says.

Other trucks on campus have been hesitant to solicit donations. Rachel Pran, the heir to Bui's Lunch Truck, has been serving bacon, egg, and cheese sandwiches (salt/pepper/ketchup) on 38th Street for 33 years alongside her parents. She misses the same things Varvoutis does: her customers, the Alumni Weekend rush, looser purse strings. But, unlike Magic Carpet, Pran has opted to weather the pandemic the old-school way, relying on foot traffic alone to create revenue.

"I have no other employees, so it would be unfair to ask customers to make donations," says Pran, who runs the truck herself with her parents occasionally helping out. "[My customers] supporting me all these years is enough. It really is. But, you know, I don't expect much. I just hope that customers remain loyal."

While her food truck is only doing a third of its usual business, she says her current margins mirror those of the summer months, which is sustainable—for now. "We just stick it out," Pran says. "A dollar here and a dollar there is still everything to us."

Ultimately, the pandemic has forced Penn's food truck owners to make a grim calculus steeped in sunk cost: shut down in hopes of breaking even, or dig themselves a deeper hole in hopes of crawling out whenever normal life resumes.

For the owners of Magic Carpet, however, the answer is simple: stay open. "I can't bear to think that Magic Carpet is gonna go by the wayside," Varvoutis says. "Not after all this work." —Beatrice Forman C'22

## A Winter Without Basketball

More Penn athletes see their seasons and college careers come to a sad and premature end.



Eddie Scott C'21 can only laugh when he talks about being named a Penn men's basketball captain for the 2020–21 season. "I'm really thankful to be given that title," the senior guard says, citing the great players who served as captains before him. "But," he adds with a bemused chuckle, "it's obviously a little weird given I can't really embody that role on the court."

The honor was indeed bittersweet for Scott and fellow seniors Jarrod Sim-

mons C'21 and Mark Jackson W'21, who were named captains during a team meeting over Zoom for a season that will never happen. Just a few days earlier, they'd sat through another virtual meeting when it was announced that the Ivy League would cancel intercollegiate competition for the 2020–21 winter sports season. For Penn, that means it'll be a winter without basketball, wrestling, fencing, squash, swimming, and gymnastics.

In its mid-November announcement, the Ivy League Council of Presidents also announced that fall sports, which had previously been postponed, would not be moved to the spring semester, ending any hope of a football game at Franklin Field until September at the earliest. And Penn's spring sport athletes, who already had one season cut short last March, won't be allowed to compete through at least the end of February. (The council will determine at a later date if it will be safe to resume after that.)

For Penn men's basketball head coach Steve Donahue, who had been hopeful the Ivy League would find a way to at least hold a conference slate of hoops games, the decision was understandable given the dangerous COVID-19 trends. Yet "being the only league in Division I not playing, and to see our peers playing, it's been hard," he admits. "But like everything else, we're going to figure it out and make the best of it and come out better for it."

The first step was making sure to honor the team's three seniors, all of whom he thinks could have played important roles had there been a season. Jackson, the Ivy League's tallest player at 7-foot-3, and Simmons, who backed up AJ Brodeur W'20 for much of his first three years, would have filled a void in the middle now that Brodeur, the all-time leading scorer in program history ["Sports," May/June 2020], has graduated and is playing professionally in Germany.

And Scott, a 6-foot-6 swingman who showed glimmers of scintillating athleticism as an underclassman and was a reliable starter for part of his junior season, was ready to lead a team that he thought was poised for a "very exciting season."

"I don't want them to lose everything their senior year," Donahue says. "They should know they're the captains of this program. And even though there are no games, I think it's important they know how much the team cares about and appreciates their leadership."

Donahue further lamented the "small window of college basketball" players get, compared to coaches like him. "For that to be taken away is really hard," he says, especially since the 2019-20 postseason was also cancelled at the beginning of the pandemic.

But the solace is that the student-athletes who lost a season due to COVID-19 will not lose a season of Ivy League or NCAA eligibility because of it. They can either play for Penn during a fifth year of undergraduate education—if they withdraw for a semester or slow down their coursework toward graduation—or transfer to another program where they can use their extra year of eligibility as a graduate student. All three men's basketball seniors plan to graduate from Penn in May, and Scott and Simmons hope to continue their college basketball careers as graduate students elsewhere.

**"Being the only league in Division I not playing, and to see our peers playing, it's been hard. But like everything else, we're going to figure it out."**

Wherever he ends up next season, though, "I'll always be a part of the Penn family," Scott says. "I wish them the most success—unless we see each other on the court."

One of Scott's biggest regrets is not being able to play with Jelani Williams, whom he knew well even before they both arrived together at Penn in 2017. Williams, the most heralded recruit in their class, has missed three straight seasons due to three separate ACL tears and now, once finally healthy, a fourth season due to the pandemic. But because he'd already withdrawn from Penn for a semester, he'll be able to make his (very) long-awaited debut for the Quakers next season, before then potentially playing at least one more year for another program. "I can't imagine anyone else that has had this kind of college experience," Donahue says.

Speaking in early December, the coach wasn't sure if other players might choose to take a leave from Penn and then stay a fifth year. But he's ready to keep moving the program forward regardless of the uncertainty around the roster, or his inability to coach practices at

the Palestra (which has remained closed for the time being). And he's also been watching his peers' games on TV despite the pain of not being a part of it. "I love college basketball," Donahue says. "I'm trying to use this as a year that I can get better."

Penn women's basketball head coach Mike McLaughlin has the same sympathy for his players, some of whom found out their college careers were over on Zoom and haven't been able to even see their teammates in person. "I think what players have missed the most is that interaction—being coached, being challenged, having a schedule, being organized, being high-fived after a good play, perhaps being yelled at if they didn't execute the right way," he says. "That's been the biggest void."

Another void he's been trying to address is how his team can improve when a handful of seniors will graduate without being able to pass down lessons to a new batch of freshmen. "There's nothing more powerful than young players coming in and looking up at experienced kids," McLaughlin says. "For me, that's what I've been consumed with." —DZ



# Wellness Warriors

In response to a rash of suicides in recent years, Penn students have fought to take charge of their own mental health, creating new peer-to-peer counseling groups and collaborating more closely with the administration on wellness initiatives.

Is it enough to combat the pandemic stresses, burnout, and social isolation that afflict “the loneliest generation”?

By Dave Zeitlin

**G**ianni Ghione C’21 stood on the corner of 39th and Chestnut Streets, watching the cars whizz by. He was on his way to pick up Chinese food on a drizzly February evening in 2018, a melancholy song from the musician Eden piping through his headphones.

*Would this be the day?*

In his head, he devised a plan. He kept his eyes trained on the road, the Division I athlete ready to spring into action. Suddenly, the music stopped. An old friend he hadn’t talked to in years was calling. Feeling like such a random encounter must have been some sort of omen, he abandoned the fleeting thought of leaping into oncoming traffic, and instead safely crossed the street to retrieve his dinner.

On the way back to the Quad, he

stopped at the fraternity house where many of his Penn wrestling teammates lived, locked himself in the basement bathroom, and cried.

**Ghione’s suicidal thoughts** began during his freshman year at Penn in the fall of 2017. “The culture shock of being away from home for the first time and just feeling so distant from everything” were the driving forces, along with the stress of shedding pounds and competing at a high level for the wrestling team. Late at night in his dorm room, he remembers thinking: *Did I even care to be alive anymore? I love my friends and family, but did it really matter anymore?* What’s more, he determined the easiest and most comfortable thing for him to do would be to con-

ceal his feelings. “I could keep it hidden and no one would really know,” he says, “because no one knew me well enough to think I was acting any differently.”

Had Ghione looked, he might have found several of his classmates dealing with their own struggles and depression.

A month into his freshman year, Henry Platt C’21 had trouble getting out of bed, scrolling through smiling friends on his Instagram feed and wondering why he couldn’t feel the same way. Phuong Vu EAS’21, an international student from Vietnam who was in the US for the first time, had difficulty participating in seminars and finding her place on campus socially. Jennifer Richards C’21 G’21 was told by two new classmates that they were contemplating suicide, the





Gianni Ghione, a senior mental health leader and member of the Penn wrestling team, stands on the same corner from which he nearly took his own life three years ago.



first of those disclosures coming during her third day of college. Similarly, Allison Gelfarb Nu'21 saw several new friends struggling with anxiety and eating disorders and was shocked by a student suicide early in her first semester.

More than three years later, all of those students (as well as a handful of others interviewed for this piece) have emerged as campus leaders in Penn's growing mental health community, running student-led groups like Penn Wellness (Richards), CogWell (Gelfarb), and Reach-A-Peer Helpline (Phuong), as well as serving on the Student Wellness Advisory Group (Platt) and boosting the athletics department's mental health offerings (Ghione).

With the COVID-19 pandemic colliding with academic burnout, Zoom fatigue, seasonal depression, election anxiety, and existential dread over the state of the country and planet, it's doubtful there's ever been a time when these resources have been needed more.

**W**hen she was in high school, Allison Gelfarb was always the person that her friends would come to with their problems. She believes that was because of a personal tragedy in her own life: when she was in seventh grade, her mother passed away due to a congenital heart defect. "Going through that experience at a younger age has made me a very empathetic person," Gelfarb says, "and able to recognize that everyone is dealing with something, whether you can see it or not."

That came into sharp focus almost immediately upon arriving at Penn, when on August 31, 2017, she learned of the suicide of a senior named Nicholas Moya. A former president of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity and data analyst for the men's basketball team, Moya was the fourteenth Penn student to die by suicide since February 2013—a staggering number that prompted a campus-wide conversation about the crisis, the launch of the University's "Campaign for Wellness" programming initiative, and the

hiring of four new therapists and the extension of hours at Penn's Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS).

Meanwhile, student groups sprang into action—including CogWell, which Gelfarb joined her sophomore year and now serves as copresident. CogWell's mission is to "create a more supportive and caring network of students," says Gelfarb, by hosting training sessions in active listening across "every pocket of campus"—from religious groups to sports teams to sororities and fraternities, the latter of which was hit particularly hard by Moya's death. CogWell members try to make these sessions interactive (even now with everything on Zoom) with role playing activities that include what *not* to do when listening to a friend—things like looking at your phone, looking down, or cutting them off by saying something similar happened to you. "You don't even have to be struggling with mental health," Gelfarb says. "You just have to want to improve your relationships in life."

What separates CogWell from other mental health groups, Gelfarb notes, is that they actively seek out cultural centers and Greek houses, so "we may be reaching people that wouldn't reach out themselves." But each of the dozens of peer-to-peer mental health groups have their own niches, and several have either been established or expanded in recent years.

One of Gelfarb's friends and classmates, Eliana Doft C'21, joined Penn Benjamins, a student-run peer counseling organization that holds private, one-on-one meetings in rooms in Van Pelt Library or Harnwell College House. Like other group members, Doft took a semester-long training program (with an exam at the end) to learn listening skills. Then she would sit in a room during posted hours, waiting to see if anyone would stop by for a confidential ear and a cup of coffee (no appointments or sign-ups necessary). Most of the time no one did, but even still, she says, "the skills I've learned have been really helpful in my day-to-day conversations with friends and family."

Due to the pandemic, it's been harder for Penn Benjamins to promote the group on Locust Walk and to remain as accessible in a virtual format. (And for Doft, leaving campus in March to return home to New York City, then a COVID-19 epicenter, was a "really, really hard time" that led to her own anxiety and loneliness.) But the group has had staying power and remains well known on campus since its founding in 2015 by Emily Derecktor C'16, who while at Penn did a research project for CAPS that concluded that many students who would have benefited from mental health services didn't seek them. "I thought maybe peers could be the answer to that issue," she says.

At the time, Derecktor acknowledges that CAPS had a "terrible reputation" among the student body, in part due to longer wait times to see a counselor that have since been addressed. But she still felt it was important to work with CAPS, because "we wanted to make sure we were viewed as a legitimate organization." That meant the "Bens," as the group's peer counselors are called, were trained by CAPS psychologists and developed their own training manual.

"We really tried to build something with a really strong foundation, to last well beyond the time that we left," Derecktor adds. "At a very minimum, what Penn Benjamins does is it trains a group of people how to be excellent listeners. At its maximum, it can really make a difference in peers' lives."

**T**he same year that Penn Benjamins was founded, another student-led group called Penn Wellness was launched to serve as an umbrella organization for the University's growing mental health offerings. Founded by Ben Bolnick C'16 L'21—who had previously created a wellness group at Penn Hillel and would go on to serve as a student wellness communications coordinator in the office of the vice provost for university life—Penn Wellness collaborates with various student groups,

Allison Gelfarb, who'd like to become a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner, runs the group CogWell, which trains students in active listening.

provides funding, and advertises events through its social media platforms and website ([upennwellness.com](http://upennwellness.com)), while serving as a liaison to the administration.

According to Jennifer Richards, current chair of the seven-member Penn Wellness board, more than a dozen groups fall under the Penn Wellness umbrella, including CogWell, Penn Benjamins, Penn Art and Wellness, Penn Franklins (peer support for graduate students), Penn Initiative for Minority Mental Health, Penn Reflect, Project HEAL (for students with eating disorders), Project LETS (for students with disabilities), SEAS Wellness, Wharton Wellness, Reach-A-Peer Helpline, Penn Undergraduate Health Coalition, the CAPS Student Advisory Board, and Penn's chapter of Active Minds—a national organization founded almost 20 years ago by Alison Malmon C'03 ["Staying Active," Sep/Oct 2020].

Using money provided by a fund from the Class of 1978 (about \$15,000 every year), Penn Wellness helps these groups put on events, and it also runs point on Wellness Week, which this year was held virtually from November 8 to 14 and included workshops on listening skills, meditation, and nutrition, as well as a movie night, trivia games, a chess tournament, and "Wellness Jeopardy."

"It's been hard to get the same kind of exposure we've gotten in the past," says Richards, who, with campus closed, helped plan virtual Wellness Week from her home in San Diego. "But I will say that I think more students have been interested in the issues of wellness than we've seen in years past."

Richards calls it "admirable" that Penn's student mental health leaders have been hard at work to help other students when "they're also going through the same struggles." Those struggles, from what Richards and others have heard, include exhaustion due to the University's cancellation of Fall Break, social isolation and loneliness, and Zoom fatigue. But even before the global pandemic upended college life, she saw how difficult it was for



several of her friends to keep up at a competitive Ivy League school—and not always knowing where to turn for help. What she now calls a "rough first semester" included "having to figure out by trial and error" how to talk to two new classmates who were contemplating suicide and also coping with the death of her friend and classmate William Steinberg, who lost his life in a plane crash while taking a trip to Costa Rica with his family. That's what caused her to get involved with Penn Wellness.

"When I was a freshman, it still felt pretty stigmatized," says Richards, echoing a thought conveyed by some of her classmates. "I feel like I've seen huge leaps in the last three years in not only how the administration but the student body is more accepting and open to talking about wellness and mental health. I think it's night and day." And having peer-to-peer options in addition to profes-

**"Mental health does not discriminate and anyone can be dealing with something, no matter what it looks like on the outside."**

sional ones is important for a large and diverse university like Penn, she adds. "I think they definitely serve different but complementary purposes. You might not always need to go to CAPS; that's why these groups exist. There's clearly a service that they're able to provide."



Early in the spring semester of her freshman year, Sophie Beren C'17 SPP'17 ran into a classmate she knew while waiting in line during sorority rush. The two friends said hello and shared a brief hug. Two days later, that friend posted a photo to Instagram of holiday lights at Rittenhouse Square, left gifts for family members at the top of a Center City parking garage, and then took a running leap off of it.

Madison Holleran's suicide on January 17, 2014, sent shockwaves through the University community and beyond, generating national attention and shining a spotlight on how onerous the transition from high school to college can be for even students who appear to have it all. "There really is so much going on with people behind the scenes, and you never know until you ask someone," says Beren, who stayed up all night crying when she heard the news. "The issue with Gen Z in particular is no one really knows how to start those conversations. Rather than actually having a breakthrough moment, or even just checking in with a friend, we let it go undealt with."

Fueled by the tragedy—and by the suicide of another friend in high school—Beren started a group called TableTalk with a very simple premise: encouraging dialogue between students, particularly those who might never otherwise meet. "It was born out of a lack of connection I felt on campus and feeling like every single person was really flocking together with people who are like themselves," she says. "I was still that energetic freshman introducing myself while on line at the dining hall, but I felt that no one wanted to keep meeting new people."

Beren didn't specifically brand TableTalk as a mental health group, "but the way we thrived," she says, "is that we're inherently addressing mental health and fostering space for human connection." That space used to be in the middle of Locust Walk, where group members would plop down inflatable couches, offer snacks, and invite candid discussion. It

has continued to evolve since Beren graduated, with Derek Nhieu W'23, the 2023 Class Board president, starting a pre-pandemic podcast about student life.

Beren, too, has continued to push the conversation forward. In late 2019 she launched a company called The Conversationalist, billed as the "go-to destination to amplify Gen Z voices" through an app, a community forum, and weekly digital panels on topics ranging from the pandemic to new learning environments to politics and racism. "Clearly, there's no shortage of things to talk about," Beren says, touting a rising number of app subscribers and Instagram followers.

Beren has been thrilled to see openness and honesty during these panel discussions, but she's still worried about today's college students, including her sister, Esther, who's currently a sophomore at Penn. "Gen Z was already the loneliest generation, and also the generation most likely to struggle and be vocal about their mental health issues," Beren says. (Cigna conducted a nationwide survey of more than 20,000 people in 2018 revealing that Generation Z adults aged 18–22 are lonelier than older generations, and that students had higher loneliness scores than retirees.) "I think online school is only going to create a further divide in feeling lonelier and lonelier. ... My overall feeling is that everyone feels depleted and disconnected."

In an earlier iteration, The Conversationalist was a platform that featured articles on mental health—one of which was written by Beren's first cousin, Henry Platt. Now a senior at Penn, Platt detailed the severe clinical depression he was diagnosed with a month into his freshman year. "I woke up each morning with the weight of the world on my shoulders," he wrote. "Getting out of bed and going to take a shower felt like I was being tasked with completing an Ironman. Responding to text messages or phone calls was completely out of the question. Tears and breakdowns and overwhelming sadness became my

norm. My eyes saw as if through a permanent veil. I had suicidal thoughts."

Platt notes that it was "very cathartic" to write that all down and he was "blown away" by the positive feedback he received for the piece, which was republished in the *Jewish Journal*. "If I had any part in helping someone feel more comfortable confiding in someone else, or if I made someone feel less alone because they could relate to my experience, it was a job well done," he says. It also may have taken some people by surprise, considering that, by his own admission, he had "lived a charmed life" growing up with a loving and well-to-do artistic family in Los Angeles. (His father, Marc Platt C'79 is an award-winning film and theater producer ["Passion Plays," May/Jun 2006], and Henry sings in a group with his brothers Jonah Platt C'08 and Tony award-winning actor Ben Platt.) Yet those things seemed to amplify his unease. "If everything was going so well and I've been so fortunate to have what I have, then why am I still feeling like I can't get out of bed every day?" he says. "I think in a weird way it made me feel more guilty, or just confused."

In the piece, Henry expressed envy of his parents Marc and Julie Beren Platt C'79, who met their first week of college in the Quad ["Love Story," May/Jun 2006] and "didn't have to worry about what everyone else was doing at all times" in a world free of social media. When Henry arrived at Penn 42 years later, he was immediately sucked into "a barrage of Facebook events, Snapchat stories, and Instagram videos," trying to figure out where the best parties were and wondering why the start of college—which had been "heralded as such a superior experience"—actually felt more fraught than fun. "I opened my Instagram every single hour, just to see what I had missed and to check in on my likes," he wrote.

Open Platt's Instagram today and you'll find a page with videos of him singing to more than 10,000 followers. Even still, "I wish social media did not exist," he

Senior Henry Platt, a member of the Student Wellness Advisory Group, has written and spoken openly about his suicidal thoughts as a freshman.

says, because it's "not a true reflection of what people are experiencing." He's seen classmates project what's known as "Penn Face," a facade calculated to convey the impression that life is perfect and anything can be handled with ease—academically, socially, and otherwise. "It's so crazy," Platt says, "because 99 percent of people do not feel that and yet there's still this stereotype that is what the Penn student is like."

As Platt has learned, through therapy and self-reflection, to recognize the downsides of placing so much weight on Instagram likes and treating college as the pinnacle of life, his own mental health has dramatically improved. He's also been trying to help others break down the "barrier that 'Penn Face' presents," with his cousin Sophie calling him "instrumental in the new wave of mental health on campus" that didn't exist when she was an undergraduate.

**W**hen Platt had trouble getting out of bed as a freshman, he wasn't sure what to do or where to turn. After pointing out that the University's mental health resources should be more visible and accessible at a lunch with other students at Penn President Amy Gutmann's house, he was put on the search committee for a new chief wellness officer—a job that Benoit Dubé GM'01 landed in 2018 ["Taking Care," Jan/Feb 2019]. An associate professor of clinical psychiatry at the Perelman School of Medicine, Dubé has since been tasked with directing wellness initiatives across the University and overseeing an integrated division of student wellness services that includes CAPS, Penn Violence Prevention, and the Offices of Alcohol and Other Drug Program Initiatives. He also leads the Wellness at Penn initiative, which per its website ([wellnessatpenn.com](http://wellnessatpenn.com)), "offers a wide range of opportunities to reflect and engage on issues of wellness, stress, mental health, resilience, happiness, personal and academic goals, and the meaning of success."



**"It's the first time I can remember since coming to Penn that everyone has had a common shared experience."**

Having someone at the forefront of the University's mental health efforts "has made a huge difference," Platt says, adding that Dubé is "such a soothing presence, always such a calming force." And Dubé has made it a top priority to incorporate student feedback, forming a group called the Student Wellness Advi-

sory Group—or, as they like to call themselves, SWAG. Students who represent various schools and groups—including Platt, who reps performing artists—meet about once a month to discuss all sorts of issues across campus. "It's an exchange of ideas," Platt says, "and also just getting input that hopefully will inform higher-level decision making."

Dubé was particularly moved by Penn's students at the beginning of the last school year when they rose up in solidarity after a shocking tragedy that could have easily brought them down to new lows. On September 9, 2019, Gregory Eells, the recently hired executive director of CAPS, took his own life. It was a challenging and confusing time for the University community as Penn was thrust back into the national spotlight—but as Dubé told a group of parents during Family Weekend in 2019, "the death of a 52-year-old man should not be extrapo-



lated to this being a toxic place for 20-year-olds. It was wonderful what has come out of it. Students rose to the occasion and showed tremendous maturity.”

Among them was CogWell’s Allison Gelfarb, who was supposed to meet with Eells the day after his death. “It shows mental health does not discriminate and anyone can be dealing with something, no matter what it looks like on the outside,” says Gelfarb, who’d like to become a psychiatric nurse practitioner and has done research on the mental health of nurses and those who care for others.

A week after Eells’s death, Gelfarb came up with the idea for students to place sticky notes on the *Love* statue in the center of campus, because “love is transcendent. Even through hard times, love is what brings people together.” About 100 notes were left, with messages that included “It’s OK not to be OK,” and “You are loved.” The event was covered by local TV news stations and the *Wall Street Journal*. “It kind of unified students in a way,” Gelfarb says. “I think it opened up the conversation.”

Six months later, many of those same students went on Spring Break and were told not to return due to the COVID-19 campus shutdown in March. But Dubé has again been blown away by students seeking out solidarity during a crisis and trying to pluck some good from a rubble of dread. “The tragedy of Greg’s death by suicide was, I think, a predictor of how resilient and resourceful students would be when COVID hit,” he says.

Research out of Penn, USC, and Switzerland’s University of Lausanne, published in November in the scientific journal *PLOS One*, showed that nearly one-third of US adults reported some level of depression and anxiety in the pandemic’s early days. Yet Dubé notes that a survey of Penn undergraduates revealed that “students’ level of distress after the pandemic was not nearly as high as we would have expected.” More than 80 percent of the enrolled students surveyed reported that they hadn’t needed mental health services. “Individu-

als who were already more vulnerable or brittle to begin with were definitely impacted by this added layer of the pandemic,” Dubé says. “But otherwise students didn’t seem to be crushed or paralyzed by the pandemic. If anything, they showed us how resourceful they were and how they were able to rise to the occasion.”

As the pandemic extended through the summer, fall, and winter, Dubé has worried about the impact of isolation, stress, and the social connections that students have lost. For Platt, it’s come down to “re-adjusting a lot of my expectations” about what his final year of college would be like. But he’s “been really happy to see the greater Penn community—and particularly my senior class—come together and still try to salvage whatever elements of the experience are salvageable,” he says.

He’s been similarly pleased to see his classmates’ “willingness to be vulnerable” because “struggling during this time is a very human reaction” to a global pandemic that’s caused so much grief, death, and loss. “It’s the first time I can remember since coming to Penn that everyone has had a common shared experience,” Platt says. “When I was experiencing my own mental health struggles my freshman year, I felt kind of alone in it. Right now, everyone is experiencing the social stresses and the impacts of the pandemic—and everyone is united against it.”

In a guest column for the *Daily Pennsylvanian* shortly after Eells’s death, Dubé acknowledged the “shock waves” caused by a “man who spent his professional career promoting resilience” taking his own life—and acknowledged that the confusion might never subside. But after highlighting CogWell’s event and other campus-wide conversations, he vowed to personally oversee the transition at CAPS, which he noted had already improved its services with 24/7 phone access to clinicians, free appointments with wait times that generally average just a few days, and the implementation of the “Let’s Talk”

program, which was rolled out in October of 2019. The brainchild of Eells, who had spearheaded a similar program at Cornell, “Let’s Talk” brings drop-in clinical access to the Greenfield Intercultural Center, the LGBT Center, the Graduate Student Center, and other spaces where students study and socialize (when campus is, of course, open). “I cannot think of a better way to honor his memory,” Dubé wrote at the time.

Among other advances, CAPS has also expanded its group therapy offerings—which, similar to the student-led peer counseling organizations, help students make real connections through shared struggles. The groups and workshops—which include a graduate women’s support group, a support space for grieving students, an international student empowering group, and a support group for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students—are led by a counselor, but it’s often the students who seize control of the conversation. “There are definitely powerful moments when people are sharing things they’ve never shared with anybody,” says Michele Downie, the group coordinator at CAPS. “They’re about getting support but also giving support.” Students might come into these groups fearful about opening up in front of strangers but leave with the “opportunity to stay connected indefinitely,” says Michal Saraf, the senior clinical director at CAPS. “Almost every aspect of life is group-based,” she adds. “It’s a wonderful way to work those issues out and also to mirror the kind of interactions we have on the outside.”

When the pandemic struck, CAPS was able to “pivot very effectively,” according to Dubé, and continue to offer group sessions, private appointments, and even “Let’s Talk” in a virtual format. (They maintained a small in-person presence during the fall semester, and will likely provide a virtual/in-person hybrid model this spring.) “There’s an artificial quality to using Zoom,” Dubé admits, though he adds that what therapists “might

Stephanie Hasford, a junior psychology major, helps provide CAPS with student perspectives as a chair of the CAPS Advisory Board.

have lost with closeness” they’ve gained with students sometimes being more willing to share certain things because of their surroundings (a childhood bedroom, for instance, instead of an office on Market Street).

CAPS administrators have also continued to lean on the CAPS Student Advisory Board (CAPSAB), which advocates for student needs, solicits student input on CAPS policies and procedures, and helps market its services. CAPSAB co-chair Stephanie Hasford C’22, who wants to be a psychologist, believes CAPS has done an excellent job promoting self-care to students during such unsettling times. Its website ([caps.wellness.upenn.edu](https://caps.wellness.upenn.edu)) provides guidance and tips on coping with COVID-19 (share your feelings; take breaks from social media; connect with others), election anxiety, and racial trauma—the latter of which was especially valuable to Hasford, who is Black, during this summer’s protests for social justice. “Being at Penn, which is a predominantly white institution, sometimes you can feel your presence is ignored or not appreciated,” she says. “And then seeing all the things going on in the world, you still have to suck it up and be a student. It’s always good to have friends and a community you can stick with in these times.”

One big issue in the fall was making sure students knew that they could still utilize CAPS while scattered around the world. Suhita Kodali C’21, another CAPSAB cochair, has been trying to understand why CAPS saw less use in the first few months after the pandemic. And she’s concerned that colder weather and more time inside as the spring semester starts may exacerbate feelings of loneliness, even for students who live off campus with several housemates.

She’s been trying to help. In addition to her role at CAPSAB, Kodali also co-hosts a podcast called the Silent Lotus with classmate Suditi Rahematpura EAS’21, which is billed as “two young South Asian women, a little worn out



from the world, ready to discuss all the topics that tend to get swept under the rug.” For Kodali, whose parents are from India, talking openly about mental health is not something she ever thought she’d do. “At least in my family, it’s not something we talk about,” she says. “And I think a lot of children of immigrants especially have that same struggle.”

Kodali dealt with that struggle early in the pandemic when she returned home to New Jersey in March. Her parents were mostly worried about her safety from COVID-19 and her physical health. “I don’t think they considered the mental health impact of me having to come home in the middle of my semester and having to stay home when I was supposed to be in a different city for the summer,” she says, adding that the suddenness of the 2020 spring semester being cancelled has had a lasting impact. “The lack of closure was very, very difficult.”

**“It’s always good to have friends and a community you can stick with in these times.”**

**A**nthony Rostain GM’85 GM’87 is acutely aware of the new dynamic that Kodali and other college students faced after being whisked away from their dorms and into their childhood homes. Rostain, emeritus professor of psychiatry at Penn and the new chair of psychiatry at Cooper University Health, previously explored the student-parent dynamic in his 2019 book *The Stressed Years of Their Lives: Helping*



*Your Kid Survive and Thrive During Their College Years*, which Penn distributed to 1,200 families of incoming students in 2019. In a related workshop during Family Weekend that November, he discussed how parents have become more savvy to how the internet and social media affect their kids both positively and negatively. But then the pandemic came and “boom—immediately social interaction becomes totally digital and the only way you can do anything,” says Rostain, who has encouraged his patients to take breaks from the screen and to try to create a normal sleep-wake cycle because “our brains are not designed to spend all of our waking hours looking at a screen.” But when it comes to advice about the pandemic itself, he knows that parents “have to acknowledge that this is not something you can make go away for your kid,” and that they have to toe a fine line between rigid rules preventing them from socializing out of the house and an overly cheery outlook trying to assure them that things will get better.

“A lot of COVID college kids are kind of feeling like they’re going through something that’s not only making life harder but that’s screwing up their future,” Rostain says. His mantra to his patients, some of whom are Penn students, is that “life is unpredictable, and this is going to be the best way to get used to unpredictability.” And even though the nation’s mental health situation has been troubling—one in four people aged 18 to 24 seriously contemplated suicide in June, according to research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—Rostain has found reason for hope in a post-pandemic world. “The COVID college students will have a bonding experience through all of this that will, in the long run, make them more understanding of disadvantaged people and people who live in circumstances that they don’t have as much control over.”

Phuong Vu, the head of Reach-A-Peer-Helpline (RAP-Line), has had the opposite problem as the Penn students who

were stuck at home and missing their college friends. As an international student from Vietnam, she hasn’t been able to return home due to travel restrictions and misses her family as intensely as when she first arrived as a freshman in 2017, when she found it hard to fit in and her mental health suffered as a result. But then and now she’s leaned on the community at RAP-Line, which was established in 1996 to provide peer support, information, and referrals to any Penn student who wants to connect to a human to get something off their chest.

Even though the pandemic stalled the group’s phone service, Phuong says that a RAP-Line student is generally able to respond to each texter within one or two minutes. At first, most of the texts were about COVID-19 and adapting to virtual school, but students “don’t talk about that as much now,” Phuong says, adding that, no matter the subject matter, the most important thing is to respond with open-ended questions. “We’re not allowed to give advice or be judgmental,” she says. “The key is to remember to hear more about the person. Most of the time, people just want someone to talk to.”

Just like CogWell, Penn Benjamins, and other student groups, RAP-Line will sometimes refer a student to CAPS (which also provides RAP-Line volunteers with training sessions). “There’s a distinction between peer support and professional support but there’s room for both,” Saraf says. “For some people, the peer support is a wonderful resource and what they need.”

Rostain agrees. “We’re not expecting students to be professionals,” he says. “What we are hoping that they can do is offer comfort and help people through the worst of their loneliness, and then, if necessary, getting them to some help.”

**T**hree years after nearly jumping into traffic, Gianni Ghione is doing much better—but it’s been a winding and frightening road to get there. As a sophomore in 2018–19, he dealt with a shoulder injury and concussions, caus-

ing him to miss the season and wonder: *Who am I without wrestling? What am I if not an athlete?* One day at his friend’s room in a fraternity house, he laid down on the floor and said, “Hey, I’m having a full-blown panic attack.”

The panic attacks continued through that winter. He barely ate. He couldn’t carry on a conversation. One day he went to a mall with his girlfriend and forgot where he was or how he got there. By February of 2019, he decided to take a leave of absence from Penn, returning to his home in New Jersey and checking himself into an Intensive Outpatient Program, where, through five-hour-a-day group therapy sessions, he “learned so much about coping mechanisms and mindfulness and being more in the present moment.”

Back at Penn for his junior year, he managed to cope with another wrestling injury (a broken ankle) and a global crisis (COVID-19) with far more serenity than he would have a year earlier. And he’s been trying to help his fellow athletes get by, too. Along with administrators in the athletic department, he attended an Ivy League/Patriot League mental health summit before his junior year and came up with the hashtag #KeepYourHeadUP for a video campaign featuring Penn athletes pledging to break the stigma of talking about mental health. And he believes Penn Athletics is “moving in the right direction” with the advent of health and wellness captains for each team. “I think it’s awesome we have a more approachable route, when if you’re dealing with something that’s super heavy and stressful you can reach out to someone you’re in the thick of it training with every day,” he says.

One of Penn’s health and wellness captains is Abby Abramson C’21, a softball player studying neuroscience who has been trying to make sure teams have been sticking together this past year—through virtual game nights, journaling, meditation, and more. She and other health and wellness captains want to ensure that athletes can talk through the pain of feel-



Phuong Vu, an international student from Vietnam, has battled her own struggles and helped others at Reach-A-Peer Helpline throughout her time at Penn.

ing like part of their identities have been stripped away with the cancellation of their seasons. “Athletes are taught from a young age that you need to push through and you need to be strong—and sometimes struggling with mental health doesn’t fit that image,” Abramson says. “That’s been one of our main concerns. There is no image of a perfect student athlete; there’s only humans.”

It’s easy to see why college athletics presents a particular mental health concern. Over the past 15 years, four Penn varsity athletes have died by suicide—including Holleran, a member of the track team. Andrea Wieland, a psychologist hired in 2018 as an associate athletic director for athletic performance, recognizes the unique demands and pressure on Ivy League athletes, citing research that shows that at Penn and other colleges, athletes are less likely to seek out treatment than the rest of the student body because of the fear of being recognized or seen as weak. But she’s helped to spearhead efforts to shed the stigma with increased programming on emotional wellness and resilience, and with a potential partnership with CAPS next fall so that a mental health screening from a mental health specialist is “part of the process of medically clearing our student-athletes.”

For Ghione, many factors helped turn the tide—including the outpatient group therapy, support from his family, and calling the CAPS 24/7 hotline on his hardest nights. And just like Henry Platt and several more of his classmates from across campus, he’s tried to be a mental health leader simply by being transparent and willing to talk to others. Shortly after he took his leave from Penn, he posted a long screenshot on Twitter that detailed his mental health journey with a far shorter Tweet to go with it: “It’s okay to not be okay! Don’t hesitate to reach out!!”

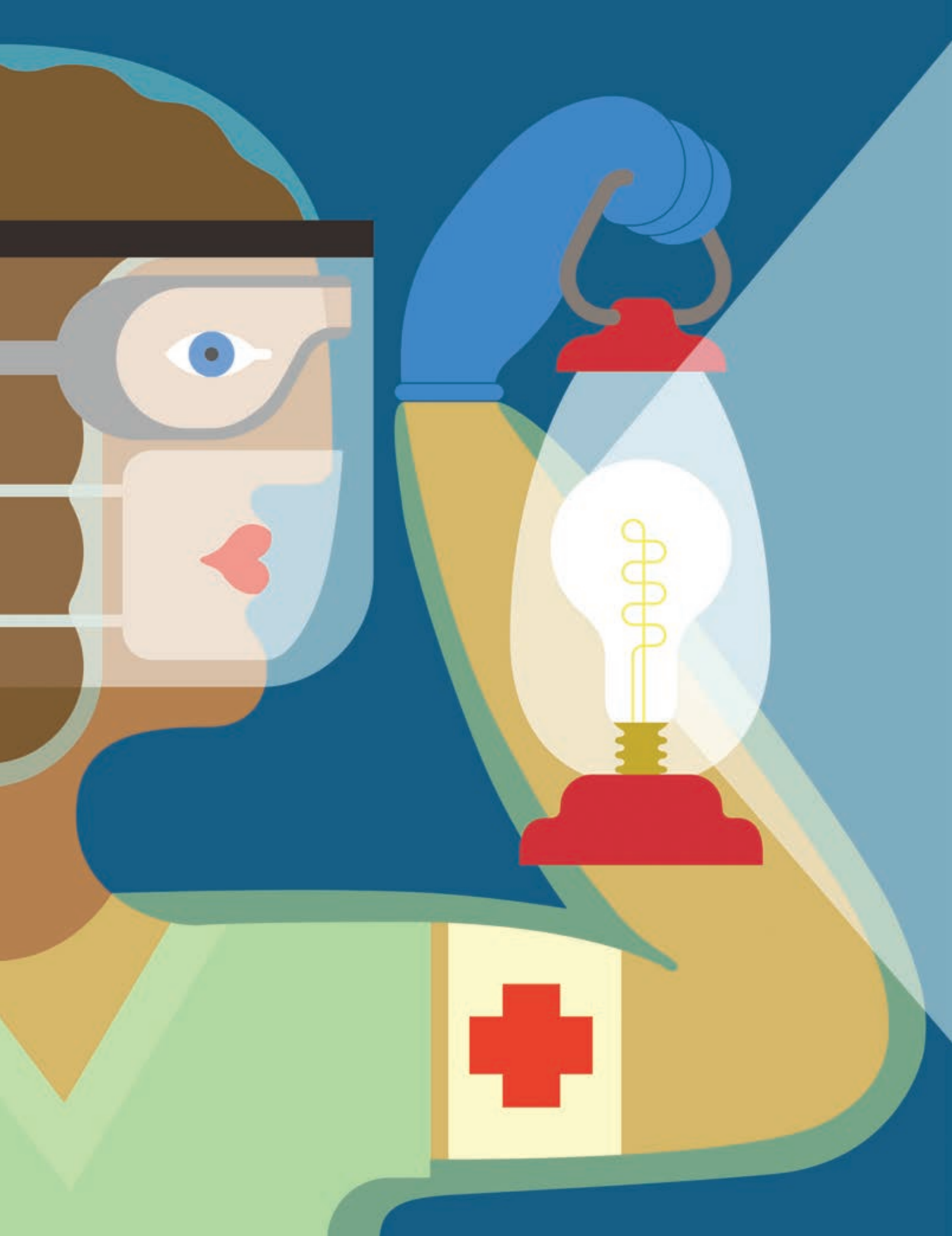
In many ways, Ghione is paying it forward because he knows his story might have turned out differently if not for his own circle at Penn—his coaches; his



**“The key is to remember to hear more about the person. Most of the time, people just want someone to talk to.”**

teammates who’d take cathartic walks with him across the South Street Bridge just to watch dogs frolic at the dog park; Matt Valenti C’07, a Penn associate athletic director and former star wrestler, who talked him down in the wake of his worst panic attack.

“I would say the biggest thing I’ve learned is that things will only get better if you start to work on them,” says Ghione, who got a tattoo on his left wrist that reads *Only If You Let It*. “I didn’t reach out to anyone when I was dealing with my depression and my suicidality. And it wouldn’t have gotten better if I didn’t start talking to people about it.” He understands that not everyone has a supportive family that they can turn to, and he’s especially sympathetic to students who might be holed up in a room during the pandemic dealing with their depression on their own. But whether it’s a professional therapist or a peer group or simply a friend or acquaintance, “there’s *always* someone you can talk to,” he says. “If you don’t think there is someone, a lot of people will surprise you if you just take that first step.”





# In Nursing We Trust

The past year has propelled America's most trusted profession into the spotlight, with the World Health Organization's designation of 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife followed by the unprecedented and continuing challenges posed by COVID-19. Penn Nursing alumni and faculty weigh in on coping with the pandemic and on nursing's essential—and expanding—place in the healthcare system.

By JoAnn Greco

**M**any nurses say their vocation was set from childhood—as they listened to an older sister or their mom, home from a long shift at the hospital, tiredly relay a small triumph, or watched a grandparent or favorite uncle waste away and vowed, when they grew up, to help someone else's loved one get well, or at least die more comfortably.

Marion Leary GNu'13 Gr'14 Gr'23 isn't one of those nurses.

"The only thing I knew about nursing as a kid was what I saw on TV," she says. "Nurses standing patiently by, nurses taking orders ..."

It wasn't until she was in her 20s that Leary, who had trained as an EMT and

HIV/AIDS educator, encountered a nurse who made an impact. "I was working for a residential program in Boston where the clients were HIV-positive and struggling with drug and alcohol addictions and mental illness," she recalls. "One of them, a quadriplegic who wound up dying, had a visiting nurse who just blew away my whole preconceived notions of nursing. She responded to his phone calls and requests 24/7, or at least it seemed like that, and I remember him telling me that she was his guardian angel. She opened my eyes to what nursing is and could be. Her autonomy, her knowledge, her experience, her empathy were just incredible."

Leary enrolled in nursing school at Thomas Jefferson University, then spent

a few years in the clinical environment before deciding to move toward research, earning graduate and doctoral degrees from Penn and working as a researcher at Penn Medicine's Center for Resuscitation Science since 2007, where she spearheaded efforts to incorporate augmented and virtual reality into training bystanders to respond to emergencies. In 2019 Leary was named the first director of innovation in the Office of Nursing Research at Penn Nursing, supporting the school's priorities to "create, cultivate, and grow new strategic partnerships, test new methods to improve health and the outcomes of healthcare, and to prepare our students as the next generation of nurse innovators."

## **“Nurses create new roles for themselves all of the time. They identify needs and figure out how to meet them.”**

One of her newest initiatives is *Amplify Nursing*, a podcast that spotlights nurses who are redefining the field. Chinelo Ofoma GNu’15, a traveling pediatric nurse practitioner, was a guest on the program. She has created an online platform, Nurse on Purpose, to question and dispel the media images—“the sexy nurse, the mute nurse, the battle-ax nurse”—that perpetuate stereotypes. Under its auspices, she recently presented a virtual training session on nursing tropes to journalists and nurses in her home country of Nigeria. “When I was a nursing student, people would always ask ‘You’re so smart, why don’t you want to be a doctor?’ I didn’t get it. I was surrounded by so many sharp and proactive nurses,” says Ofoma, with a hint of outrage. “Why aren’t we getting the voices we deserve? Nurses are earning PhDs, they are serving in Congress.”

The field’s diversification is “incredible,” says Regina Cunningham Gr’03, chief executive officer at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP) and assistant dean for clinical practice at Penn Nursing. “Nurses are everywhere. They’re in communities, schools, churches. They work in research, in pharmaceuticals, in corporations. Nurses create new roles for themselves all of the time. They identify needs and figure out how to meet them.”

### **A Big—and Continuing—Battle**

Americans may not have a complete picture of all that nurses actually do, but that hasn’t stopped them from ranking the profession as the most trusted in the nation for nearly two decades running, according to an annual Gallup poll. Last year the World Health Organization (WHO) proclaimed 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, calling for increased investment in their education, jobs, and leadership training. The declaration was timed to the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s birth, but it was the arrival of the novel coronavirus pandemic that pushed nurses, along with other frontline workers, into the

public spotlight, as they turned intensive care units into makeshift COVID-19 wards, wrestled with a dearth of personal protective equipment (PPE), and risked their lives to deliver care. “What nurses [have done] during the pandemic is just staggering—and they really got a lot of attention for it,” says Claire Fagin, the long-serving former dean of the School of Nursing (1977–1991) and interim Penn president (1993–1994) for whom the nursing education building is named. “We can’t let this moment pass,” she declares.

Nurses make up nearly half of the world’s healthcare workforce and they “spend more time with patients than anyone else in healthcare,” points out the school’s current leader, Antonia M. Villarruel GNu’82, who has been the Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Penn Nursing since 2014. “Often, they are the *only* provider in their area.”

Villarruel remembers encountering one such nurse on a research trip to Mexico. “She had created a needlepoint of the entire village, and was able to show me how many kids each family had, who had diabetes—it was this whole record-keeping effort,” she says. “Nurses take on incredible responsibilities like that all of the time and often they aren’t compensated adequately for it. Even in the United States, their salaries are stagnant after a period of time, the work is demanding, and burnout is common.”

In an opinion piece last September for the political news website *The Hill*, “As Nursing Goes, So Goes Public Health,” Villarruel and Fagin raised concerns

about what nurses are dealing with during the pandemic and warned against nursing staff reductions at hospitals in the wake of expenses and losses related to COVID-19. “Nurses don’t abandon patients,” they wrote. “We must ensure that we do not abandon nurses.”

It’s happened before.

When the US entered World War I, nurses were sent overseas in droves, notes Julie Fairman Gr’92, the Nightingale Professor in Honor of Nursing Veterans at Penn and a specialist in nursing history. “So when the 1918 flu pandemic arrived, towns like Philadelphia were desperately calling for nurses, not physicians,” she says. (“If you would ask me the three things Philadelphia most needs to conquer the epidemic, I would tell you, ‘Nurses, more nurses, and yet more nurses,’” one local official reportedly declared.)

Once the war ended and the pandemic abated, “nursing leaders naturally expected that the public would back them as they strove to improve the status of the profession and to right working conditions,” Fairman adds. “But that never really happened—people have short memories. It was a big battle for nurses to make any headway, and those efforts continue to this day.”

One sticking point is the continuing requirement in some states that nurse practitioners (who along with nurse-midwives, nurse anesthetists, and clinical nurse specialists, are considered advanced practice registered nurses) enter into collaborative agreements with physicians before they can diagnose, treat, or prescribe medications. Such limitations have often been relaxed during the pandemic, but so far that’s just temporary. “These regulations are perplexing and unnecessary,” says Villarruel. “They can restrict nurses from practicing to their fullest.”

### **Empowering Education**

Penn Nursing traces its origins to a training program within HUP that began in 1886. Eventually, a bachelor of science degree in nursing (BSN) was offered, first



in the School of Education and then the Medical School, but it wasn't until 1950 that a separate School of Nursing was established at Penn, followed in 1978 by the introduction of the first nursing doctorate at an Ivy League university. (While Penn Nursing remains the only Ivy to offer a BSN, more than half of its student body is enrolled in graduate programs.)

The school has produced two MacArthur Foundation "genius grant" winners: Ruth Watson Lubic HUP'55 Hon'85 in 1993, for her pioneering advocacy of the American nurse-midwifery movement, and Sarah Hope Kagan, the Lucy Walker Honorary Term Professor of Gerontological Nursing, who was honored for her research on older cancer patients 10 years later ["Sarah Kagan's 'Genius Idea,'" Nov/Dec 2004]. For five consecutive years, Penn has been named the world's top nursing school by *QS World University Rankings*, an international ranking service; its master's degree program is tied for third place among nursing schools on 2021's *US News & World Report* list; and it has received more research funding (\$11.3 million) from the National Institutes of Health than any other nursing school for three years running.

"Penn Nursing is extremely empowering of its students. It pushed us to reach our greatest potential," says Flannery Farrell Nu'15 GNu'19, a licensed midwife. "I never really had an understanding of how powerful nurses can be and how crucial they are to making our healthcare system work until I came to the school." The extensive contact nurses have with patients means that "we can have the honest conversations with them and find out what they really want," she adds. "We are trained to be their advocates."

Farrell thinks the curriculum prepared her as well as possible for the onslaught of the pandemic (a mass casualty simulation covers some of the same ground, albeit on a smaller scale and shorter time frame), but she says she would have liked more frank discussions on issues like anti-racism. "I think today's nursing stu-

## Remote Possibilities

**P**enn Nursing has quickly adapted its teaching following the campus lockdown last spring and during this year's virtual fall semester. This included not only remote classroom learning but virtual clinical experiences at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

To allocate for missed clinical time and due to quarantining, the school created new virtual simulations and recorded them, as well as converted more than 20 existing simulations to an online platform. It also expanded the square footage devoted to its simulation center into unused classroom space to accommodate social distancing regulations. Students were also able to take advantage of some unique learning opportunities presented by the circumstances: undergraduates participated in on-campus

COVID testing, for example, while several nurse practitioner candidates volunteered for the Moderna vaccine trials.

Although some students are scheduled to be back on campus for the spring semester starting January 20 ["Gazetteer," this issue], a large part of clinical training will continue to be done through remote and socially distanced in-person simulations "due to space restrictions and ratios, unit availability, and competing schools for clinical placement," says Penn Nursing dean Antonia Villarruel.

Psychiatric and community simulations in particular lend themselves very well to the remote platform, Villarruel adds. She also notes that telehealth training and virtual reality offerings will increasingly make their way into teaching during the upcoming semester and likely find a permanent place in the curriculum. —JG

dents are demanding that as they try to work very hard to effect change," she says.

Villarruel, who grew up in a Mexican-American household, recognizes the concern firsthand. During her own college and graduate school years, she says, she rarely ran into Latinx instructors or students. (Overall, the nursing workforce in the US is about three-quarters white.) These days, underrepresented minorities account for 17 percent of Penn Nursing's students. And while social justice and health inequity figure in the nursing curriculum, Villarruel adds that Penn Nursing is "committed to increasing its diversity."

A recent \$2 million gift from Penn President Amy Gutmann and her husband Michael Doyle will fund 10 "leadership scholars" annually among undergraduate and graduate nursing students, chosen for diversity, first-generation status, academic achievement and leadership potential, and interest in working with underserved urban and rural communities.

### Beyond the Bedside

Recent graduate Alaina Hall Nu'18 understands that working with minority populations, whether in urban centers or rural villages, will become an increasing

part of healthcare's future. A recipient of the 2018 President's Engagement Prize ["Gazetteer," Jul/Aug 2018], a University-wide competition that provides up to \$100,000 in funding and a \$50,000 stipend for seniors to design and undertake impactful post-graduation projects, her path has led to a deeper involvement with at-risk populations. Hall says she has a "passion for working with communities that are impoverished."

She used her grant money to return to an orphanage in Mexico where she had been volunteering since high school, with a goal of reducing pediatric infections like stomach bugs and upper respiratory illness. Her year-long project involved repairs to the town's sewage system and building a new water filtration system for the orphanage, as well as health education components. "I think it made me a better nurse," Hall says. "I'm more prepared for leadership roles. I'm more adaptable."

After returning to the US, Hall joined the pediatric intensive care unit at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx. There she underwent a trial by fire as the borough's largest hospital was bombarded with COVID patients just a few months after she came on board. "The

experience made me realize that being a nurse goes beyond making sure patients are out of pain. It means working to build a society that will protect people from being wiped out by crisis,” says Hall, who is currently pursuing an online master’s degree in humanitarian action, with an eye toward working for WHO or UNICEF.

Hall says she was inspired by her grandmother, a nurse who volunteered at free community clinics during her time off. Patti Brennan GNu’79, too, started out with what she calls a “classic 1960s dream,” she says: “My mom was a nurse, so I was going to be a nurse.”

But her early experiences with computer simulations at Penn led to an interest in harnessing the power of data to support nurses in making the best choices for improved patient outcomes—ultimately leading to her appointment as the first nurse to head the National Library of Medicine (NLM), the world’s largest biomedical library.

Nursing’s history of quantitative reasoning actually starts with Florence Nightingale, Brennan says. “Most of her advances came about because of her observations and the data she mined,” she explains. “We attribute a nurse’s success to intuition, which is often true, but we are also skilled in watching, and smelling, and touching—that’s all data.”

Whether they choose to burrow into communities, or data, or something else, nurses are increasingly thinking beyond the bedside—and pursuing advanced degrees to get the preparation they need. According to the website [2020nurseandmidwife.org](http://2020nurseandmidwife.org), established to mark WHO’s Year of the Nurse and Midwife, as of 2019 the percentage of America’s approximately four million nurses who hold a BSN or higher was about 63 percent. Those degrees have brought opportunities for more nurses to specialize in specific areas of medicine like psychiatry or geriatrics; move into entrepreneurial disciplines such as nurse navigators and nurse practitioners; and teach, research, and advocate both for patients and the profession

itself—and opened new paths for nurses to become leaders.

Regina Cunningham also hails from a healthcare family and began her nursing career by pursuing an early interest in oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. There she was exposed to healthcare’s administrative side and a desire to better understand the relationship between nurses’ working circumstances and patient outcomes, which eventually led her to a PhD at Penn; leadership roles at the Abramson Cancer Center; and positions as chief nursing executive for the Penn Health System and, currently, as HUP’s chief executive.

“Most hospitals are run by people with backgrounds in healthcare administration or finance,” Cunningham says. “A long time ago, practitioners running hospitals were a lot more common—Nightingale ran her hospitals. It gives you an incredible amount of credibility when you understand the obstacles and pressures that physicians and nurses face.”

As the pandemic’s first wave hit last spring, that trust and insight became paramount. Cunningham and her executive team knew they had to protect their staff even as the patient census climbed every day and supply chain issues and price gouging brought other problems. “I wanted to do this work to influence the practice environment,” she says. “The development of new policies and the decisions on how resources are allocated are huge and ultimately affect the patient.”

Cunningham is part of an ad hoc committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that will produce a report, *The Future of Nursing 2020–2030*, scheduled for release early in 2021. An earlier report covering the 2010–2020 decade called for the removal of regulatory obstacles and advocated for the granting of increased graduate degrees. This time the focus will be on the “roles that nurses can and should play in driving health outcomes in a positive way,” Cunningham says. “It talks about the potential for nurses to move

the needle on health equity, about the importance of wellness among nurses themselves, and the lessons from COVID. It’s got some strong recommendations on advancing the impact of the field.”

## Nursing While Male

Across campus at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center, James Ballinghoff GrN’19, the facility’s chief nursing officer and associate executive director, also spends his days advocating for nurses. Staffing—or lack of it—was his top concern when COVID-19 hit. “We knew that if we got hit in the same way [as New York], we wouldn’t have nearly the number of nurses we needed in critical care,” he says. “We had to evaluate and develop new models of care very quickly and do it on our feet because this was all relatively new and we weren’t sure how infectious it was and how many patients we’d see admitted.”

Though he’s an administrator now, Ballinghoff says he continues to miss bedside nursing. He originally came to the profession somewhat by chance, having held various jobs in the service industry, waitering and working for Atlantic City casinos after high school. “I was always interested in science so when I met a male nurse, I was intrigued,” he says. “I got to know more about the exciting opportunities and I took my first class and I was hooked. I tell people all the time that it’s one of the best areas you can get into. You find your niche and you find your strength and you can do anything.”

Although nursing is one of the fastest-growing fields in the US—with more than 175,000 annual job openings projected for registered nurses through 2029, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics—not many men are hearing this message. Less than 10 percent of nurses are men, which initially came as a surprise to Marcus Henderson Nu’17 GNu’20. “When I applied to nursing school, I didn’t think anything of it,” he says. “Then when I got there, I saw that I was one of just eight men. I couldn’t help but notice the gender division. Some of my classmates were



even teasing that men couldn't be nurturing. I was, like, 'So I wasn't nurturing when I wiped my great-grandmother when she soiled herself?'"

The first in his family to go to college, Henderson is another President's Engagement Prize winner, awarded in 2017 for his project with classmate Ian McCurry Nu'17 to work with a Philadelphia homeless shelter on increasing access for its underserved population ["Gazetteer," May/June 2017]. He is also serving on the committee working on *The Future of Nursing 2020–2030* report, having been selected, like Cunningham, in a national search.

"Decisions that impact the healthcare of people are put into place all of the time and nurses aren't part of the discussion," Henderson says. "And it's not just about insurance, or Medicaid. I'm talking about how transportation works, how housing authorities work, how the Department of Agriculture handles food access. Nurses can provide a vital perspective on how these policies affect the communities they serve."

Henderson anticipates he'll ultimately pursue an academic career, along with possible government service. "I often joke," he says, sounding dead serious, "that I'd like to be the first nurse to become Secretary of Health and Human Services."

### Healthcare Startup

In contrast to the 90 percent of her Penn Nursing peers who opt to move on to a master's degree program, Sarah Gray Nu'13 was eager to enter the job market. Once she started looking around, though, she was "shocked at how difficult it was to figure out my options. It was all so overwhelming."

After her husband received an offer to work in San Francisco and the couple relocated, Gray settled into a career as a pediatric nurse but discovered that "I was more drawn to the processes, the inefficiencies, the lack of resources," she says. "I had friends working for Facebook and Apple and Google that were surrounded by innovation and their em-

ployee experience was so robust, autonomous, and flexible. I thought, why does healthcare seem so behind? I wanted to be part of that change, that sense of being on the cutting edge."

Gray began exploring healthcare startups that appealed to her desire to shake things up. When she stumbled on something called Trusted Health, she thought she'd found what she was looking for. "It was basically still a concept [about creating a job marketplace for nurses]," she says. "But it looked like they were trying to build exactly what I had wanted as a nurse." She started pitching in and before long the two founding partners invited her to join them as a founding clinician and the platform's first non-tech hire.

Trusted Health's timing has been ideal—on track to meet a predicted hiring boom designed to serve an aging population with increased healthcare needs and a concurrent surge in nurse retirements (nearly half are already over 50). Now with more than 200,000 nurses on its platform, the company specializes in travel, or contract, nursing. "Many nurses aren't interested in arriving on a floor and staying there for the next 20 years," Gray observes.

As COVID spiked around the nation, Trusted Health found itself well-positioned to send hundreds of temporary nurses from hotspot to hotspot, along the way creating a newly specialized workforce. "It's been exciting for me to work for a company that is itself a model of how nurses can be utilized," Gray says. "About 20 percent of our employees are RNs, and they're on the tech team, in marketing, in compliance. I realize that nursing has a jam-packed curriculum, but I would challenge Penn Nursing and all nursing schools to find a way to set their students up for careers that break the boundary of the clinical setting. When nurses take control of their careers, they can find growth and challenges in dozens of non-traditional ways."

Villarruel has watched the change firsthand. "My parents channeled me into nursing because they wanted to

make sure I would always have a job," she observes. "They would be absolutely amazed at just what kind of opportunities await today's nurses. There are so many paths which can be charted, but still it's the basics of the experience—the science, the empathy, the critical thinking—that can prepare you for anything."

### "Heart" and "Head"

Despite promising vaccine news, the fall surge in COVID-19 cases across the nation—which could worsen throughout the winter—is a reminder that the pandemic is still very much with us. And nurses will make "extensive and expansive contributions" to weathering this latest onslaught, both in "what we do and how we lead," says Villarruel. "People understand and know the 'heart' of nursing, but they don't think about the 'head,' and what a powerful combination nurses have in both."

As hospitals—and healthcare workers—are once again being stretched near the breaking point, there have been calls for strikes over working conditions and inadequate PPE, and many messages from health workers on social media imploring the public to wear masks and practice social distancing.

"The pandemic has brought to light the true conditions in which our frontline workers are forced to engage—for the benefit of others," says Villarruel. "That is what strikes are about; it is not about nurses per se, but about advocating for environments that will keep people—healthcare providers, patients, families—safe."


Villarruel would like to see public expressions of gratitude translate into "meaningful investments in nursing education; to developing a true career trajectory into the profession; to integration of nurses in policy decisions—whether at the institutional or global level."

That's "a big ask," she admits. "But we have already made so many adjustments—out of necessity—and we need to continue to move forward."

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JoAnn Greco writes frequently for the *Gazette*.

# Heard at Homecoming



Voices from a  
fall celebration  
(wait for it) ...  
like no other.

**AS** with everything else in this pandemic year, Homecoming 2020 was *different*. But what it lacked in on-campus camaraderie, it made up for with a rich and varied slate of content online for alumni.

Billed as *Homecoming@Home* and extending for six days from November 9 to 14 instead of being squeezed into the traditional jam-packed weekend, the all-virtual celebration included upwards of 20 panel discussions on topics including arts and culture, racial and social justice, and the frontiers of medical research and patient care, as well as presentations on Penn's architectural heritage, virtual gallery hops, the University's most unusual "gifts in kind," and more. There was even a football game, with a Saturday rebroadcast of a 2002 contest between Penn and Harvard. (Spoiler alert: Penn won.)

Here are excerpts from a few of the panels, which have been lightly edited for conciseness and clarity. Full videos of all the presentations offered can be found at [www.alumni.upenn.edu](http://www.alumni.upenn.edu). —JP

## The Scholar Artists


*Since 2009, Homecoming has featured a special focus on arts and culture. Launching this year's Arts at Homecoming, Kelly Family Professor of English and Writers House Faculty Director Al Filreis moderated a conversation among several Penn faculty members who combine scholarship and teaching with work as creative artists—which included this exchange among Walter H. Annenberg Professor of History and novelist Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet; Ken Lum, the Marilyn Jordan Taylor Presidential Professor and chair of fine arts in the Weitzman School of Design; and assistant professor of English and poet Simone White, on the challenge of pursuing a creative career given its uncertain economic return, compounded by the pandemic.*

**Kashani-Sabet:** I actually wanted to answer this question, about how you can ensure writing consistently enriches your life when the lack of career stability can make it a drain. I wanted to say a few things about that very quickly: one is, if you're inclined to write, you can never stop writing. If you're inclined to produce creatively, you can never stop doing that because it's suicide, you know? And I think that this moment that we're in right now—I don't know about others, but for me it was crucial that I find quiet moments to think and to write. I don't even know if it was good, or if it is good, or if anyone wants to read it, but it was my survival mode.

But I don't want to ignore the economics of it, and this is the second part of

what I want to say. For those of us now who have tenured positions, I think we do have an opportunity to "make it count." We can go to the dean's office and say these [creative] endeavors should count [toward tenure and career advancement]. They deserve raises. We should create more opportunities in the university and in the academy, and so that's on us. And I think that, you know, certainly one hopes that the national endowments for the arts and the humanities will be tripled in funding! But we also in our own small ways within our institutions have the power to make it matter, and I think we really have to do that.

**"How can I have enough—enough everything, right?—to do the things that I need to do?"**



**Lum:** Well, it's true that we are living in a social justice moment. A lot of pundits have used that term. But it's a moment that has long been in gestation, so it's not like a moment that just somehow appeared out of nowhere, and COVID-19 is only underlining the consequences of a social order that's been long built on racism, social injustice, and profound inequity. So the coronavirus actually can be a catalyst, I think, for artists to reex-





amine the social environment and the institutions that govern that environment and, in fact, I think it behooves artists to think in that wider political sense, right? And I think also that the crisis of—the confluence of crises, of multiple crises, the monuments crisis and so on—has also made explicit the damage that human cultures have wrought on the world’s environmental footprint as well, so all of these things have kind of converged. I think it’s really important for us to ask the question: What is the global public good that we can offer through our work at this moment? And I think unless we can have some clarity to ourselves in terms of that purpose we will not be very effective artists.

**White:** I want to acknowledge the sort of dark underbelly of not doing the things that you need and want to do. ... Depression is a real thing, “drain” is real. Those are real experiences that people have as they’re struggling to try and figure out what they’re going to do with their lives. One of the things that I’ve tried to think about very seriously, as a person who started their creative work late in life [after working as a lawyer], is that these areas of thinking can’t be separated from each other. How can I have enough—enough everything, right?—to do the things that I need to do? Where do I need to live, what do I need to be looking at, are there people in my life who I need to make closer connections to? This isn’t just about work, it’s also about relationships, it’s—you know, maybe you’re not the person who’s going to get married, I don’t know. That is an economic activity too. And one of the things that creative work can do is to help us to start to think how I want my whole life to look, so that I can think about how I want the world to look. I just really hope that people think about art and art practice as ways of reimagining what the world’s going to look like, as you live in it longer and longer and longer, and are you going to have the emotional resources to stay in it?



## The Urgent Matter of Black Lives

*In this discussion sponsored by the Center for Africana Studies and the Black Alumni Society, moderator Margo Crawford, director of the Center and professor of English, began by asking panelists Mary Frances Berry, the Geraldine R. Segal Professor of American Social Thought and professor of history; Dorothy Roberts, the George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology and the Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights; and Tukufu Zuberi, the Lazry Family Professor of Race Relations in the department of sociology, to weigh the promise and potential problems around the “mainstreaming” of the modern abolitionist movement during this year’s protests against police brutality and in support of racial justice and the 2020 election campaign.*

**Roberts:** The promise of it, I think, is the idea of abolition—that the US is a white supremacist nation, still. Its institutions, like police and prisons and, I would add to that, family policing, its healthcare system, its education system—every institution in the United States—we can trace back to slavery. And we can see ways in which the US has continued to maintain these structures of oppression throughout the century even past the abolition of slav-

**“The term gets watered down as it becomes more and more popular and people use it without understanding what it means.”**

ery, and we can talk more about some of the ways in which structural racism is perpetuated. But abolitionists—starting from anti-slavery abolitionists to well-known ones [today] like Angela Davis, Ruthie Gilmore, and others have been creating a movement, a longstanding movement to dismantle completely these punitive carceral institutions that have been used to maintain Black people’s subordination and a racial capitalist system in general, and to instead imagine a radically different society. And of course we want more and more people to understand the meaning of that and to join that movement. I think it’s promising that more and more people are paying attention to abolitionism as a philosophy, as a political strategy, as a vision.

I think the pitfall is that the term gets watered down as it becomes more and more popular and people use it without



understanding what it means. One example is the call to defund police, which is an abolitionist idea—with shrinking the funding for police leading toward dismantling policing as a way of dealing with social problems and conflicts in human needs. But many people use the term either to mean something that's the minimal shifting of resources away from policing without that broader vision, or they are just afraid of that term—so that politicians are afraid to use it. Biden, for example, had to make it clear, "I don't believe in defunding the police!" because it becomes associated with scary radicalism.

**Zuberi:** ... The idea of ending enslavement in the way that it was ended in the United States, the way that it was ended everywhere in the world, comes as a result of this abolitionist tradition. ... If anybody thinks they're for freedom, then they would have to be for abolition—because the other way puts you on a modern Confederate side and that is a side against human existence and against the United States of America, and against us having a possibility for a future. So I think that there is a way that we need to understand that white supremacy is not good for anybody—it's not good for white people, it's

**"We need to understand that white supremacy is not good for anybody."**

not good for Black people, it's not good for colored people. White supremacy is not good. Maybe it got us to this point, but getting us to this point is now destroying the earth and threatening human civilization, much less threatening Black lives. So I think that this is a fundamental idea. It has long been in our tradition, and its rearticulation and galvanization around

**"We don't demand of politicians anything when we're all talking about going to vote for them."**

the various iterations of our movement, I think, is the way we need to understand this. But I think we also need to be careful that American democracy and American freedom are most fully articulated around this concept of abolition and that we need to recognize that—because the society is founded *against* abolition, the society is founded in, grounded in, enslavement. So, you want to know how to get beyond that? You get into this abolitionist movement, which is attempting to destroy the continuing existing elements of white supremacy, of the enslavement of freedom, the enslavement of democracy, the enslavement of the possibilities of equality.

**Berry:** After those two eloquent statements, I don't know what I have to say except to do my usual contrarian interjection, which is to point out that the reason why we don't have a policy implemented of abolitionism, in any term—just like we don't have a policy of reparations, we don't have a policy of the whole idea of police reform with qualified immunity, which is part of abolitionism—is because of Black people. Because many Black people are afraid ... and so whenever anybody mentions abolitionism or reform or any of these things, they can always find some Black people to come out and say, "Oh, that's scary. I'd be scared if you did that. Oh please, don't do that to the police. I love the police. I love them coming to my house." And so are reparations. They say, "I don't need any reparations. Oh, I can do everything myself." And so every time we get any kind of major reform objectives that we advocate ... there's always

## Merit Awards

The following alumni were selected to receive the Alumni Award of Merit and the Young Alumni Award and will be celebrated at Homecoming 2021 at the Alumni Award of Merit Gala on November 5, 2021.

### Alumni Award of Merit

Judith Bollinger WG'81  
Ghislain Gouraige C'80  
Michael Kowalski W'74  
Clemson Smith Muniz C'79  
John Vosmek C'61

### Young Alumni Award of Merit

Ashley Zampini Ritter Nu'07 GNu'08 Gr'18

somebody who's going to object, and it's not just white people and white supremacists, it's Black people who do so.

The other thing we don't do is, we don't demand of politicians anything when we're all talking about going to vote for them. All we talk about is, "We need to vote, we need to vote," and I tell my students that Fannie Lou Hamer and Rosa Parks and all of those Black women that I knew in the Civil Rights movement did not fight for us to get the vote just so we could "just vote, just vote." They wanted us to vote like Martin said at the Prayer Pilgrimage in 1957, wanted us to vote so that we can get something—justice, various things we want—or that he said in the missed part of the March on Washington speech, that we came to "cash a check" to give us freedom and justice. So when people are always talking about voting, I say, "Why don't you demand something of these politicians and tell them you're not gonna vote for them unless they do it?" Not one of them in the general election—the two that were there, because we only have two parties, I guess—supported reparations, police reform, or prison abolitionism, or any of the things we want, or any kind of targeted relief for Black people, whether it's economic, political, or otherwise—while they were happy to support such relief for other people without fear or favor. So Black people have to get over being scared, or being, you know, fearful of revolution, really.

## Penn's ImmunoRevolution: Rising Stars and Next-Generation Therapies

*Fulfilling what he called "my childhood dream one day to be a TV talk show host," Abramson Cancer Center Director Robert H. Vonderheide interviewed seven leading researchers and clinicians involved in Penn's standard-setting work in developing immunotherapies for a variety of cancers, as well as diabetes and other diseases. He began with a "topic literally ripped from the headlines," introducing Professor of Medicine Drew Weissman, codeveloper of the messenger RNA (mRNA) technology that made possible the first coronavirus vaccine, announced just days before by Pfizer as having an efficacy of 90 percent. (Soon after, Moderna, which also licensed the Penn patent, announced that its mRNA vaccine was 94.5 percent effective, and Pfizer amended its results to 95 percent.)*

**Vonderheide:** Let's just cut to the chase. Drew, you're a world expert on this. You've been working on coronavirus 24/7 since it became a problem a few months ago. Your laboratory studies were promising that this vaccine would work. Just from your point of view, is this what we've been waiting for? Is this the news we were hoping for?

**Weissman:** I think this is fantastic news. As a vaccinologist, I can't remember ever seeing a respiratory virus vaccine that had 90 percent efficacy. We're usually thinking about flu—that's 40 to 60 percent, and we're happy with that. But this is unbelievable, that's just incredible efficacy, and I think it's probably going to be a wonderful vaccine.

**Vonderheide:** Well, we're all hoping and wishing it the best. Drew, every great breakthrough has its moment when it was created. I want you to take us back to your laboratory around 2005. You were working on the RNA molecule and how it's rigged and how dendritic cells, a certain immune cell, responds to it. Can you tell us back then what you discovered that was eventu-

ally licensed that has now 15 years later turned into a vaccine for coronavirus when we never even imagined it?

**Weissman:** Katie Kariko [then a Penn faculty member and currently senior vice president at BioNTech, which is partnering with Pfizer on its vaccine] and I had been studying the immunology of RNA for many years. RNA has always been thought of as a great way to deliver proteins, but the problem with it is that it's so inflammatory that we often killed the mice—which doesn't work well for a therapeutic. So we studied the immunology and what we found is that by changing one of the bases in the RNA, one of the components of the RNA, with slight modifications we could get rid of that

## "Even before coronavirus, we were ready to go with a bunch of different vaccines."

immune-activation inflammatory potential. And what was also surprising is that when we did that, we increased the amount of protein that that RNA produced by upwards of a thousand-fold—so not only did we make the RNA safe, we made it 1,000 times more potent.

**Vonderheide:** It's amazing. My understanding is that RNA is ordinarily so inflammatory that you get this immune response that's not productive, but by altering it you're able to then use its properties to actually start an immune response, in this case against coronavirus, and that's incredibly clever. It means, perhaps, Drew, that we can use this for a vaccine for many other indications beyond coronavirus, isn't that right?

**Weissman:** We've got clinical trials already set up and ready to start for genital herpes, influenza, HIV, Norovirus, C. diff., and malaria, and others on the way.

## "Sometimes we say these breakthroughs are 20-year overnight sensations."

Even before coronavirus, we were ready to go with a bunch of different vaccines.

**Vonderheide:** The material we're talking about here, RNA is different than conventional vaccine. This really would be the first time to use RNA in a commercially available vaccine. Is RNA hard to make, is it hard to manufacture, is it expensive?

**Weissman:** That's probably what attracts pharmaceuticals the most. Making vaccines is very labor intensive, very expensive. Making RNA is a two-step reaction. It's simple. It's one tube to make the RNA, one tube to put it in a lipid particle, and you're done. The cost of RNA vaccines is much less than other vaccines.

**Vonderheide:** And I guess that explains why we were able to go from not even knowing the virus in January to mature clinical trials here being reported in November. It really is unprecedented speed. You know, it reminds me—sometimes we say these breakthroughs are 20-year overnight sensations. ... What do you think the next step from here is? What can we expect next in the news or scientifically?

**Weissman:** I think we're now convinced that the Pfizer vaccine works. The next step is the Moderna vaccine. After that, to me as a clinician, the most important next step is to get it out to the people and to have people take the vaccine. Because it isn't going to do much good if people don't want to take it.

**Vonderheide:** And are you concerned about the safety of this formulation?

**Weissman:** No. The vaccine gives local side effects—people's arms hurt—but other than that, there have been no bad side effects. I think it's a completely safe vaccine.

**Vonderheide:** I share your confidence. RNA is not toxic and has never been shown to be toxic, so another reason to take advantage of it.





*Somebody's Knocking*  
Ashley Bryan, linoleum block print  
[ca. 1982]

## Calendar

**Annenberg Center**  
[annenbergcenter.org](http://annenbergcenter.org)  
Temporarily closed

**Arthur Ross Gallery**  
[arthurrossgallery.org](http://arthurrossgallery.org)  
Temporarily closed

**ICA**  
[icaphila.org](http://icaphila.org)  
Temporarily closed

**Jan 13:** Virtual curator-led tour of  
*Milford Graves: A Mind-Body Deal*

**Kelly Writers House**  
[writing.upenn.edu/wh/](http://writing.upenn.edu/wh/)

Temporarily closed, but visit the website for links to virtual events, archived programs, PoemTalk podcasts, and the PennSound poetry collection.

**Penn Libraries**  
[library.upenn.edu/collections/online-exhibits](http://library.upenn.edu/collections/online-exhibits)

**Remarkable Figures:**  
Women in the Art of Ashley Bryan  
**The Jewish Home:** Dwelling on the Domestic, the Familial, and the Lived-In

**In Sight:** Seeing the People of the Holy Land

**Red Etchings:** Soviet Book Illustrations from the Collection of Monroe Price

**The Midwest Experience:**  
Ormandy in Minnesota  
*plus dozens more online*

**Penn Museum**  
[penn.museum/collections](http://penn.museum/collections)

Temporarily closed, but collections are viewable online

**Slought**  
[slought.org](http://slought.org)  
Temporarily closed

**World Café Live**  
[worldcafelive.com](http://worldcafelive.com)  
Temporarily closed



# Portrait of the Artist as a Former Financial Analyst

Jill Krutick finds her happy place.

**J**ill Krutick W'84 was supposed to wrap up this autumn in Brussels. Following a later-in-life foray into the professional art world, she'd been on a roll through 2019 and into early 2020, landing her first solo museum show plus a dozen other exhibition opportunities. Another crop of shows was on the way, including more US museum exhibitions and a November art fair in Brussels. Then the pandemic swept in and cleared her entire calendar.

Instead of packing up her abstract expressionist paintings to introduce in Europe, Krutick has been penned inside her Mamaroneck, New York, studio since March, making new work while trying to figure out how an artist can stay visible when museums and galleries are shut.

That's where her Wharton days and previous career are proving handy. Harnessing what she learned during 23 years in the business world, Krutick is using all this unplanned downtime to reach art enthusiasts and collectors who, like her, are mostly stuck at home right now.

"I have tried basically every way to engage with people and keep people interested and wanting to view my work, buy my work," she said during a virtual presentation at Homecoming in November. Since March, that's included TikTok and Instagram videos of her painting process, a new Etsy shop, a home art curation service, a virtual viewing room, a perpetually updated website, and "storytime" videos about each of her painting series.

In her most-viewed TikTok video, posted in June, Krutick's gloved hand drags a palette knife across a white canvas, smoothing on white molding paste.



It's like watching a pastry chef frost a very large, very flat cake. A soft cover of Maroon 5's "Sunday Morning" accompanies the clip, along with the caption, "Molding paste is calming," followed by a series of tags: #satisfyingpainting #foryoupage #processvideo #moldingpaste.

Aside from supplying Zen footage, this process is how Krutick begins many of her paintings. She'll cover an entire canvas with textured acrylic molding paste, then sculpt in lines, swirls, and abstract shapes. "As I'm creating it, I might see a story coming out," she says. In a video on her website, Krutick steps back to

study a large canvas that she's already coated and carved. "I see a lot of vegetation," she says. "I see a lot of fairytale elements. It's certainly a happy place."

She layers colorful paint over the textured paste, swiping on ocean blues and soft reds and pale greens in the video. Color is Krutick's other passion. She "collects" it everywhere she goes, relying on her strong visual memory to capture a stroll under fiery autumn leaves or a boat ride on a foggy day.

In her abstract works, Krutick's inspiration has swung from Batman to *The Giving Tree* to trout. (Her son is a fishing



*Ice Cube Night*, 2013, oil on canvas (top);  
*Crayon Forest*, 2020, oil and acrylic on canvas (bottom).



captain in Miami and suggested that last one.) “Inspiration comes from a lot of different places,” she says. “Sometimes they’re just fantasy worlds that I dream about,” as in her *Shangri la* series, which has hints of Monet. “There are so many different ways that I get transported as I’m painting,” she adds, “which is why I call it taking a journey.”

Krutick’s *Ice Cube* series draws inspiration from Mark Rothko’s color-field paintings, but often incorporates harder edges and brasher contrasts. She explains on her website that “the Ice Cube shape”—two drippy rectangles separated by a thick band and placed inside a square—“has emerged as my artistic fingerprint.”

“It’s a very unique series, which stands apart from all my other series,” she says. She’s made more than a hundred of them at this point, in various sizes and colors. “The actual image, while simple, is actually very complex when you take a closer look—in terms of the textures and the layers and the nuances that are on the canvas,” she says. “You can actually see so much in what appears to be a simple picture.”

Like many artists, Krutick remembers falling in love with her craft as a kid. By her teen years, she was copying famous Monet and Van Gogh works in oil. But in college she studied finance and decision sciences at Wharton, followed by a 17-year career on Wall Street and then six years as a senior vice president at Warner Music Group. When Warner was taken private in 2011, she threw herself back into painting. Soon “all of that energy that I put into finance got directed into building an art practice,” she says.

She spent four years taking classes at the Art Students League of New York, learning from her teachers as well as the other students.

The more she painted, the more she wanted to paint. By 2017, she had her own studio/gallery. In early 2019, at age 56, she landed her first museum show. “That was a milestone event for me,” she says, recalling the 5,000 square feet—six

rooms in all—inside the Coral Springs Museum of Art in Florida that were filled with her work.

Another museum show sprang from that one, then another and another, until Krutick had major momentum and a busy travel schedule heading into 2020. You know what happened next.

But she's managed to find slivers of light in a dark year. "All I did was try to dream up new ways to reach people," she says. "That was the silver lining: instead of just pressing ahead with the shows and preparing for those specific events, I took a blank sheet and started from scratch, thinking about how to create a virtual experience and share the art in new and different ways."

The Etsy store, for one. Launched this past October, it places Krutick's paintings on yoga pants, duvet covers, note cards, and cloth face masks, in addition to serving as an online shop for her original paintings. "It's a very tough market overall because people are in a very bad way," she says. "I believe it's important to continue to be in front of people and to show that you're constantly reinventing yourself."

With the Brussels show rescheduled for February 2021, Krutick is also preparing to mount a solo exhibition at Virginia's Longwood Center for the Visual Arts and an "Homage to Rothko" solo show at the Alex Galleries in Washington, DC, both postponed from 2020, sometime this coming year.

"The fun of the story is that I didn't have a specific plan to get to art later in life," she says. "It's something that just happened—an unplanned decision."

"But there were always two parts of me," she adds, "the artsy part and the business part. I knew that they had to live together. Now in the art world, seeing how important business is as part of this whole equation—how you market yourself and differentiate yourself in the wacky world of art—it's fascinating to me how it all comes together."

—Molly Petrilla C'06

## PUBLIC ART

## Brick House



**A commanding and enigmatic new figure has taken up residence** at the eastern entrance of College Green. *Brick House*, a 16-foot-tall bronze sculpture by Simone Leigh, was installed near the corner of Walnut and 34th Streets in November. It is a gift from Glenn Fuhrman W'87 WG'88 and Amanda Fuhrman C'95.

Leigh, a Brooklyn-based sculptor who had a solo exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2019 and was recently chosen to represent the United States at the 2022 Venice Biennale, characterizes her artistic process as a "formal creolization" that melds female bodies with elements of the buildings where women labor. This monumental statue draws inspiration from the historical and contemporary African diaspora. The cowrie shells that adorn the braids on its subject symbolize wealth and femininity, and also the African slave trade in which cowrie shells were used as currency. The abstract, skirt-like base was inspired by Batammaliba architecture in Benin and Togo and the teleuk dwellings of the Mousgoum people of Cameroon and Chad—as well as the restaurant Mammy's Cupboard in Natchez, Mississippi.

"*Brick House* is not a portrait," says Leigh. "It brings disparate forms together in a way that collapses time."

Another casting of *Brick House* is on temporary exhibit on New York's High Line through next spring. When the Fuhrmans learned that Leigh, whose work first captured their attention in 2016, hoped that this particular piece might find a home on a college campus, they reached out to their alma mater about a year and a half ago.

"While I was a student at Penn studying art history, I gained a deep appreciation for the power and influence of artistic expression," said Glenn, who serves on the board of the Institute of Contemporary Art at Penn, where he underwrote free admission with a 2008 gift. "I feel—and Simone agrees—that our urban campus is the perfect location for *Brick House*, where it can be seen by a large and diverse population."

"Ms. Leigh's sculpture brings a striking presence of strength, grace, and beauty—along with an ineffable sense of mystery and resilience—to a central crossroad of Penn's campus," said Penn President Amy Gutmann in a statement.



# After the Storm

Nicholas Christakis speculates on the pandemic's ultimate social impacts, and finds cause for optimism.

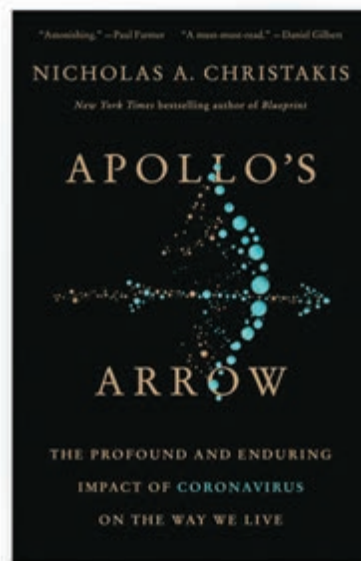
By Julia M. Klein

**A**s of late 2020, with COVID-19 again spiking across Europe and the United States, more illness, death, social isolation, and economic devastation seemed inevitably to lie ahead. Several promising vaccines, along with better treatments and public-health measures, may temper that grim forecast. But meanwhile anxiety and dismay registered as natural responses to our repeated missteps in both controlling the pandemic and mitigating its economic and social harms.

Into this winter of our discontent strides the ebullient Nicholas A. Christakis G'92 Gr'95 GM'95 with a book that points us both backward, to plagues past, and forward—with measured optimism—to a post-pandemic world. The most remarkable feature of *Apollo's Arrow: The Profound and Enduring Impact of Coronavirus on the Way We Live* is the blazing speed with which it was written—in the midst of a rapidly unfolding event whose course and impacts can't yet be fully known.

That, of course, is one of the challenges of the book, composed between March and August, a period when Americans were not yet being diagnosed at the rate of 175,000 or more cases per day. Christakis's biggest miss, however, is underestimating the rapidity with which vaccines would be ready for distribution. He predicts in the book that an effective vaccine "might not arrive before we achieve herd immunity" in 2022.

For now, though, Christakis—the Sterling Professor of Social and Natural Science at Yale, where he also serves as director of the Human Nature Lab—may



**Apollo's Arrow: The Profound and Enduring Impact of Coronavirus on the Way We Live**  
By Nicholas Christakis  
Little, Brown Spark, 384 pages, \$29

be as well suited as anyone to contextualize the crisis and speculate on the character of a post-COVID world.

*Apollo's Arrow* draws on Christakis's interdisciplinary expertise as a sociologist, hospice physician, and epidemiologist ["Good By Design," May/June 2019]. And it incorporates ideas on altruism, social networks, and other prosocial behavior outlined in two of his previous books, *Blueprint: The Evolutionary Origins of a Good Society* (2019) and *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives* (2009).

Since COVID-19 first triggered alarms last January, Christakis has focused his laboratory's work on the pandemic. With

Chinese colleagues, the lab published a study that used mobile-phone data to track the spread of the novel coronavirus in China. Other studies are designed to investigate the virus's impact in Copán, Honduras, where the lab has a field site, and how mass gatherings have affected the virus's dispersion in the US. In May, the lab released an app, Hunala, to help users proactively assess their infection risk. Christakis's Twitter feed has become an important source of information on the evolving pandemic.

Christakis borrows his metaphorical title from an account in *The Iliad* of Apollo's vengeance on the Greeks during the Trojan War. The novel coronavirus constitutes "a threat ... both wholly new and deeply ancient," he writes in his preface. We must confront it "in a modern way while also relying on wisdom from the past."

That wisdom includes the history of the bubonic plague, smallpox, the 1918 flu pandemic, polio, HIV/AIDS, SARS-1, and other massive public health disasters. Plagues, Christakis reminds us, are "an old, familiar enemy," transforming the social order, wrecking economies, and eliciting grief and terror—but also, he insists, "kindness, cooperation, sacrifice, and ingenuity."

Along with a primer on the biology of coronaviruses, Christakis provides a meticulous account of how the novel coronavirus spread, first through the Chinese city of Wuhan and eventually to this country. Like most scientists, he rejects the notion that the virus could have been engineered and malevolently unleashed on the world. But he admits that much about its origins remains mysterious.

After the China discussion, however, this becomes a deliberately US-centric narrative, with only minimal attention paid to the pandemic in Europe and elsewhere. Christakis shares the general frustration of the public health community at the bumbling US response, including the early testing debacle; the mixed messaging (notably over the util-

ity of masks); and the reliance on disparate, delayed state and local measures instead of a coherent national policy. He laments that New York, though lauded for its stringent lockdown, was tardy in enacting it, with catastrophic consequences in illnesses and deaths.

Christakis reviews the range of interventions, pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical, that have been (and might be) deployed to contain the virus. He also emphasizes the indispensable role of public trust when it comes to implementing measures that are “inconvenient, unnatural, and often extremely costly.”

Much in these chapters will be familiar to anyone who has obsessively followed coronavirus coverage. More novel is Christakis’s summary of factors accounting for the differential spread of the virus. Drawing on social-network theory, he notes that popular, well-connected people are more likely to become super-spreaders. He raises the interesting possibility that the (still contested) number of infected people needed to attain herd immunity, through vaccination or other means, may depend on just *who* those people are. If popular people became immune, Christakis writes, “relatively more paths for the virus to spread through society would be cut off.” That means, he says, that “vaccinating people with many connections is more helpful than vaccinating people with few connections.”

Christakis surveys the dysfunctional reactions that often accompany pandemics. “The epidemics of emotions and of misinformation intersect in worrisome ways with the underlying epidemic of the pathogen itself,” he writes. But in the chapter “Banding Together,” he also touts the emergence of altruism among healthcare workers and other Americans, including a resurgence in mutual aid, increased charitable giving, volunteer childcare, and other efforts. “The imperative to be generous is hardwired in us,” he writes, and “capacities for altruism, cooperation, and teaching ... are ones that the virus does not de-

stroy.” Still, Christakis admits that even he has at times succumbed to despair.

Finally, amid “colossal uncertainty” about the future, he ventures into the prediction game. Whether or not vaccines become available, he suggests that Americans will be living in “an acutely changed world,” wearing masks and avoiding crowds, until 2022. That will be followed, he says, by an “intermediate pandemic period,” lasting perhaps until 2024, as people recover from the trauma of the pandemic. Finally, by 2024, a “post-pandemic period” will usher in a “normal” but changed world.

Many of those changes are unknowable, he says. But he forecasts that certain pandemic-induced adaptations—from greater self-reliance to the increased use of telemedicine and online technology for work and education—are likely to persist. The pandemic, for instance, has driven home “the pointlessness of much in-person medical practice,” he writes.

Overall, the pandemic’s economic and social aftershocks will be profound—and perhaps, on balance, positive, Christakis argues. Just as the Roaring Twenties followed the 1918 flu pandemic, he imagines a post-COVID era of “technological, artistic, and even social innovations,” bringing “not only a renewed sense of purpose but a renewed sense of possibility.” The religiosity and reflectiveness characterizing the immediate and intermediate pandemic periods may well yield to “increased ... risk-taking, intemperance, or *joie de vivre*,” boost urban living and the appetite for social mixing, transform art and literature, and perhaps even create the political will to combat economic inequality.

For survivors of the current nightmare, in other words, *Apollo’s Arrow* offers the promise of brighter days ahead. “Plagues always end,” Christakis assures us. “And, like plagues, hope is an enduring part of the human condition.”

Julia M. Klein profiled Nicholas A. Christakis for the May/June 2019 issue of the *Gazette*.

## Briefly Noted

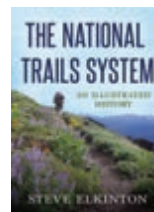


### CLOUD HOPPER

by Beth Kephart C'82

(Penny Candy Books, 2020, \$17.99.) Three misfit best friends in a rural town watch as a girl in a homemade hot air balloon falls out of the

sky. Where did she come from? Why won't she talk? And what should they do? Illuminating the perils of undocumented immigration in America, this young adult novel by the prolific memoirist, fiction writer, and occasional *Gazette* contributor explores themes of family, loss, and tragedy.



### THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM: An Illustrated History

by Steve Elkinton

GLA '76 (Vertel Publishing, 2020, \$26.99.) Established by federal law in 1968, the National Trails System grew

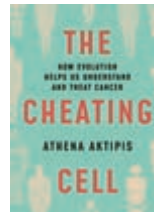
from only two trails—the Appalachian and Pacific Crest Scenic Trails—to 30 national scenic and historic trails that, combined with auxiliary paths, create a network larger than the Interstate Highway System. Elkinton, who worked on the National Trails System for 25 years, provides a chronological history, rich with photographs and maps.



### A PASSION FOR ISRAEL: Adventures of a Sar-El Volunteer

by Mark Werner

L '78 (Gefen Publishing, \$29.95.) Werner, a US corporate lawyer whose ardent Zionism spurred him to volunteer on Israeli military bases through the Sar-El organization, recounts 14 years of drama, quotidian labor, and solidarity with Israeli soldiers and civilians.



### THE CHEATING CELL: How Evolution Helps Us Understand and Treat

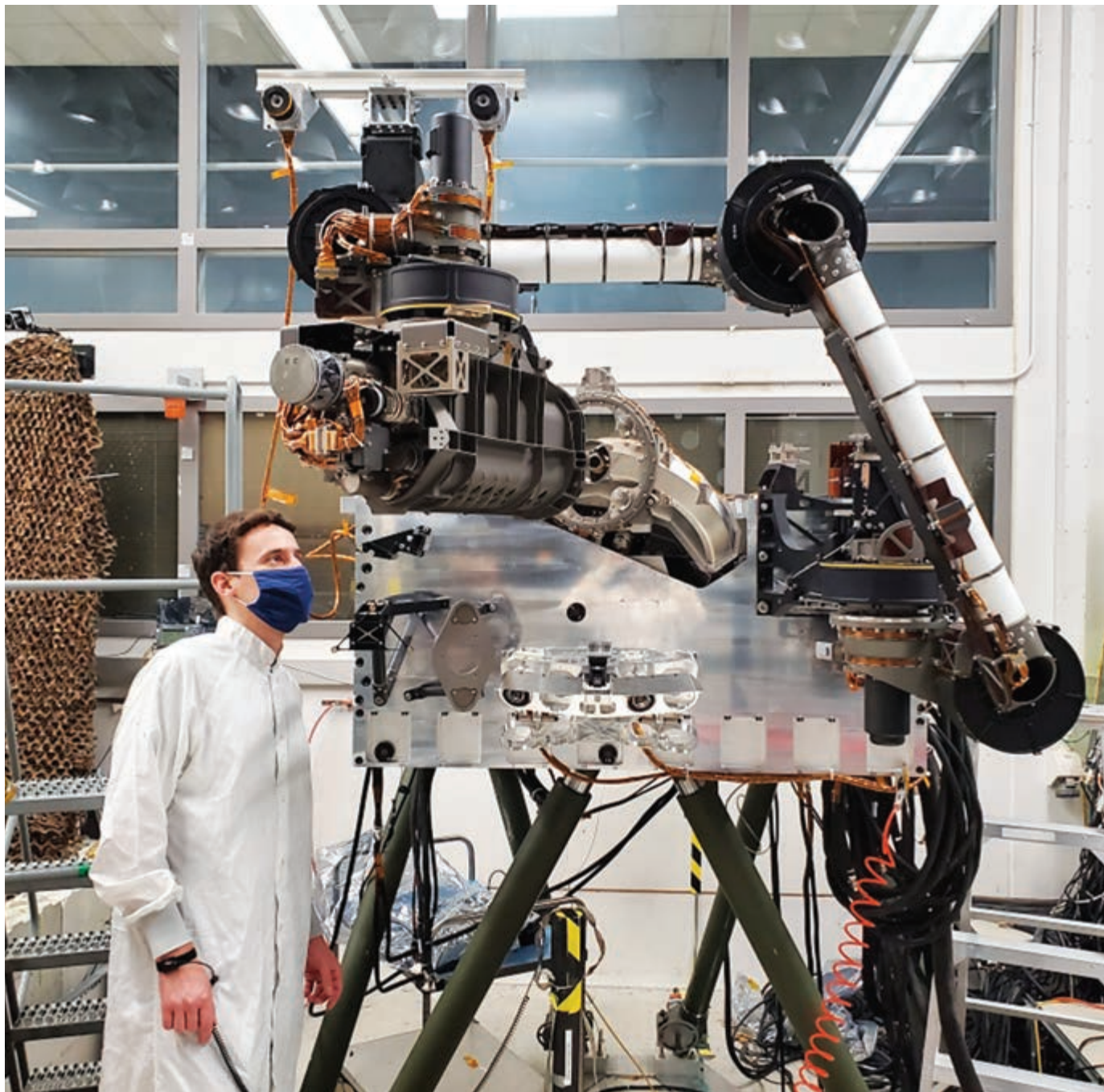
Cancer by Athena Aktipis

G'04 Gr'08 (Princeton University Press, 2020, \$24.95.) Aktipis, a psychol-

ogy professor at Arizona State University, takes readers back billions of years to explore the evolution of cells. When unicellular forms became multicellular organisms, cells learned to cooperate—but rogue “cheating” cells also arose, overusing resources and replicating out of control, giving rise to cancer.

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## Mission to Mars

Meet one of the robotics engineers working on NASA's *Perseverance* rover.



Nine months before the Mars 2020 rover *Perseverance* was scheduled to leave Earth, NASA robotics systems engineer Sawyer Brooks EAS'14 GEng'15 watched alongside some two dozen colleagues as the craft nearly botched its rehearsal of a crucial docking sequence the first time it was placed in Martian conditions (minus 76 degrees Fahrenheit).

A robotic arm was supposed to transfer soil samples from the ground to the rover. It had worked fine in Earth conditions, but now it moved alarmingly slowly. The telemetry scrolling across Brooks' computer screen was looking uncertain.

"It's a critical test and I'm getting really worried that the docking is going to fail," Brooks recalls. "I'm watching this number that indicates how close it is to success. It's just so slowly getting a little bit closer and closer. Finally, just a few tries before it gives up and declares failure, that number slips under the margin to be declared a success and docking finishes successfully."

Since arriving at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California, shortly after graduating from Penn, Brooks has primarily worked on testing the sample caching system for *Perseverance*, which is slated to land in Mars's Jezero Crater on February 18. The main focus of the mission—which will also test technologies for long-term goals of human exploration—is to drill for rock and soil samples that might contain evidence of past signs of



life, analyze them, and store them in tubes on the Martian surface for a future mission to retrieve and return to Earth.

*Perseverance* advances the science of *Curiosity*, the rover that captured the world's attention in 2012 with its nail-biting landing on Mars. The new rover is slightly larger—at 10 feet long, 9 feet wide, 7 feet tall, and 2,314 pounds—and powered by nuclear, battery, and solar energy. Its caching system is comprised of three robots—a five-jointed, seven-foot arm carrying a rotary drill; a carousel that moves drill bits and sample tubes to the drill and rover chassis; and a 1.6-foot-long arm running sample tubes between storage, documentation stations, and the bit carousel. Together they contain more than 3,000 parts that need to work with clocklike precision.

Brooks is part of the team that tests the docking process—when the larger robotic arm twists around and press-

es into a dock on the rover to hand off a sample to the caching system for processing. "It's an entirely new capability that we haven't had on any other missions," he says. The team has spent years testing the system in thousands of plausible scenarios it might encounter on Mars. Since *Perseverance* launched last July, the team has continued testing using identical rovers at JPL—a research facility, Brooks notes, that has "always been on my radar."

During his freshman and sophomore years of college, "I was following *Curiosity* really closely as it moved towards the launch and stayed up to watch the landing," he says. "Once that finally happened, around one or two a.m., I was so incredibly excited just following it online. I thought it was so cool that there were engineers who got to work on this one-of-a-kind hardware, and it blows my mind that, just a few years later, I was able to join them."

**"It's still a little surreal to me that this project I worked on is actually going to be operating on Mars."**

Brooks grew up in Sandy, Utah, a suburb of Salt Lake City. As a child of two civil engineers, he began tinkering with robotics kits at an early age, eventually founding his high school robotics team, before heading to the California Institute of Technology in 2010. But he missed the context of a broader education and community, and transferred to Penn the following year, lured by a rigorous engineering program within a liberal arts environment.

"Humanities classes and just being in a more well-rounded environment at Penn definitely helped me learn how to be a better communicator," he says. Outside of class, he participated in a project to teach programming to Philadelphia public school students. "That was one of the things that I was looking for at Penn, the chance to see how engineering works in a broader community."

Within engineering, Brooks gravitated to more hands-on courses, such as mechatronics, which had him designing, building, and programming different types of robots, and a senior design project building a solar-powered robotic boat for ocean exploration. (One of his classmates, Cristina Sorice EAS'14 GEng'14, is now also a robotic systems engineer at JPL working on autonomy technology for future missions to the moon and Mars.) Then there was a mechanical engineering lab, cotaught by Mark Yim ["Digital Natives in Tomorrow's Classroom," Nov/Dec 2007] and Bruce Kothmann, in which students built models to test theories they learned about in class. "One of the things I really liked about those labs is how much they relate to and continue to inform the work that I do today," Brooks says.

Both Yim and Kothmann were impressed with Brooks' dedicated and egoless approach to problem solving. Kothmann recalls Brooks inventing a test technique for a wind turbine project. "We had done this lab several

years in a row and no one had ever thought of it before," he says. "It showed a high level of conceptual understanding and creativity for a different way of doing it."

After taking the lab classes, Brooks had suggestions for improvements and volunteered as a teaching assistant his senior year. "He was absolutely indispensable improving on existing projects, inventing new ones, and even helped run the demo events," says Kothmann, adding that Brooks has since returned to Penn to help judge senior engineering designs. "He's a very generous person eager to share ideas."

That Penn engineering camaraderie has continued at JPL with Sorice, who sat at an adjoining cubicle before the pandemic struck and still brainstorms potential side projects with Brooks. "He's the most reliable person," she says. "Everyone at work thinks that, too. The overall opinion is, 'Can we clone him?'"

It's a trait that has served him well within the team-minded atmosphere at JPL, where Brooks is now gearing up for the rover's touch down. "As soon as it lands, we need to be ready to hit the ground running," he says. "When the scientists decide on a sample, our team is going to make that happen. It's still a little surreal to me that this project I worked on is actually going to be operating on Mars. It really puts remote work into perspective. We're working on something that's 50 million miles away."

— Susan Karlin C'85



## Grapevine Gospel

The first American woman to earn the title Master of Wine is still spreading her oenophilia.

For Mary Ewing-Mulligan CW'71, pouring wine is a form of theater and drinking it is a "fascinating intellectual pursuit," she says. "It involves the fields of biology, chemistry, marketing, history, art, religion, travel. Then, you cannot ignore that alcohol is psychotropic and makes us feel good."

The first American woman to earn the title Master of Wine—a designation bestowed by the UK-based Institute of Masters of Wine after candidates pass a series of theoretical and blind

tasting exams—Ewing-Mulligan is passionate about helping more people feel good about wine. "I'd like them to be more openminded, try new things, think for themselves, not get stuck in a rut," she says. Whether by writing columns, authoring books, or running her own wine school, Ewing-Mulligan's career has been devoted to that goal. Her expertise in and championship of the industry has won her vats of awards, including a recent nomination as *Wine Enthusiast* magazine's Edu-

## ALUMNI

cator of the Year and a lifetime achievement award from the Wine & Spirit Education Trust.

It may be an all-consuming part of her life now, but growing up in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, she “tried wine on only a few special occasions, like weddings.” Always more bibliophile than oenophile, she was an English major at

**“I guess I’m just a teacher at heart. Everything I’ve done has been inherently educational.”**

Penn while contributing to the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, where she discovered that journalism wasn’t as good a fit as she had hoped. But her brief pursuit of newspapering would serve her well upon graduation, when she applied for a job at the Italian Trade Commission in Philadelphia. “The office was involved in promoting Italian products and they needed a native English speaker,” she says. “The guy who wound up hiring me was a former journalist and he loved the idea that I had considered that as a career.”

With “zero knowledge” of Chianti and Soave, she quickly picked up pointers while organizing tastings for

writers and industry folk. “The people in the business were so encouraging and helpful,” Ewing-Mulligan recalls. “They were always trying to explain to me how this wine was supposed to taste and what was special about that grape variety.” She later wound up as the director of New York’s International Wine Center (IWC), which offered tastings and classes for wine collectors and enthusiasts.

In the late 1980s, Ewing-Mulligan began studying for the prestigious Master of Wine (MW) exam. (Slightly more than 400 experts currently hold the title, which indicates wide and deep knowledge of the art and business of wine; another 269 boast the title of Master Sommelier, which is conferred by a different organization and focuses more on table service and food and wine pairings.) Since there wasn’t any formal schooling in the US, Ewing-Mulligan attributes her education to “all of those wine tastings over the years.” She needed five attempts before she passed, successfully acing the theoretical section on her second go-around but requiring another three stabs at the wine tasting segment.

That 1993 triumph “changed everything for me,” she says. “It’s a certification that you have tasting expertise, that you have extraordinary knowledge about winemaking. ... It’s a big shot in the arm—and it feels so good.” Among other things, the hard-won honor emboldened Ewing-Mulligan to buy out her partner and

transition IWC to a vocational school that offers the courses necessary to prepare students for the MW exam.

“I was the first female in America to become a Master. A year later, I was still the only one. Then a third year and so on,” she says. “Ten years later, one of my students finally became the second female in America and, man, that was one of the most gratifying moments in my entire career.” In total, more than a dozen of the school’s students (male and female) have gone on to join the MW ranks. “I guess I’m just a teacher at heart,” Ewing-Mulligan says. “Everything I’ve done has been inherently educational.”

Her educational approach is perhaps most evident in *Wine Style: Using Your Senses to Explore and Enjoy Wine* (2005), a book she wrote with her husband Ed McCarthy, who was also her coauthor on *Wine for Dummies* (1995), and which places emphasis on what she believes really matters to wine drinkers: taste. Rather than grouping wines primarily by varietal, *Wine Style* approaches contemporary winemaking via broad flavor profiles (rich, oaky whites; fresh, spicy reds) that sometimes cut across grape types. This acknowledges the modern reality that many cult Napa Valley Cabernets, to take just one example, often bear closer resemblance to high-end Brunellos or top-tier Rhone Syrahs than to other Cabernets from, say, northeastern Italy or the Bordeaux bargain bin.

“Different people love wine for different reasons—and for many reasons,” Ewing-Mulligan says. “For me, perhaps first and foremost, I like to think about the nature of how it works in my mouth.” Another one of its appeals, she adds, is that “since we tend to drink it with food, wine promotes more moderation than other alcoholic beverages.”

As the world of winemaking witnesses the consequences of climate change—from Northern California’s catastrophic fires to the global warming that has made it possible for England to produce some well-regarded sparklers—Ewing-Mulligan emphasizes that “wine is a product of the earth that has been transformed by generations of individuals and as a result it represents a sense of place.” Although that heritage means change can sometimes come slowly, she points out that “winemakers are working methodically toward their best choices for a new future.”

Meanwhile, Ewing-Mulligan revels in the continued exploration and sense of adventure. “I love to examine bottles, to look at their labels,” she says. “If you give me any excuse, I will try a new wine. If I’m at a restaurant and the server says we tasted this wine in our staff meeting and everyone was really excited about it, that’s enough of a reason for me.”

More than anything, wine drinking should be fun not fraught, she adds. “You don’t need to hit a home run with everything you taste.”

—JoAnn Greco





## Auctions for All

This fun-loving, experience-seeking entrepreneur has created a unique kind of charity fundraising platform.

In his mind, Matthew Pohlson WG'11 wanted to win more than anybody in the room.

One summer about a decade ago, he found himself inside a luxury hotel in Beverly Hills, California, for a Boys & Girls Club of America event hosted by Magic Johnson. There was an auction, and the prize was a chance to have dinner and go to a game with

the former basketball superstar. "Magic was my childhood hero," Pohlson says. "I probably cared a lot more about him than anybody in the room."

Sadly, most of the other people in that room had far more money than Pohlson—then a graduate student at Wharton who only secured an invitation to the benefit because a close friend, Ryan Cummins, brought him along.

As he and Cummins drove home emptyhanded and dejected, they had an idea. Why not create charity auctions where everybody—no matter their wealth—could participate? The system would be framed more like a lottery with a lot of people entering a small amount, rather than the wealthiest giving a large sum.

Just like that, Omaze was born.

Founded in 2012 by Pohlson and Cummins, Omaze raises money and awareness for charities by auctioning off experiences and items (and making money itself by taking a slice of what's raised). Since it launched, the company has raised more than \$130 million for 350 different charities, including UNICEF and Make-A-Wish Foundation. People contribute between \$10 to \$100 to try to win prizes such as touring Dollywood with Dolly Parton, shopping on Rodeo Drive with Julia Roberts, and watching the Mars Rover landing with Bill Nye. In 2019 one lucky winner took

home a Lamborghini blessed and signed by Pope Francis.

In the past few years, the company has pivoted from auctioning off experiences with celebrities to material prizes and trips. One recent prize was \$100,000 to pay off student debt. Another was a 2020 BMW i8 Ultimate Sophisto Edition. “Since we changed the type of prizes, we have grown 500 percent in the last 24 months,” Pohlson says. The company recently landed \$30 million in Series B funding toward its goal of raising \$1 billion for charities.

Growing up in Laguna Beach, California, Pohlson dreamed of becoming a celebrity himself—first in sports. In fourth grade, he joined a star-studded basketball team that featured four future NBA players, hoping he might get to the NBA himself. “As a kid I was really good, but as I got older I knew it wasn’t in the cards for me,” he says. “I am only 5-foot-10 on a good day.”

Then it was acting. After graduating from Stanford University, where he majored in economics, he secured small roles in television shows like *Scrubs* and *Everwood*. But he pivoted to screenwriting and then went on to produce a variety of media projects. In 2007 he was one of the first directors of *Live Earth*, an event that had concerts in seven continents simultaneously to sound the alarm on climate change.

Not long after that, he decided to pivot again and go to business school. Upon entering Wharton in 2009, he brushed up against class-

mates who were starting companies that were “all about giving back,” he says. “I think it’s because we were just getting out of a financial crisis, and people started thinking about the world.” Once Pohlson came up with his idea for Omaze in his second year, he too joined the entrepreneurship bandwagon, asking his professors if he could focus on that in his classes. “They were so accommodating,” he says.

Still, the first years of Omaze were tough. Pohlson struggled to raise money and secure prizes that excited large audiences. “Our first experience was to be a judge on *Cupcake Wars*,” he says of the Food Network show. “Some people would love that—but not enough people.”

When he did secure an exciting experience—a day out with *Breaking Bad* star Bryan Cranston—he almost lost the opportunity to a competitor called Prizeo. But Pohlson used his resourcefulness to track down the actor at a party and begged him to stay on board by promising him they would raise \$200,000. With stakes so high, Omaze raised \$300,000.

Stars then started flocking to Omaze, and some nonprofit organizations—like People Assisting the Homeless (PATH)—began to believe in its vision too. In 2014, PATH auctioned off an opportunity to join actress Kristen Bell on the red carpet at one of her movie premieres. Since then, they’ve raised \$1.6 million through Omaze, according to Tessa Madden Storms, PATH’s senior director of philanthro-

py. “The Omaze model effectively brings Hollywood to the masses, all in the name of doing good,” she says.

Pohlson’s had some fun along the way too. Omaze once auctioned off a chance to ride a tank with Arnold Schwarzenegger and crush things—which Pohlson got to experience himself during a film to market it. “We were there for four hours,” he remembers. “Arnold loves crushing things: cars, mini houses, DVDs of *Million Dollar Baby*, all different things.”

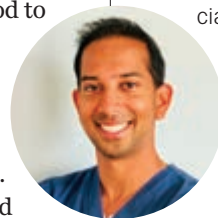
Two years ago, Pohlson had a life-defining moment. After surgery relieving a bowel obstruction, he says he flatlined for four-and-a-half minutes before coming back to life. “The doctor said to me, ‘The fact that we have you going home with your full faculties, we have no explanation for this,’” he recalls.

With a renewed lease on a life—and a lot of time to think during recovery—he tackled the question that had been gnawing at him: how to scale Omaze. Celebrity experiences were limited and dictated by their schedules and availability. But products—fancy cars, exotic vacations, London penthouses—were in much greater supply.

“These things have exceeded our best-case projections,” Pohlson says. And the pivot just might have saved the company during the pandemic. “If it was just celebrities, you can’t do those things now. I don’t know if we would have made it through.”

## Early Stage

Meet Neeraj Gupta C’04, an emergency medicine physician in Philadelphia, whose new company, Home Sonography, helps pregnant women get ultrasounds from the comfort of their own homes. To read his story, visit [thepenngazette.com/double-duty](http://thepenngazette.com/double-duty).



Omaze has started focusing on new charities and nonprofits too. Leading up to the election, for example, it raised money for Rock the Vote by giving away a \$100,000 cash prize that can be used to pay off debt, save a local restaurant, or send a kid to college. In the aftermath of George Floyd’s death, it highlighted social justice nonprofits, including the Black Votes Matter Fund and Color of Change, a civil rights advocacy organization. (Some causes have hit closer to home. A recent campaign raised money for a mobile ECMO unit, the hard-to-find machine that helped save Pohlson’s life.)

Omaze now claims that it can raise up to 40 times more with its platform than an ordinary action or charity gala can—simply by appealing to everyday people who are willing to pony up as little as \$10 if they get excited enough by a unique prize. “To have a company that starts from nothing and goes on to make a social and financial impact, it really is a dream come true,” Pohlson says. “It’s a pretty amazing feeling that this is working.”

—Alyson Krueger C’07



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“Throughout the years,  
I’ve pursued a career as a  
professional concert whistler.”

—Steven L. Herbst C’67

## 1958

**Charles Burnette Ar’58 GA’63 Gr’69**, a retired professor of industrial design at the University of the Arts, has been honored with the establishment of a prize in his name. The Charles Hamilton Burnette Prize in Design will be given each year to a graduating product design major at the University of the Arts to jumpstart their career and support their entrepreneurial drive. When he was at Penn, Charles was a research associate at the Institute for Environmental Studies, head manager of Mask & Wig, president of Sigma Chi fraternity, and a member of Friars Senior Society and the Kite and Key Society.

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## 1960

**Roger Colley W’60** writes, “I’ve published my third novel in a trilogy, *Sopris*, about ways to resolve conflict without resorting to violence. Quite pertinent to these times!” Visit [rogercolley.com](http://rogercolley.com) for more information.

**Harriet Luskin Hornick CW’60 WG’73** and **Roger Winston W’60**, copresidents of the Class of 1960, write, “We organized a Class of 1960 Virtual Homecoming cocktail party on Zoom, led by **Hugh ‘Hank’ Aberman C’60 G’62** on Saturday, November 14. Twenty classmates attended and reconnected. Joining us in the festivities were **Dr. Barton Blinder C’60 M’64 GM’68**, **Barry Borodkin W’60**, **Howard Cantor W’60**, **Carl Covitz W’60**, **Dr. Chuck Driben C’60 V’65**, **Aileen Feller Fisher-Isaksen CW’60**, **Inez Friedman-Lipetz Ed’60**, **Adele Aron Greenspun Ed’60**, **Bert Lazerow C’60**, **Paul Lichtman W’60**, **Murray Newman W’60**, **Ed Parmacek W’60**, **Jerry Riesenbach W’60**, **Bob**

**Rothman W’60**, **Dan Saxon W’60**, **Sylvia Neuwirth Wagner CW’60**, and **Stanley Zwirn W’60**. The conviviality and remembrances made for a memorable event. For those of the Class of 1960 for whom we do not have email addresses, we missed you and want to hear from you. Please send your alumni news either to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* or to Hank at [ship3@comcast.net](mailto:ship3@comcast.net).”

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## 1961

**Wesley Truitt C’61** has published his eighth book, *NATO Reconsidered: Is the Atlantic Alliance Still in America’s Interest?* He writes, “The book traces the evolution of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from its beginning in 1949 to the present. It asks a fundamental question rarely raised in Washington: After 71 years, is the Atlantic Alliance still in America’s best interest? If America’s interest is better served by freeing itself from NATO’s wide-open commitment to come to the aid of any Alliance member (there are 30 of them today) subjected to an ‘armed attack’ by Russia, then the US should promote alternative security arrangements for its European partners and disengage from the Alliance. This is a realistic consideration given Russia’s relative decline, making America’s protectorate over Western Europe unnecessary, and given China’s rise in power threatening America for global leadership. NATO dilutes America’s military power and distracts its focus away from its major challenger in the 21st century—China, not Russia. The Washington establishment with its vested interests will disagree with this proposal, but average Americans who would be called upon to defend

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**ALUMNI NOTE DEADLINES** 7/15 for the Sep/Oct issue; 9/15 for Nov/Dec; 11/15 for Jan/Feb; 1/15 for Mar/Apr; 3/15 for May/Jun; and 5/15 for Jul/Aug.

these countries should welcome it. I earned my political science PhD at Columbia University and have taught international relations at the graduate level. For many years I was also vice president–Europe at Northrop Grumman, an aerospace and defense firm, giving me practical knowledge of world politics. This book is the result of five decades of studying NATO and US foreign policy. To see my trilogy of espionage novels based on my work with the State Department and the CIA, visit [www.westruitt.com](http://www.westruitt.com).”

## 1962

**Robert L. Horst GEE’62** writes, “After a four-decade professional career and 1989 retirement from Armstrong World Industries, I discovered competitive running. My races from age 70 to date include 5K, five-mile, 10K, and half-marathon (four) age-group runs. I successfully completed my 497th race on my 90th birthday on June 5! My previous running experience was in boot camp, during service in the US Navy (1951–54), before my academic studies at Penn State (B.S. 1958) and Penn, and my engineering career.”

## 1964

**Dr. Robert Allyn Goldman C’64** has published a new book, *The Slammer: A Critique of Prison Overpopulation, a Menacing Flaw in American Culture*. He writes, “It can be purchased on Amazon and Barnes & Noble, but preferably at any independent bookseller (keep them in business).”



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## 1965

**Evelyn M. Cherpak G'65** is editor of the book *South of the Border: Women Travelers to Latin America*, which is available on Amazon.

**Judith Kantor Clark MT'65 G'67** has received the Leadership Award from the Lebanon County (PA) Women's Commission "for her lifetime of dedication to residents of the county." Judith has served as the volunteer president of Beth Israel Synagogue, the volunteer president of Beth Israel Sisterhood, a member of the Lebanon City School Board, and a volunteer president of the Women's Medical Auxiliary of Lebanon County. She currently works in outpatient services for WellSpan Philhaven Hospital and instituted the Violent Domestic Offenders Program for Lebanon County, among other achievements. She is the mother of **Deborah Clark Lorich C'90** and the mother-in-law of the late **Dr. Dean Lorich C'85 M'90 GM'95**. Her twin sister is **Diane Kantor Shrager MT'65**.

## 1967

**Eleanor Rodio Furlong Nu'67**, a retired mental health clinician and educator, has written a cookbook, *A Taste for All Seasons: A Blend of Italian and American Cuisines*. From the press materials: "Arranged by seasons and emphasizing the importance of using fresh produce, the pages unveil a cornucopia of Italian classics as well as some innovative ideas that will whet the palate." Find more information on its release at [erodiof.com](http://erodiof.com).

**Steven L. Herbst C'67** writes, "In 2004, at 58, I retired from a 34-year career as senior vice president of a \$900 million dollar advertising agency specializing in recruitment advertising and employee communications. In 2008, I decided I was too young to retire. I got my MSW from Fordham University in 2010, plus CASAC-2 (Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor) credentials, and became a psychotherapist. Most of my career has been involved with substance abuse treatment. I am currently working remotely as an LMSW providing telehealth psychotherapy to patients in nursing and

## Events

### METRO NEW JERSEY

On January 21 at 7 p.m., the Penn Club of Metro New Jersey will host a virtual open board meeting and celebrate Ben's Birthday Bash with a "How Quaker Are You" trivia challenge. Please also join us on February 13 for a virtual game night with ConnectRship. Visit [www.pennclubmetronj.com](http://www.pennclubmetronj.com) to learn more and register. For more information, contact club president Janet Pisansky C'91 at [jpisansky@burkepotenza.com](mailto:jpisansky@burkepotenza.com).

### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Join the Penn Club of Southwest Florida for these upcoming events! On Sunday, January 16, we will have our annual Ben's Birthday Bash starting at 6 p.m., and on Saturday, February 13, we will have our annual Mystery Dinner Show at 6:30 p.m. For more information on both events, and to register, please visit [www.alumni.upenn.edu/clubs](http://www.alumni.upenn.edu/clubs) or email club president Robert Klausner C'84 M'88 at [rklausner@aol.com](mailto:rklausner@aol.com).

### SUNDANCE

The Penn Clubs of Utah, Los Angeles, Westchester/Rockland Counties, and PennNYC, in collaboration with Pennertainment, Penn Film and Media Pioneers, and the Penn Cinema Studies

Department, are proud to cohost the 9th annual Penn Sundance Schmooze, a gathering of celebrated filmmakers, entertainment industry professionals, and friends of film. The event will take place online at 2 p.m. EST on Saturday, January 30, during the 2021 Sundance Film Festival. This free, virtual event will feature a panel discussion with noted alumni in the industry, moderated by Penn Cinema Studies Professor Peter Decherney, followed by a Zoom breakout networking event. More details, including instructions to register for the event as well as the names and bios of the panelists, will be released in December. For a recap of our 2020 event, visit: [bit.ly/PennSundance](http://bit.ly/PennSundance). For updates on the 2021 Penn Sundance Schmooze, follow the Penn Club of Utah website ([bit.ly/PennUtah](http://bit.ly/PennUtah)) or the PennNYC website ([www.penn.nyc](http://www.penn.nyc)), or email Jesse R. Tandler EAS'03 W'03 at [jesse@penn.nyc](mailto:jesse@penn.nyc).

### VIRTUAL

In light of ongoing global health concerns, visit [www.alumni.upenn.edu/clubs](http://www.alumni.upenn.edu/clubs) to find the latest information on Regional Club events in your area. And be sure to check out [www.alumni.upenn.edu/govirtual](http://www.alumni.upenn.edu/govirtual) for an abundance of virtual events and digital resources available for alumni.

rehab facilities. I have no intention of ever retiring, especially with the advent of being able to work from home! As a lifelong singer, I enjoyed four years with the Penn Glee Club (where I started whistling in public after Bruce Montgomery turned that over to me); and I have been a member of the University Glee Club of New York City for 42 years. Throughout the years, I've pursued a career as a professional concert whistler ["Alumni Profiles," Nov/Dec 2001]. I am an international grand champion, the first ever named International Whistling Entertainer of the Year three years in a row, and I was named to the Whistlers' Hall of Fame (along with Bing Crosby). I've appeared on the *Today Show* twice; *Good Morning America*; *CBS This*

*Morning* three times; *CBS News Sunday Morning*, which did a feature story about my whistling; *Voice of America*—plus countless other TV and radio shows, as well as in newspapers and magazines from coast to coast and abroad. I've performed in Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, the Lincoln Center, and the Kennedy Center, and as far away as Osaka, Japan. My CD, *Broadway and Beyond*, has sold hundreds of copies. I've also done TV commercials for Verizon DSL (with James Earl Jones), Eight O'Clock Coffee, and more; and I've participated in two Guinness World Record cabaret shows. I am featured in a documentary film, *Pucker Up: The Fine Art of Whistling*, which can be viewed for free on YouTube. Check out my website, [SteveTheWhistler.com](http://SteveTheWhistler.com), to learn more."

## 1968

**Lionel M. Schooler C'68**, a partner practicing management and employment law, as well as trial and appellate litigation, at Jackson Walker in Houston, has been selected for inclusion in the *2020 Super Lawyers* list and the *2021 Best Lawyers in America* list.

## 1969

**Laura J. Colker CW'69** is coauthor of *Trauma and Young Children: Teaching Strategies to Support and Empower*. She is president of the Washington, DC-based L. J. Colker & Associates and an author, lecturer, and trainer in early childhood education.

**Dr. Eli G. Goodman C'69** is the author of *The Adventures of Abe: The \$5 Dollar Bill*. He writes, "It tells the story of a \$5 bill who recalls his most memorable adventures over a 20-year career and the important wisdoms he learned along the way. ... This is a substantial book. Suitable for both kids and adults. Lots of material and dozens of fantastic illustrations [by Angela Martinez, Eva Vikman, and Brenda Beck Fisher]." Eli also authored an illustrated children's book titled *The White Horse* in 2014. Visit [eligoodmanmd.com](http://eligoodmanmd.com) for more information.

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## 1970

**Ann Kent Cowen CW'70**, on behalf of the Class of 1970 Reunion Committee, writes, "Please join the new Class of 1970 Facebook group! This group is exclusive to the Class of 1970. To join, search for 'Penn Class of 1970 50th Reunion' on Facebook or visit [bit.ly/Penn1970](http://bit.ly/Penn1970)."

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## 1971

**Nicholas Canny Gr'71** writes, "I am now living in retirement in Ireland, having completed a stint from 2011 to 2017 on the Scientific Council of the European Research Council. In March 2020 I was awarded a Cunningham Medal by the Royal Irish Academy for excellence in research. This makes me the 45th recipient since the medal was first endowed

in 1796. Although technically retired, I remain active as a historian and have just completed a comprehensive study, *Imagining Ireland's Pasts*, that will be published by Oxford University Press in 2021. I was scheduled to give a talk to the graduate students in Penn's history department on April 1, 2020, where my topic would have been how my four years from 1967 to 1971 spent at Penn as a graduate student shaped my outlook on life and on scholarship. Sadly, I had to withdraw from this nostalgic return because of the ban on trans-Atlantic travel due to the spread of COVID-19 in Europe and in the US. As I take stock of the current situation, it saddens me to think that I may never again see the US, Philadelphia, or Penn."

## 1972

**Archpriest Alexander F. C. Webster C'72** retired in August 2019 as dean and professor emeritus of moral theology at Holy Trinity Seminary, a Russian Orthodox institution of higher learning in Jordanville, New York. He is senior coeditor of the book *Healing Humanity: Confronting Our Moral Crisis*. He writes, "I teach undergraduate courses in religious studies part-time at George Mason University back home in Virginia, where I'm delighted to devote 'full-time' attention to my family and grandchildren, at last."

## 1974

**Geoffrey Greif SW'74**, a professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work, has published his 15th book, *In-Law Relationships: Mothers, Daughters, Fathers, and Sons*, written with Michael E. Woolley. In 2020, Geoffrey was inducted into the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

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## 1975

**Guy C. Antonioli W'75** writes, "After 20 years in international marketing and advertising with Cyanamid, 3M Company, and the Interpublic Group of Agencies, and of living in Mexico City, San Antonio, Miami, and Bogotá, Colombia, I settled in Austin, Texas, in 1994 to

start GCA Consulting, which helps companies venture south with the advent of NAFTA. Then, in 1996, I opened a Hispanic division, Focus Latino, which focuses on consumer research among the US Latino population. Most of our work is in the areas of communications (positioning, concept development, and advertising testing), branding, and consumer behavior. I'm still doing research and playing tennis, and I continue to jog, which I took soon up after leaving Penn. In August, three other classmates—**John Cherry C'75**, **Dan Maze W'75**, **Walter Enick W'75**—and I got together in Austin at the Barton Creek Country Club for a weekend of golf, great dinners, and drinks. All four of us had not been together since graduation in 1975!"

**Heidi Bogin Oshin CW'75**, **Neil Friedman C'75**, and **Bill Weiner W'76** have founded ChaiFlicks, a subscription streaming service dedicated to Jewish and Israeli entertainment. Find more information at [www.chaiflicks.com](http://www.chaiflicks.com).

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## 1976

**Dr. Robert M. Fleisher GD'76** has published eight books, including *The American Strangler*, which launched in July. He writes, "I'm pleased to announce that my previous novel, *The Divine Affliction*, received the 2020 Bronze eLit Award in the mystery/suspense/thriller category. Mike Garrett, Stephen King's first editor, had this to say, 'I enjoyed your story, which rarely happens when I edit.' You can read more about my writing at [www.novelsmithbooks.com](http://www.novelsmithbooks.com)."

**Avrom Jacobs SW'76 WMP'81**, writes, "I'm delighted to report the August birth of my fourth grandchild (and first granddaughter), Rafi Eden, to my son, Gilad, and his lovely wife, Dr. Jamie Jacobs of Newton Center, Massachusetts. Rafi joins her two-year-old brother, Liev Max, and, in Israel, cousins Elior and Amitai, sons of Kayla Jacobs and Chaim Kutnicki. Rafi's birth coincided with my 70th birthday—age being but mind over matter; if you don't mind, it doesn't matter—so I got quite a present! Additionally, NormaTec, the medical/sports device firm that I cofounded with my late wife, **Dr. Laura Furst Jacobs**



**ChE'77 EE'77 GEng'78 Gr'82**, was recently sold to Hyperice, the sports recovery and technology company—so in all, a wonderful, whirlwind year. I hope everyone stays safe!”

**Michael P. Malloy L'76** writes, “West Academic published the 2020 update to my casebook *Contemporary Payment Systems*. The update includes discussion of Australia’s misspelled banknotes, the latest ‘faithless employee’ case—*Lesser v. TD Bank*—and a footnote reference to composer Irving Berlin’s analysis of the signature requirement applicable to checks and drafts.”

**Bill Weiner W'76** see **Heidi Bogin Os- hin CW'75**.

## 1977

**Rick Meyer W'77** was inducted into the 2020 USTA Eastern Tennis Hall of Fame last year. During his 10-year professional playing career on the ATP Tour, he amassed wins over a dozen players ranked in the Top 10 in the world, and he competed in several Grand Slam tournaments, reaching the Round of 16 at the 1983 Australian Open and losing to eventual champion John McEnroe in four sets at the 1980 US Open. As a student at Penn, he played No. 1 singles and doubles and won the Eastern College Athletic Conference in singles and doubles.

## 1978

**Clare Sapienza-Eck OT'78** has been appointed chief strategy officer of Inspira Health, a nonprofit healthcare organization that comprises three hospitals, a cancer center, several multispecialty health centers, and a total of more than 150 access points.

## 1979

**Neil S. Plakcy C'79** writes, “The recent publication of *The Most Expensive Spice*, 11th in my bodyguard adventure series, marks my 50th published novel. Short stories, novellas, and edited anthologies for various publishers add to that total. The wonder of the imagination and the internet have allowed me to write stories set in Pennsylvania, Florida, Hawaii,

Vermont, and France, despite quarantining in South Florida. More books to come, with no authorial retirement in the future.” For more information, visit [www.mahubooks.com](http://www.mahubooks.com).

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## 1980

**Lisa R. Jacobs W'80** was awarded the W. Edward Sell Business Lawyer Award from the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) at a virtual event in November. According to the release, the award “honors the contributions to the practice of business law at the highest level, either through the practice of law or through teaching. Recipients must have contributed to the statutory development of business law in Pennsylvania and to the PBA by working in leadership roles in the Business Law Section.”

**Jan Levine C'80**, a partner at the law firm Troutman Pepper, has been named to the *Philadelphia Business Journal's* 2020 Best of the Bar list of Philadelphia’s top lawyers. She represents clients in antitrust, unfair competition, privacy/data breach, and class action cases.

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## 1981

**Dale Borenstein Bell MT'81** and **Leslie B. Posnock C'81**, copresidents of the Class of 1981, write, “Greetings, Class of 1981! We know you want to keep up with what’s happening on campus and with our classmates, so please take a quick minute and send us your current email address (to [dalesbell01@gmail.com](mailto:dalesbell01@gmail.com) or [lposnock@schwartzposnock.com](mailto:lposnock@schwartzposnock.com)). That will allow us to update you on Penn happenings as well as our upcoming 40th Reunion (May 2021), which we’ve started planning. We do this by way of our monthly newsletter. And please join our Facebook Page for the most up to date information, photos, interactive programs, and event schedules: [bit.ly/2IITgGZ](https://bit.ly/2IITgGZ).”

**Mike Bellissimo C'81** writes, “In October, I joined Boston-based telehealth company XR Health as their first chief operating officer. XR Health delivers FDA-approved therapeutics to support physical therapy, occupational therapy, pain management, and behavioral

health through a virtual, in-home experience. Connected to a clinician over a telehealth portal, XR Health patients use VR technology to self-manage their care needs as often as they would like, all without the need for medication. Leveraging technology originated for use by Israeli army fighter pilots, XR Health has set up virtual clinics in the US in Massachusetts, Illinois, California, and Florida, with plans to expand to Texas and Michigan in early 2021. Learn more at [www.xr.health](http://www.xr.health).”

**Scott Eagle W'81** writes, “After over 35 years of being in the pharma/CPG and Silicon Valley high-tech world and building/selling companies, I decided to do one more start-up blending all of my experiences. So this January, I am launching the first US line of CBD wellness therapies for sleep and stress issues based on condition, age, gender, and lifestyle. Never imagined that my Wharton background would lead me to cannabis—Mom is so proud! Am also enjoying the California life and would love to hear from Penn friends at [seagle@zippz.com](mailto:seagle@zippz.com).”

## 1982

**Helene Panzarino C'82** writes, “I’ve been in London for a long time and realized that it’s been a while since I shared any updates. I’m a lecturer on financial technology, or fintech, for Oxford and UCL masters’ programs, as well as executive education at Imperial College London and the London Institute of Banking and Finance. It’s not where this CAS grad expected to land, but fintech—corporate innovation is my superpower. In the same vein, I have a new book out, published in November, *Reinventing Banking and Finance: Frameworks to Navigate Global Fintech Innovation*. I’m also working as chief ecosystem officer with Vacuum Labs/Tribal FS covering the US, and I’m particularly interested in hearing the views of community bankers and corporates with large SMB customer bases as regards digital transformation. So if anyone would like to share over a digital coffee, please reach out via LinkedIn.”

**Craig Sidell C'82** has published his debut children’s picture book, *The Life and Times of Fuzzy Wuzzy*. From the book’s press materials: “This book teaches children the im-

portance of being kind and loving and that it's not what you look like that is important. A great life begins with love for everyone and everything around you."

## 1983

**Steven R. Jacobs C'83**, a partner practicing corporate and M&A law at Jackson Walker, has been selected for inclusion in the 2020 *Chambers USA Guide* and the 2021 *Best Lawyers in America* list.

**Dr. Stan Savinese C'83** has been named medical director of Penn Medicine Hospice. He is an associate professor of clinical medicine at Penn's Perelman School of Medicine, and a palliative medicine consultant at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

## 1984

**Jeffrey L. Pollock C'84**, an attorney practicing in Pittsburgh since 1987, was appointed to serve as a member of the board of directors for Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS). He writes, "The board sets the policy under which NLS operates. Its members include representatives of client and community organizations who help identify the legal needs of low-income individuals and families; attorneys who understand how those needs can be met under the law; and representatives of county bar associations who foster the important role of pro bono attorneys. I also practice mediation and was one of three cocreators of CLASP, the Collaborative Law Association of Southwestern Pennsylvania. I previously served as the chair of the Allegheny County Bar Association's Center for Volunteer Legal Resources and, during parts of the last five decades, have been regularly contributing pro bono legal services, primarily in the area of family law."

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## 1985

**Cynthia Goldfine Kaiser C'85 G'87** writes, "After working for a number of years on the translation of *Au Pays des Manchots* by Georges Lecointe, my father, Howard Goldfine, professor emeritus of microbiology

at the Perelman School of Medicine, and I are excited to announce the publication of *In the Land of the Penguins* (Erskine Press, 2020). Thus, after 120 years, the Belgian Antarctic explorer Georges Lecointe has once again been freed from the Antarctic ice pack with this first translation into English of his account of the voyage of the ship *Belgica* in 1898. Lecointe recounts with humor the joys, trials, and tribulations of the very first overwintering in the Antarctic."

**Marc Tayer WG'85** writes, "In September, I was elected president of the North Coast Repertory Theatre Board of Directors (San Diego). What is the connection between my former career as a technology executive/entrepreneur and this retirement/volunteer career in the arts? Not much, except perhaps that some of my blood, sweat, and tears in the digital TV revolution paved the way for streaming video over the Internet, and now with COVID-19, our live theatre is shut down, so we are producing shows for streaming. Our current production, *Necessary Sacrifices*, is the story of Abe Lincoln's historic meetings with Frederick Douglass during the Civil War. Next up is *Same Time Next Year*, for which Ellen Burstyn won a Tony Award back when we were high school and college kids. Other than that, all is good after surviving a pretty bad COVID case in March and April."

**Larry Weitzman W'85** writes, "My first novel, *Ghost Rendition*, came out in November. It's a fun take on a spy novel, where the protagonist is a neurotic, divorced, suburban dad. So it's part thriller and part dramedy. And no, it doesn't come from personal experience ... mostly. The majority of my work is documentary, so it was a pleasure to be able to make stuff up!"

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## 1986

**Ralph H. Cathcart C'86** writes, "I would like to say hello and wish the best to all of my fellow classmates around the globe coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. I am pleased to share that despite many challenges, this year I was recognized by *Managing Intellectual Property* magazine as an IP Star 2020, by

*World Trademark Review* magazine as one of the top 1,000 trademark attorneys in the world, by *Super Lawyers* magazine as a 2020 Super Lawyer (Metro NYC); and I also became a member of the National Black Lawyers Top 100. In addition, I prevailed in defending against an appeal in *Mourabit v. Klein*, et. al, Case No. 19-2142 cv (Second Circuit June 8, 2020) on preemption grounds under the Copyright Act. Oddly enough, I was forced to argue that appeal telephonically from my home during the lockdown in New York."

**Jim Rotherham W'86**, a partner at the accounting firm Baker Tilly US, LLP in San Diego, has been appointed to the Small Business Advisory Committee (SBAC) of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). The SBAC serves as a standing resource for the FASB to provide focused input and feedback from a small public company perspective, and to assist the FASB and its staff on matters for which the FASB may seek guidance.

## 1987

**David Brigham G'87 Gr'92** has been appointed CEO of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Previously, he served as president and CEO of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

## 1988

**Nancy Davis Kho W'88** writes, "My podcast *Midlife Mixtape*—for the years between being hip and breaking one—has won an Iris Award from media company Mom2.0 and been named the 2020 Podcast of the Year. The show, available on all podcast platforms, features interviews with Gen Xers and icons of Gen X about what they actually like about being in the middle phase of life, what advice they'd give their younger selves, and that uber-important question: What was your first concert?"

**Larry Satcowitz C'88** was elected to the Vermont State House of Representatives in November.

**Dr. John Whyte C'88**, chief medical officer at WebMD, has been named to Medical, Marketing, and Media's 2020 Health Influencer 50 list. The list can be viewed at [bit.ly/3mM8865](https://bit.ly/3mM8865).



## 1989

**Dr. Christine Dingivan EAS'89** has been named president and CEO of Emmes, a contract research organization based in Rockville, Maryland, that supports clinical trials and produces research on human health and diseases.

**Lisa Niver C'89**, a travel journalist and founder of We Said Go Travel, has written a series of articles for Thrive Global, including "Escape into Fiction this Fall" (October 25). It begins, "Due to COVID-19, I have now been in Los Angeles 230 days. I used to travel nearly half of every month. Since I have not been able to move about, I have been escaping into the locations in some of my favorite fiction books." See the article and her recommendations at [bit.ly/3kmixUj](https://bit.ly/3kmixUj).

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## 1990

**Tim Ito C'90** is coauthor of *The BS Dictionary: Uncovering the Origins and True Meanings of Business Speak*. He writes, "It's a humorous take on corporate business speak—including 300 definitional entries, original research on the word origins, and what the word really means when it's used in a business context."

**Deborah Clark Lorich C'90** see **Judith Kantor Clark MT'65 G'67**.

**Tina Polsky C'90** writes, "I am very excited to announce that I have been elected as a Florida State Senator. I have served as a Florida State Representative since 2018. I have been living in Boca Raton, Florida, since 2005 with my husband Jeff and our two children. I also practice as a mediator since I 'retired' as an attorney." Tina invites alumni contact at [tina@tinapolsky.com](mailto:tina@tinapolsky.com).

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## 1991

**Ali Shapiro Cudby C'91 WG'97** writes, "After working on my newest book for almost two years, coronavirus completely upended my plans for launch. All the speaking and launch events ... POOF! Gone. Nonetheless, the launch was an amazing success, and I'm thrilled to share that *Keep Your Customers:*

*How to Stop Customer Turnover, Improve Retention and Get Lucrative, Long-Term Loyalty* hit No. 1 on the Amazon Bestseller list in April. It was also named one of the Top 50 Sales Books of 2020 by Top Sales World, which was a delightful and unexpected surprise. At Penn, I'm currently a tri-chair of Momentum 2020 (which will be held in 2021), the amazing women's conference that will be coming your way. Otherwise, life in Indianapolis is also a delightful and unexpected surprise."

**Dr. Manisha Singal C'91** has written *The CBD Skincare Solution: The Power of Cannabidiol for Healthy Skin*. She is chief medical officer at BridgePoint Hospital in Washington, DC.

## 1994

**Daniel Naegele GFA'94 Gr'96** has written *Who Shot Le Corbusier? The Architect of the Century and His Photographers*. Daniel writes, "The book is concerned with the great architect's use of photography and his working relationship with numerous photographers. Much of the groundwork for it was done at the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris in 1993 when I was researching my Penn dissertation."

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## 1995

**Dr. Aly Cohen C'95**, a rheumatologist and environmental health specialist, has written a new book, *Non-Toxic: Guide to Living Healthy in a Chemical World*, coauthored with Dr. Frederick vom Saal. She writes, "Environmental health is an incredibly relevant and important topic ... especially now with COVID, given the inflammatory response to environmental chemicals, links to comorbid conditions, and the heightened response to coronavirus infection with comorbid conditions." In December 2019, Aly gave a TEDx Talk titled "How to Protect Your Kids from Toxic Chemicals," which can be viewed at [bit.ly/2TmWTEA](https://bit.ly/2TmWTEA). Find out more on her website [thesmarthuman.com](https://thesmarthuman.com).

**Alisha Berger Gorder C'95** writes, "While I haven't had much to share with the Penn community all these long years, I finally did something sort of cool. After many years of working as a reporter and editor, I published my first

## ALUMNI IN BUSINESS

A guide for Gazette readers seeking to reach

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novel in July. These are such complex and troubling times, and *Joy: A Modern Fable* is simply written, accessible, and so very uplifting. It is a book about kindness and community. Additionally, my daughter designed and hand-drew the cover. I just love that. She's 15."

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## 1996

**Scott Savitz GEng'96 Gr'99** has published a new book of historical fiction, titled *The Fall of the Republic*. He writes, "Though the book recounts historical events from ancient Rome, many of the issues that it addresses (such as inequality, corruption, the treatment of outsiders, and a republic in danger) have contemporary relevance."

**Alexander Trivas C'96 GEd'97** writes, "I've launched a health and wellness card game company, called the Food Monsters, for families to learn about the hidden and often dangerous ingredients lurking in their food and drinks." Learn more at [thefoodmonsters.com](https://thefoodmonsters.com).

## 1997

**Samantha Rajaram G'97** has written a new novel, *The Company Daughters: A Heart-Wrenching Colonial Love Story*. The book reached the Amazon bestseller list in the categories of LGBT literary fiction and literary saga, and it was the No. 1 historical fiction novel for one week in November. Samantha writes, "My book traces an actual Dutch policy in the 17th century that sent young Dutch women to Batavia (modern day Jakarta, Indonesia) to marry Dutch settlers there. In my novel, two of these women fall in love while en route to the colony. After I received my master's degree in English at Penn, I became a lawyer and practiced law for 10 years. I've since become a professor at Chabot College in Hayward, California."

## 1999

**Meredith Lahl Foxx Nu'99 GNu'02** has been named executive chief nursing officer of the Cleveland Clinic's Stanley Shalom Zielony Institute for Nursing Excellence. In this role, she oversees the practice and education of more than 28,000 nurse caregivers, including advanced practice registered nurses, nurse leaders, registered nurses, and nursing support staff.

**Dr. Maggie Hymowitz C'99**, a New York-based ophthalmologist, released her first children's book, titled *Operation Achoo!*, coauthored with her father, Dr. Samuel Hymowitz. Maggie writes, "This book takes children on an adventure—with five germs who are on a mission to get a little boy sick—all while teaching the importance of hand-washing. The story includes a captivating song to keep children entertained while washing their hands, as well as medical terminology throughout to intrigue the young scientist." It is available in hardcover and paperback on Amazon and barnesandnoble.com.

**Ella Woger Nieves C'99** is chief operating officer of InvestPR, a nonprofit organization created by law, which is tasked with attracting new businesses and capital investment to Puerto Rico. Ella recently moved back to the island to take on this role after leading the consulting practice at the Collage Group, a market and strategy consulting firm in Washington, DC.

*Celebrate Your Reunion, May 21–23, 2021!*

## 2000

**Charles "Chaz" Howard C'00**, Penn's chaplain and new vice president for social equity and community [see "Gazetteer," Sep/Oct 2020], has published *The Bottom: A Theopoetic of the Streets*, a novel that fuses poetry and theology to explore the concept of homelessness.

*Celebrate Your Reunion, May 14–17, 2021!*

## 2001

**Monica Popescu G'01 Gr'05**, a professor of African literature at McGill University, has written *At Penpoint: African Literatures, Post-colonial Studies, and the Cold War*. According to the press materials, the book "traces the development of African literature during the second half of the 20th century, showing how the United States and the Soviet Union's efforts to further their geopolitical and ideological goals influenced literary practices and knowledge production on the African continent."

**Rikki L. Tanenbaum C'01** has been named chief operating officer of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, California. She joined San Manuel in 2018 as chief marketing officer of San Manuel Casino. In her new role, Rikki will be responsible for overseeing activities related to the planning and implementation of the tribe's strategic, cultural, and economic development objectives.

## 2003

**Jamila M. Brinson C'03**, a partner practicing management and employment law, as well as trial and appellate litigation, at Jackson Walker, has been named to the 2020 Rising Stars list from *Super Lawyers*.

## 2004

**Melissa Byrne CGS'04** writes, "So many Penn alumni were thrilled to participate in defeating **Donald Trump W'68** in his reelection campaign for president. Friends including **Sue Casey CGS'07**, **Matt Grove CGS'03**,

**Miriam Joffe-Bloch C'00**, **Arshad Hasan C'03**, **Adam Lubow C'03**, **Nina Swanson Marshall C'04 SPP'06**, and **Reshma Mehta C'02** all celebrated as we do during a pandemic—via a group chat with a lot of gifs. **Lincoln Ellis C'03** reached out to celebrate as well (Lincoln hates group chats!). During the campaign cycle, she got to work with **Morgan Finkelstein C'13** on a special messaging project featuring bright lights and big, big banners. Most of all we're excited to see Joe Biden Hon'13 get sworn in alongside his children and grandchildren, some of whom are Penn alumni and Penn students. It's a bright day for the Penn community to see the best of us represented in leadership centered on empathy and based in the ethos of laws without morals are useless. This means that on Day One over 650 children will have a team working hard to reunite them with their families, the Muslim ban will be ended, and we'll be able to truly work on building back better. And we'll cancel all student loans."

**Chenxi Jiao EAS'04** has joined the law firm Blank Rome as an associate in the consumer finance group. She works out of the New York office.

*Celebrate Your Reunion, May 21–23, 2021!*

## 2005

**Shanti Grumbine GFA'05** has been awarded a 2020 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in the category of Printmaking/Drawing/Book Arts, which includes an unrestricted grant award of \$7,000. Shanti writes, "This has instantly changed my life in these hard times."

*Celebrate Your Reunion, May 14–17, 2021!*

## 2006

**Melody Kramer C'06** writes, "I signed up to donate bone marrow while a student at Penn, and recently matched! I donated my bone marrow to an anonymous recipient, and it was one of the greatest experiences of my life. I'm now trying to sign up 1,000 people for the Be the Match registry. You can register using my link here: [join.bethematch.org/melody](https://join.bethematch.org/melody)—please email me with any questions you have at [melodykramer@gmail.com](mailto:melodykramer@gmail.com)."



## 2009

**Katerina Semida Manoff C'09 W'09** is founder of ENgin, a peer-to-peer English language program. Launched in early 2020, it has recently enrolled 1,500 participants. The program pairs English-speaking volunteers with English learners abroad for weekly online practice. Learn more at [www.enginprogram.org](http://www.enginprogram.org).

**Jarad A. Mason C'09 G'09** *see Ivy Cheung Mason C'10*.

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## 2010

**Ivy Cheung Mason C'10** and **Jarad A. Mason C'09 G'09** write, “We are overjoyed to announce the birth of our daughter, Ella Marie Mason, on June 3 in Boston.” Ivy is a postdoctoral fellow at Mass General Brigham in the Division of Sleep and Circadian Disorders and a teaching fellow at Harvard University; and Jarad is an assistant professor of chemistry at Harvard University.

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## 2011

**Richard “Ricky” Katz W'11** *see Nicole “Nicki” Blumenfeld EAS'13*.

## 2012

**Janay Sylvester C'12** has published the second edition of *Climbing Vines: A Collection of Short Stories*. She writes, “*Climbing Vines* features 19 narratives from Black alumnae and undergraduate women about their undergraduate experiences at the University. The book spans many topics, including sisterhood, self-love, the importance of diversity in the classroom, mental health and wellness, healing from sexual assault, and more. The collection is meant for all audiences; however the hope is that through reading these stories and inspired dialogue among students, faculty, staff, parents, and community members, the informative piece will guide and positively influence Black undergraduate women as they navigate their first years at Penn, or at other predominantly white institutions. The book is available

for purchase (e-book and print) on Amazon. Visit [civines.org](http://civines.org) for more information.”

## 2013

**Nicole “Nicki” Blumenfeld EAS'13** and **Richard “Ricky” Katz W'11** write, “We were married on August 23 in Westport, Connecticut. Hurrah hurrah!”

## 2014

**Ernest Owens C'14** has been named editor at large for *Philadelphia* magazine. Previously, he was a writer at large for the magazine, covering the city's political and community affairs. In 2019, he was named to the 2020 *Forbes* “30 Under 30” list. Ernest is the first Black journalist to serve as editor at large in the magazine's 112-year history.

**Arazi Pinhas C'14** writes, “I earned a PhD in astrophysics as a Gates Cambridge Scholar at the University of Cambridge in 2019. Informed by both the mysteries of the Universe and an intense spiritual experience while at Cambridge, I've written a new book on Bhakti Yoga, spirituality, and mysticism. *Wisdom of a Mystic: Spiritual Wisdom from a Kundalini Awakening* tells the intimate tale of heartbreaks and hardships that ultimately led to my spiritual awakening. The book extends an invitation to look inward, to the depths of consciousness, as a way to connect with the richness of our own being. It reminds us that the wisdom we seek is hidden in plain sight and that spirituality can—and should—be informed by our most mundane experiences. Valentina Bravo, senior book editor, called *Wisdom of a Mystic* ‘a creation born of love and devotion, two things the world desperately needs more of.’ To learn more, visit [www.mysticwisdom.press](http://www.mysticwisdom.press).”

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## 2015

**Jessica Hurley Gr'15**, assistant professor of English at George Mason University, has written a new book, *Infrastructures of Apocalypse: American Literature and the Nuclear Complex*. According to the press release, the

book delivers “a new approach to the vast nuclear infrastructure and the apocalypses it produces, focusing on Black, queer, Indigenous, and Asian American literatures.”

## 2017

**Kevin Park W'17** writes, “I'm excited to share that I have joined the board of PennPAC, a pro bono alumni consulting firm dedicated to assisting nonprofits propel their mission forward and connecting Penn grads across the country. I'm looking forward to seeing all that we'll achieve over the coming years!”

## 2019

**Ari M. Gordon Gr'19** is director of US Muslim–Jewish relations for the American Jewish Committee. In October, he was a featured speaker at a webinar presented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, titled “Understanding the Abrahamic Family Through Qibla Studies.” Ari writes, “For the first time, the Ministry hosted a program featuring a Jewish speaker discussing the relationship between the Abrahamic faiths. I used the topic of prayer direction in early Islam and religions of late antiquity (the focus of my dissertation at Penn) as a way to address difference and bridge-building between religions. This was not a standalone lecture, but part of an effort to increase exposure and openness to other faith communities in the Muslim-majority country. The Ministry has felt that exclusionary and ideologies have, of late, taken root in some segments of Indonesia and run counter to their proud legacy of pluralism and coexistence.”

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## 2020

**Kwesi Vincent Ged'20**, a teacher at the Workshop School in Philadelphia, was chosen by the Knowles Teacher Initiative as a member of its 2020 Cohort of Teaching Fellows. This year, 34 promising high school mathematics and science teachers who are just beginning their careers were awarded Knowles Teaching Fellowships.

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Margot Neuberger, C'12  
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## VIETNAM

Eleanore Yang, G'05, WG'05  
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# PennAlumni Regional Clubs

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For questions, please call:

(215) 898-7811 or

email: [daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu](mailto:daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu)

## 1940

**Martha Beard HUP'40**, Annville, PA, a retired school nurse; Sept. 10, at 100.

**J. Richard Petersen W'40**, Santa Ana, CA, retired founder of a payroll servicing business; April 14, at 101. He served in the US Army during World War II. At Penn, he was a member of Acacia fraternity.

**Sidney L. Posel C'40 L'50**, New York, a retired law professor at Rutgers University; March 8, at 99. He served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II as a meteorologist.

## 1943

**G. Ross French W'43**, Lutherville, MD, a sales executive for a wire products company; Oct. 7, at 99. He served in the US Army during World War II and was awarded a Purple Heart. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Psi fraternity, Sphinx Senior Society, and the soccer team.

**Robert T. Goodman W'43**, Jupiter, FL, May 10, 2019. His daughter is Ann Dee Goodman Rome CW'69.

**Daniel B. Green W'43**, Conshohocken, PA, former chairman and CEO of Firsttrust Bank; Aug. 26. He helped turn a small family-run bank founded by his father in 1934 into a leading bank in the Philadelphia region with \$4.5 billion in assets and a lending portfolio that includes commercial real estate. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. One son is Richard J. Green L'77 WG'78, who succeeded him as the bank's chair and CEO.

## 1944

**Dr. Seymour E. Harris C'44**, Baltimore, a retired physician; Aug. 31. He served as a flight surgeon in the US Air Force.

**Malcolm R. Kallman C'44**, Henrico, VA, retired owner of a children's clothing store; Oct. 19. He served in the US Army during World War II.

**Dr. Thomas Watkins Jr. D'44**, Dana Point, CA, a retired dentist; Oct. 4, 2019. He served in the US Navy during World War II and was the first African American dentist in that military branch.

## 1945

**H. Leon Bradlow Ch'45**, Seminole, FL, a biomedical researcher at the Rockefeller Institute who specialized in cancer and hormone-related research; Oct. 20. His wife is Hattie Gottlieb Bradlow CW'45, and his son is Alec M. Bradlow C'79.

**William G. Hjerpe ME'45**, North Attleboro, MA, a mechanical engineer at C&K Incorporated; Aug. 9. He later became manager of the company's Canadian subsidiary, based in Montreal. He served in the US Navy during World War II and the Korean War. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, the ROTC, and the rowing team. One granddaughter is Katherine Hjerpe Manuel C'01 G'01 GED'05.

**Catherine "Kaki" Hurley SantaMaria Marshall CW'45**, Philadelphia, former assistant managing director of the Annenberg Center, founder of what is now known as the Philadelphia Children's Festival, and a Penn lecturer in theatre arts; Aug. 29. She started at Penn in 1975 as the assistant managing director/artistic advisor of performing arts. When she joined the staff at the Annenberg Center, she was primarily responsible for programming, as well as overseeing student performing arts at Penn. In 1982, she took on a secondary role as a lecturer in the theatre arts program, then in the English department. She also lectured in the College of General Studies. In 1985, she founded the Philadelphia Children's Festival at the Annenberg Center. She left the Annenberg Center in 1989 and continued to teach theater arts until 1995. In 2011, she won the Penn Creative Spirit Award for the festival and her career in theater arts. As a student at Penn, she was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority and Penn Players. One daughter is Elizabeth A. Distefano CGS'84; two sons are Matthew Marshall CGS'88 and Stephen Marshall C'90; and her sister is Elena S. Brazer CW'57.

## 1946

**Wilma L. Fischer HUP'46**, Mechanicsburg, PA, a retired nurse; Oct. 9.

**Lawrence M. Newman W'46**, Somers, NY, an entrepreneur in several industries including real estate and dairy; July 15. He served in the US Army during World War II. His wife is Sydel Schwartz Newman CW'52.

**Jean Dailey Palmquist CW'46**, Voorhees, NJ, a former research scientist at the Fox Chase Cancer Center; Dec. 21, 2018. At Penn, she was a member of Kappa Delta sorority.

**Dorothy Ginsburg Rosenbaum CW'46**, Dayton, OH, a former senior scientist at Merck; Feb. 14, 2019. At Penn, she was a member of the choral society. One brother is Jack M. Ginsburg C'49.

## 1947

**Herbert J. Brenner W'47**, Fort Myers, FL, a retired executive of M. Brenner & Sons; Sept. 5. He served in the US Air Force during World War II. At Penn, he was a member of Pi Lambda Phi fraternity. One son is Arthur D. Brenner C'83. Two grandchildren are Lianna A. Brenner C'13 and Isaac R. Brenner C'20.

**John H. Henzel Ed'47 GED'47**, Essex Junction, VT, a former vocal teacher and co-owner and cook of a bed and breakfast; Sept. 19. He served in the US Army during World War II and received a Purple Heart. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity and the lightweight rowing team.

**Lee Longenecker CW'47**, Longview, TX, Sept. 21. At Penn, she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority.

**Sydney Meshkov C'47 Gr'54**, Washington, DC, a theoretical physicist who worked at what is now known as the National Institute of Standards and Technology and several universities; Aug. 31. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

## 1948

**Marie Calabrese Pietrafesa DH'48**, Beverly Hills, CA, a retired dental hygienist; Sept. 1. Her son is Dr. Charles A. Pietrafesa M'78.

**Vincent J. Salandria C'48 L'51**, Philadelphia, a retired attorney specializing in labor law and civil rights issues; Aug. 23.



He authored the book *False Mystery: Essays on the Assassination of JFK* (1999).

## 1949

**William D. Lawson III WG'49**, Gastonia, NC, a retired executive at a cotton trading company now known as Cargill Cotton; Oct. 18. He served in the US Army's Graves Registration Service during World War II.

**Marysol de Seabra Scott CW'49**, Silver Spring, MD, a retired translator for the US Department of State's Office of Language Services; April 10. She translated and interpreted in Spanish, Portuguese, and French.

## 1950

**Herman A. Bode Jr. C'50**, Street, MD, Aug. 13. At Penn, he was a member of the golf team.

**Catherine R. Naulty Clauss HUP'50**, Westover, MD, retired manager of Penn's Student Health Services; Sept. 4.

**Rev. C. William "Bill" Hassler C'50**, Powell, WY, a Presbyterian pastor; April 9. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity, Friars Senior Society, and the football team.

**John Heller C'50**, New Orleans, Sept. 5. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity and Penn Players.

**Edwin L. Hollowood WG'50**, Waynesburg, PA, a retired regional credit manager for Westinghouse Electric; Aug. 28. He served in the US Army Air Forces during World War II.

**Virginia Litto Klevan Ed'50 GEd'51**, La Crosse, WI, a retired employee at the New York State Department of Education; Sept. 24.

**Ethel Sachs Stevens CW'50**, Portland, OR, a retired realtor; Aug. 18. At Penn, she was a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority.

## 1951

**John K. Boyce Jr. WG'51**, Amarillo, TX, a retired insurance agent; Sept. 15. He served in the US Army Corps of Engineers.

At Penn, he was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity.

**William B. Corson ChE'51**, Lakewood, NJ, a retired computer programmer; Dec. 27, 2018. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and the Glee Club.

**Rebecca Ashton Goss CW'51**, Vail, CO, May 19.

**Peter R. Gyllenhaal EE'51 GEE'55**, Huntingdon Valley, PA, a retired engineer at General Electric who worked on military contracts; Sept. 27. He served in the US Navy during World War II. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Chi Rho fraternity.

**Leon C. Holt Jr. L'51**, Bethlehem, PA, a retired executive at Air Products and Chemicals Incorporated; Sept. 13. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

**Harold D. Langley G'51 Gr'60**, Arlington, VA, a retired associate curator of naval history at the Smithsonian Institution; July 29. He was also an adjunct professor at the Catholic University of America. He served in the US Army during World War II, earning the Army Meritorious Service Medal and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal.

**Karin Rademacher Loewy CW'51**, Philadelphia, a violin repairer; Sept. 10.

**Dr. C. Parker Long M'51**, Green Valley, AZ, a family physician; Oct. 6. He served in the US Marine Corps during World War II.

**Samuel L. Rosenfeld W'51**, New York, an art appraiser and private art dealer; Sept. 27. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity, the Glee Club, and the swimming team. His daughter is Marjorie R. Sanua C'78 GEd'79 Gr'86, and his son is Michael Rosenfeld C'84.

**Frank C. Sheppard C'51**, Bryn Mawr, PA, a sales representative for Aluminum Specialties and other housewares and toy companies; Sept. 1. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity. He served in the US Army Air Corps.

**Marlyn F. Smith C'51 L'54**, Bryn Athyn, PA, a lawyer; April 2. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Chi fraternity and the basketball team.

**Joseph J. Soldo WG'51**, Englewood, NJ, Feb. 26.

## Notifications

Please send notifications of deaths of alumni directly to: Alumni Records, University of Pennsylvania, Suite 300, 2929 Walnut Street, Phila., PA 19104

**EMAIL** record@ben.dev.upenn.edu

Newspaper obits are appreciated.

## 1952

**Alan L. Aufzien W'52**, New York, a retired real estate executive and former chairman of the board of the NBA's New Jersey (now Brooklyn) Nets; June 21. In 2019, he and his family set up the Aufzien Family Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Parkinson's Disease at Tel Aviv University. At Penn, he was a member of Pi Lambda Phi fraternity and WXP. One daughter is Meredith Aufzien Bauer C'83, and one son is Jonathan M. Aufzien WG'96. Two grandchildren are Andrew M. Bauer C'11 and Jacob H. Aufzien EAS'22.

**John H. Blumberg W'52**, Highland Park, IL, a former manager of his family's furniture and real estate businesses; Oct. 12. He is a veteran of the Korean War. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity and the lacrosse and squash teams.

**Lt. Col. Bernell A. "Bernie" Dowse EE'52**, Placerville, CA, a former insurance agent; Aug. 28. He served in the US Air Force for 22 years.

**Constance Prowell Haswell HUP'52**, Haddonfield, NJ, a retired pediatric nurse; Sept. 10.

**Ruth Bram Joseph CW'52**, Philadelphia, a retired educator and businessperson; Nov. 10. Her sons are Bruce Joseph C'76 W'76, Warren Joseph C'78, and Larry Joseph W'79.

**M. Barry Meyer W'52**, Abington, PA, former government relations staff member for the Aluminum Association; May 18. One daughter is Rebecca A. Meyer C'83.

**Priscilla Van Horn Walker HUP'52**, San Diego, CA, a retired nurse; Sept. 21.

**Horace E. "Ike" Williams C'52**, Whitehaven, PA, a retired underwriter at Aetna

Life and Casualty Insurance; Oct. 6. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Society fraternity.

## 1953

**Ronald J. Dobey W'53**, Columbia, MO, a retired sales representative for IBM; Aug. 21. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Society fraternity.

**Dr. Henry L. Dragun C'53**, Severna Park, MD, a retired chemist and chemistry professor at Anne Arundel Community College; May 14.

**Rev. William W. J. Ennis C'53**, Allentown, PA, a retired Lutheran pastor; Sept. 19. He served in the US Naval Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, the orchestra, and the heavyweight rowing team.

**Maralyn Habby Fowler Ed'53**, Valrico, FL, Oct. 2. At Penn, she was a member of Alpha Xi Delta sorority.

**Dr. Paul M. Ratner D'53**, Poughkeepsie, NY, a retired dentist; Sept. 21. He was one of the first dentists to provide dental implants in Poughkeepsie. He served in the US Coast Guard during World War II.

**Rev. James A. Trimble Jr. C'53**, Philadelphia, former rector of Christ Church in Old City; Sept. 6. One sister is Ann Trimble Winner CW'57.

**Roland M. Wright C'53**, Brookhaven, PA, retired copyeditor, designer, and author of a weekly column at the *News Journal* in Wilmington, DE; Sept. 16. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

## 1954

**Dr. Richard M. Barry M'54**, Arden, NC, a retired physician; Sept. 18. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

**John Bertman W'54 L'57**, Hammononton, NJ, an attorney and former municipal court judge; Sept. 28. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Delta Phi fraternity.

**Marilyn Joan Schrom Bloss HUP'54**, Gainesville, FL, a former nurse and co-owner of a gas station; Sept. 7.

**George E. Cruser Sr. WG'54**, New Hope, PA, retired chief financial officer of Westvaco Corporation, a pulp and paper company now known as WestRock; Oct. 12. He served in the US Army during the Korean War. One son is George E. Cruser WG'89.

**Gary W. Hartquist W'54**, The Villages, FL, a retired insurance agent; Sept. 29. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, the Air Force ROTC, and the soccer team.

**Dr. Dwight J. Hotchkiss Jr. M'54**, Salem, SC, a retired oncologist; Aug. 30. He served in the US Army. One brother is Rev. Robert V. Hotchkiss C'53 G'73.

**Joan McCarte Lynch CW'54**, Greenville, DE, retired owner of a stencil company; Nov. 2. Previously, she was a mathematician who worked on the UNIVAC, one of the first computers. At Penn, she was a member of Alpha Chi Omega sorority.

**Michael J. Piarulli L'54**, Cherry Hill, NJ, a retired attorney specializing in civil litigation and business law and a local politician in Camden, NJ; Aug. 21.

**Dr. Vincent J. Smith D'54**, New Britain, CT, a retired dentist; Aug. 31. He served in the US Army during World War II.

**George S. Stewart III L'54**, Philadelphia, a retired attorney; July 30. He was cited by the Philadelphia Bar Association upon his retirement "in recognition of 50 years of distinguished service" and he received an award from the Philadelphia City Council for his decades of work for the blind.

**Ione Apfelbaum Strauss CW'54**, Haverford, PA, a former Penn trustee; Oct. 1. She received Penn's Alumni Award of Merit in 1971 and became a University trustee the following year. She was the first female president of Penn Alumni (then known as the General Alumni Society) and the first woman ever to head a major private university's alumni society. She was one of the inaugural members of the Board of Overseers of the Penn School of Arts and Sciences, from 1982 to 1988. She was also a trustee of Penn Press from 2002 to 2005, and she was an early member of the Trustees' Council of Penn Women. She held countless other volunteer roles in Penn or-

ganizations, including as a member of the *Pennsylvania Gazette's* advisory board. She was one of the longest-serving members of the Board of Overseers of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, and she created and subsidized several fellowships at the Katz Center. As a student she was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* and Phi Beta Kappa honor society. One daughter is Louise A. Strauss C'82.

**Donald M. Williams ChE'54**, Pittsburgh, a retired DuPont employee in the technical polymer marketing department and a former Wilco Sales employee involved in technical industrial electronic instrument sales; July 18. He also held a patent for an aqueous semi-gloss paint. He served in the US Navy as a hospital corpsman research statistician. One daughter is Cynthia W. Schoeppner C'83, who is married to Mark G. Schoeppner W'83. Two grandsons are Kyle G. Schoeppner C'15 and Troy W. Schoeppner W'16.

## 1955

**Frank D. Dreizler ChE'55**, Malvern, PA, a retired executive at Gulf Oil; Sept. 23. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Chi fraternity.

**Paul E. Gorka FA'55**, Philadelphia, an art teacher; Oct. 12. He served in the US Army during the Korean War. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. One daughter is Barbara C. Gorka G'87 Gr'93.

**Malcolm C. Henry Gr'55**, Harpswell, ME, a retired researcher at Natick Labs who helped develop Kevlar helmets, Arctic gear, and chemical protective clothing; Sept. 28. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

**Stephen A. Wasser W'55**, Lauderhill, FL, retired executive at Golub Corporation, a supermarket operator that owns Price Chopper; Sept. 7. At Penn, he was a member of WXPn.

## 1956

**Robert C. Butler WG'56**, Essex Fells, NJ, retired chief financial officer for Cel-



gene, a pharmaceutical company; Sept. 20. He served in the US Army. One son is John H. Butler WG'89.

**Samuel H. Campbell III W'56**, Look-out Mountain, TN, president and chairman of his family's business, Chattanooga Bakery; Oct. 8. At Penn, he was a member of Friars Senior Society and Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity.

**Jonas M. L. Cohen W'56**, Baltimore, retired president of an insurance agency; Oct. 2. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. One son is Mark S. Cohen C'84.

**James J. Heffernan W'56**, Blue Bell, PA, a retired attorney; Sept. 3. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity.

**Kinnaird S. McQuade W'56**, Cincinnati, retired owner of an audio and visual equipment rental company; Feb. 29. At Penn, he was a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity.

**Bernard M. Zindler W'56**, Columbus, OH, Oct. 2. He worked in the retail clothing business. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity.

## 1957

**John L. Bidwell C'57**, Lansdale, PA, a retired dentist; Oct. 11. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity.

**Gregory E. Brodinski W'57**, Ridgefield, CT, a retired IBM executive and former teacher; Aug. 23.

**Dr. Kenneth M. Given C'57**, Lansdale, PA, a retired regulatory affairs executive at the pharmaceutical company Bristol Myers Squibb; Oct. 6. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity.

**Dr. Francis P. Judge C'57**, Ann Arbor, MI, a retired neurologist and founder of Ann Arbor Neurology; April 3. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity.

**Carol Nisnick Puschett Ed'57**, El Paso, TX, a mortgage specialist; Aug. 1. At Penn, she was a member of Phi Sigma Sigma sorority, WXPn, and Penn Players. One son is Dr. Mitchell Ivan Puschett M'92.

## 1958

**Samuel M. Cameron C'58 Gr'63**, Hatboro, PA, a professor emeritus of psychology and a clinical psychologist at Arcadia University; Sept. 5. At Penn, he was a member of the fencing team.

**Rose Specca Cochran Nu'58**, Southampton, PA, a former nurse; March 2.

**Dr. Raymond D. Fogelson G'58 Gr'62**, Chicago, professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Chicago; Jan. 20, 2020.

**Dr. Richard H. Phillips D'58**, Wyncottskill, NY, a retired dentist; Sept. 27. He served in the US Air Force during the Korean War.

**Stuart E. "Trudy" Reider W'58**, Greenwich, CT, former liaison officer with the Greenwich Japanese School; Aug. 25. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

**Hugh Van Deventer III WG'58**, Sun Valley, ID, a former manager at Hahne-mann University; Sept. 11.

**Dr. Beecher H. Watson Sr. V'58**, Church Road, VA, a veterinarian; Sept. 30. His son is Dr. Beecher H. Watson Jr. V'82.

## 1959

**Katharine Violet Sziklai Alexander L'59**, Los Altos Hills, CA, a retired attorney; Nov. 21, 2019.

**William C. Cohen Jr. W'59**, Wichita, KS, retired CEO of IMA Financial Group, an insurance brokerage; April 1. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity and the swimming team.

**Barbara Graul Gillen HUP'59**, Allentown, PA, April 11, 2019.

**Dr. Peter P. Ravin Jr. GD'59**, Dallas, PA, a retired dentist and oral surgeon; Sept. 25. He served in the US Navy as a dental officer, and later in the US Naval Reserves.

**Elizabeth Rismiller HUP'59**, Pottsville, PA, a former nursing supervisor in obstetrics and gynecology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; Sept. 3. At Penn, she was a member of the basketball team.

**Charles E. Mather III L'59**, Philadelphia, retired president of an insurance

brokerage; Sept. 21. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Psi fraternity. His brother is Victor C. Mather II C'61, and his son is Charles E. Mather IV WG'86.

**Mary E. Vason Sharp DH'59**, Jacksonville, FL, Oct. 10.

**Joseph Wakeley Jr. EF'59**, State College, PA, a retired research associate with the Penn State Applied Research Laboratory; Aug. 27. His research supported the US Navy's underwater and torpedo programs. At Penn, he was a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity, Friars Senior Society, and the swimming team.

## 1960

**Hon. Alan M. Black W'60**, Allentown, PA, retired president judge of the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas (PA); Sept. 21. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Delta Phi fraternity, Friars Senior Society, and the wrestling team. One brother is Ronald K. Black C'64. His children are Martin J. Black W'85 and Sara Ann Black C'86.

**Jennie-Marie Scott DeMartinis Nu'60 GNu'65**, Jeffersonville, PA, a former nurse who later worked as an insurance claims processor; Oct. 4. At Penn, she was a member of Alpha Chi Omega sorority.

**E. David Harrison L'60**, Washington, DC, a former lawyer; Oct. 10. He served in the US Army. One grandson is Eli J. Harrison C'24.

**Sophie P. Homsey CW'60**, Venice, FL, a retired librarian at the Delaware Museum of Natural History; June 24, 2019.

**John G. Kavanagh W'60**, Middletown, RI, Aug. 28. He worked in the insurance and investment industries. At Penn, he was a member of Psi Upsilon fraternity.

**Ward L. Reed Jr. WG'60**, Saint Johnsbury, VT, a retired partner at a management consultancy; Oct. 11. Later, he became co-owner of a restaurant in Quincy, MA. One daughter is Elizabeth A. Reed C'86 G'87.

**Sandra Saxe-Solomon CW'60**, Swampscott, MA, Aug. 10. She was an active fundraiser in her community. Her husband is Marshall Z. Solomon WG'54, and one brother is Howard Rich C'59.

**Dr. Larry A. Schmuck V'60**, New Providence, PA, a retired veterinarian; Oct. 22.

**Dr. David A. Sommer M'60**, Coral Gables, FL, a retired gastroenterologist; Sept. 12. He served in the US Army.

**Hon. Thomas T. Trettis Jr. L'60**, Naples, FL, a former judge in the Collier County Court (FL); Oct. 13. He was also a special agent for the FBI. He served in the US Marine Corps.

**John M. Whalley GLA'60**, Longridge, UK, a retired landscape architect; June 11.

## 1961

**Dr. Nick J. Bartis D'61**, Greensboro, NC, a retired dentist; September 24. He served in the US Army during the Korean War.

**Dr. MarJeanne "Mimi" Collins Blasco M'61 GM'66 CGS'07**, Lower Merion, PA, associate professor emeritus of pediatrics at Penn; Oct. 8. In 1969 she became an instructor in pediatrics, and seven years later she became an assistant professor of pediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine. In 1973, she advocated for the creation of an inpatient adolescent medicine unit at CHOP and went on to serve as the inaugural director of that unit. In 1979, she became an assistant professor at CHOP as well. In 1980, she became the assistant director of Penn's Student Health Services and was promoted to director five years later. She served as both the director of Student Health Services and as a clinician-educator at Penn's School of Medicine and at CHOP until her retirement in 2000. Her husband is Dr. Luis Blasco GM'74 CGS'07.

**Eldon du Pont Homsey GAR'61**, Wilmington, DE, an architect; May 11.

**John A. Lutts Gr'61**, Quincy, MA, a faculty member at the University of Massachusetts Boston; Sept. 21.

**Dr. Melvyn C. Rothman C'61**, Phoenix, a retired physician practicing hematology and pathology; Oct. 6. At Penn, he was a member of the fencing team. One son is James Rothman W'86. His brother is Dr. Stephen S. Rothman C'56 D'61 Gr'64.

**Dr. Louis A. Tobia Jr. C'61 D'63**, Kennett Square, PA, a retired dentist; October

6. He served in the US Army as a dentist. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity and the fencing team.

**Mendel I. Trachtman Gr'61**, Bronx, NY, July 9. One son is Dr. Howard Trachtman M'78, and one granddaughter is Hannah Littman C'13.

**George A. VerWys GEE'61**, Vestal, NY, a retired IBM employee in the federal systems division; July 25.

## 1962

**Dr. George F. Becker D'62**, Blue Point, NY, a retired dentist; Aug. 20.

**Geoffrey A. Collens GLA'62**, London, a retired landscape architect; April 10.

**Robert A. Harger GEE'62**, Shrewsbury, MA, retired technical director of a missile program at Raytheon, a defense contractor; Sept. 9. He served in the US Air Force during the Korean War.

**Charles Kindleberger III C'62**, Saint Louis, a retired city planner; Aug. 22. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Psi fraternity, Friars Senior Society, Kite and Key Society, and the soccer team.

**Sheldon W. Liebman W'62 Gr'72**, La Grange Park, IL, retired chair of the humanities department at Wilbur Wright College; Sept. 15. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity.

**Dr. Robert L. Piscatelli INT'62**, Woodbury, CT, former chief of medicine at a hospital and dean of the medical school at the University of Connecticut; Sept. 12. He served as a medical officer in the US Navy for 10 years.

**Dix C. Shevalier Jr. GAR'62**, Nantucket, MA, an architect; Oct. 3.

**Rudolph J. Wimberger GEE'62**, Niantic, CT, a retired electrical engineer; March 25. He served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II.

**Dr. Herbert Y. Wong GM'62**, Honolulu, a retired family physician; May 15.

## 1963

**Edward L. Meehan Jr. W'63**, Fal-mouth, ME, a retired insurance agent;

Sept. 27. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity.

**Dr. Malcolm H. Rourk Jr. M'63**, Durham, NC, a retired physician and clinical professor at Duke University, where he completed his career as the director of the pediatric residency program; Sept. 4. He served as a captain in the US Air Force. His wife is Jane Davis Rourk OT'60.

**Ronald T. Shefman W'63**, Houston, July 4, 2018. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity.

**Blair C. Shick L'63**, Newton, MA, a retired attorney and assistant director of the National Consumer Law Center at Boston College Law School; Aug. 26.

**Dr. Harvey M. Zalesin GD'63**, Birmingham, MI, a retired dentist and oral surgeon; July 6. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

## 1964

**George R. Johnson C'64**, Hilton Head Island, SC, an executive at a financial printing company; Oct. 4. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and the Navy/Marine ROTC.

**Dr. E. Barry Topham C'64 M'68**, Hol-laday, UT, a dermatologist; Sept. 21.

## 1965

**George G. Breed L'65**, Sebastopol, CA, a retired lawyer for the mortgage insurance company PMI; Sept. 13.

**W. Hayne Hipp WG'65**, Greenville, SC, an insurance executive, philanthropist, and Greenville civic leader; Aug. 27.

**Bernard J. Laurenzi Gr'65**, Middletown, NY, professor emeritus of chemistry at the University at Albany; Sept. 7.

**James A. Spendiff W'65**, Lewistown, PA, retired steel company executive; Sept. 6. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity.

## 1966

**Charles D. Beshore WEv'66**, New Hol-land, PA, an accountant for the steel mill

Lukens Steel; Sept. 20. He served in the US Army during the Korean War.

**Albert B. Ikeda GME'66**, Audubon, PA, a retired engineer at General Electric and Lockheed-Martin; June 26. During World War II, he was held in an internment camp. He served in the US Army during the Korean War.

**Dr. Arthur H. Jacobs D'66**, Naples, FL, a retired dentist; June 20. He was also a mentor and coach for high school students. He served in the US Air Force.

**Jerry R. Richards GEE'66**, Naples, FL, a former senior engineer at Lockheed Martin; Oct. 11.

**Dr. Judson D. Todd GV'66**, Kansas City, KS, former chairman and CEO of Syntro Corporation, a biotechnology company specializing in animal health; Sept. 10. He served in the US Air Force.

## 1967

**Karl F. G. "Ric" Du Puy GAR'67**, Washington, DC, an architect and professor emeritus of architecture at the University of Maryland; Aug. 21. Previously, he worked as an urban designer for the City of New York.

**Franklin C. Farrow Jr. GrE'67**, Paoli, PA, an electrical engineer; Sept. 23.

**Edwin C. Hamblet Gr'67**, Plattsburgh, NY, a retired professor of French at SUNY Plattsburgh; Sept. 13. He was also a teaching fellow at Penn during his graduate school years. He served in the US Army as a translator.

**Kyunja Paik Park G'67**, Villanova, PA, Dec. 1, 2019. Her husband is Dr. Kun I. Park GEE'68 GrE'72, and one daughter is Dr. Meyeon Park M'06.

**Madeleine O. Robinson G'67**, Cumberland, RI, a teacher, artist, and writer; Aug. 23. Throughout her 38-year career, she taught middle school through college.

**Dr. Donald C. Steckel M'67**, Lewisburg, PA, a retired physician; Aug. 28. He served in the US Army Corps of Engineers during the Vietnam War.

**Dr. Benson Varon Gr'67**, Alexandria, VA, June 1.

**Cynthia R. Youtzy Nu'67**, Roslyn, PA, a retired lieutenant colonel in the US Air Force; Nov. 19, 2019.

## 1968

**Carol Marshall Paumgarten CW'68**, Oyster Bay, NY, cofounder and artistic director of the dance studio Steps on Broadway; Sept. 24. At Penn, she was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. Her husband is Nicholas B. Paumgarten C'67. One son is Alexander M. Paumgarten C'94.

## 1969

**Sandra Bonilla Bailey CW'69**, Humacao, Puerto Rico, a former obstetric nurse who later owned an arts and crafts store; Sept. 8.

**Roger C. Bird Gr'69**, Blue Bell, PA, a retired business and economics professor at what is now known as the American College of Financial Services; Sept. 5.

**Mary E. Edwards GrS'69**, Philadelphia, a US government employee; April 26.

**Dr. Ann Hanahoe Hines M'69**, Danbury, CT, a retired pediatrician; Sept. 7. She founded the Cyril and Mary Hanahoe Memorial Children's Clinic in 1974 and served as its executive director. Her husband is Dr. Paul S. Hines Gr'69.

**David E. Kuendig Sr. C'69**, Daytona Beach, FL, a former manager at CertainTeed Roofing, a construction product supply company; Sept. 22. His wife is Mary Bridgman Kuendig CW'69, and one son is John A. Kuendig C'05.

**Dr. Edward Levinson GEE'69 GrE'71**, Metuchen, NJ, a software engineer; June 24.

**Robert W. Shirley Jr. WG'69**, Charlotte, NC, June 7.

## 1970

**Guy T. Castagliola C'70**, Brandon, FL, an auditor for the Veterans Administration; July 19. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of the Glee Club.

**Simeon J. Crowther Gr'70**, Seal Beach, CA, a professor emeritus of economics and former dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at California State University, Long Beach; Nov. 14, 2019. One son is John Charles Crowther C'93 Gr'01.

**David B. Ford WG'70**, Greenwich, CT, a retired partner at Goldman Sachs; Sept. 20. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity.

**Edna H. Fred SW'70**, Jacksonville, FL, retired director of operations for the Pennsylvania State Department of Public Welfare; Sept. 13.

**Robert J. Newhouse III WG'70**, Vero Beach, FL, a retired senior executive at Marsh and McLennan, an insurance broker; July 21.

**William Michael Ostrowski ME'70**, Exeter, PA, a mechanical engineer; Aug. 27. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and the football team.

## 1971

**Dr. Eugene R. Gaddis G'71 Gr'79**, West Hartford, CT, a retired archivist at the Wadsworth Atheneum art museum; Aug. 1.

**Richard A. Lindenmuth WG'71**, Raleigh, NC, a corporate turnaround executive; Aug. 31. At Penn, he was a member of the squash team.

## 1972

**Dr. Paul C. Fiehler C'72**, Freeport, PA, a pulmonologist; Oct. 6. At Penn, he was a member of Pi Lambda Phi fraternity and the wrestling team.

**Barry J. Kay G'72**, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, Dec. 13, 2019.

**Douglas M. Kincaid WG'72**, Fort Worth, TX, a retired real estate investment executive; Aug. 26.

**Jorge L. Pardo EE'72**, Casselberry, FL, a retired engineer at Duke Energy, a utility company; Sept. 30.

**William Tortu C'72**, Redondo Beach, CA, a retired lawyer; June 9. At Penn, he was a member of the Philomathean Society and the Sphinx Senior Society.



## 1973

**Leonard P. Bogorad GCP'73**, Bethesda, MD, managing director of a real estate consultancy; Aug. 26. His wife is Cynthia Schneider Bogorad CW'74.

**Dr. Alan S. Crandall GM'73**, Salt Lake City, an ophthalmologist; Oct. 2.

**Samuel A. Hood Jr. C'73**, Wake Forest, NC, July 18.

**William H. Proctor WG'73**, Pikesville, MD, a retired attorney and business professor at Morgan State University; Oct. 13. He served in the US Army and later spent 20 years in the US Army Reserve.

**Dr. Bruce D. Shoicket D'73**, Boston, a retired periodontist; Feb. 10. He also taught dentistry at Tufts University. His wife is Rachel Brandes Shoicket DH'73. One sister is Judi Shoicket Robbins CW'73.

## 1974

**John F. "Jump" Dautrich C'74**, Paoli, PA, retired manager of an insurance company; Sept. 21. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity and the track and swimming teams. One sister is Susan D. Lastowski GED'79.

**Robert E. Kane SW'74**, Bowdoinham, ME, a school therapist for teens; Aug. 28.

## 1975

**Bruce A. Biermann W'75**, Federal Way, WA, an executive finance manager at Microsoft; Sept. 30. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity.

**C. Suzanne Buechner L'75**, Newtown Square, PA, an attorney specializing in estates and probate; Sept. 22.

**Carol Riggins James WG'75**, Westport, CT, a retired executive at PNC Advisors; Sept. 16. Her brother is Dr. Edward P. Riggins Jr. C'74 D'76.

**Jeffrey T. Winston GAR'75 GLA'76**, Denver, founder of a landscape architecture and urban planning firm; July 23. His wife is Gretchen Lutz Winston CW'70.

## 1976

**Kirkpatrick W. Frederick C'76**, Memphis, TN, an office manager and bookkeeper of an architecture firm; Sept. 20.

**Irving P. McPhail GrEd'76**, Raleigh, NC, president of St. Augustine University; Oct. 15.

## 1977

**Maj. John F. Duignan WG'77**, Hummelstown, PA, a retired Pennsylvania State Trooper; Sept. 1. During his 36-year policing career, he was director of training and director of evaluations and standards. He served in the US Navy.

**David C. Franceski Jr. C'77 G'77 L'80**, Berwyn, PA, a partner in the law firm Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young, where he served in the securities litigation and enforcement department; July 11. At Penn, he was a member of Kite and Key and Phi Beta Kappa honor society.

## 1978

**Reba S. Mangham SW'78**, Barnesville, GA, a retired social worker; March 4, 2019, at 100. She served in the US Women's Army Corps during World War II.

**Dr. Thomas D. Thomson V'78**, Bountiful, UT, a former senior research scientist at Lilly Research Laboratories; July 20.

## 1980

**Dianne Hodgetts (Bladon) W'80**, Boston, a senior director for Dell Technologies; Aug. 23. At Penn, she was a member of Penn Players, Quadramics, and the Sphinx Senior Society.

**Leslie E. Skillman-Hull GNu'80**, Chatham, NJ, a nurse and artist; Feb. 29. She also worked as a professor of women's health at the Universities of Rochester and Colorado.

**Rosanne H. Wyleczuk WG'80**, Saratoga, CA, June 3.

## 1981

**Cynthia Carchman Fruchtman DH'81**, Langhorne, PA, owner of an online

retail business; Oct. 13. Her husband is Dr. Hal D. Fruchtman D'79.

**Rocco Gigante Jr. GrEd'81**, Runnemede, NJ, a retired administrator at the School District of Philadelphia; Oct. 7. He served in the US Air Force during the Korean War.

## 1982

**Deborah G. Lord G'82**, Moorestown, NJ, a retired grade-school teacher; Sept. 12.

## 1983

**Hugh K. Rogers GrEd'83**, Kingsport, TN, a grant writer and educator who taught manufacturing engineering at a number of universities; Oct. 11. He served in the US Army for 20 years and was a veteran of the Vietnam War.

## 1984

**Dr. John K. Erban III GM'84**, Wakefield, MA, a clinician, researcher, and teacher at Tufts University, where he served as chief of the hematology/oncology division; Sept. 2. His brother is Dr. Stephen B. Erban M'84 GM'87 GM'88.

## 1987

**Dr. Gregory N. Prah C'87**, West Chesterfield, NH, a physician who ran the department of anesthesiology at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital; Sept. 3. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Upsilon fraternity.

## 1989

**David B. Aureden C'89**, Skaneateles, NY, Oct. 17. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and the heavy-weight rowing team.

## 1990

**Ronald S. Rosenberg WG'90**, Basking Ridge, NJ, former head of alternative investments at Merrill Lynch; Sept. 19. At

Penn, he was a member of the Wharton Follies. One daughter is Carly Paige Rosenberg WG'21.

## 1995

**Jefferson R. Cartano EE'95 EAS'95**, Livingston, NJ, a professor of physics and engineering at County College of Morris; Aug. 24.

## 1997

**Erin Korengold Markowitz C'97**, Potomac, MD, Sept. 4. Her father is Dr. George M. Korengold C'68, and one brother is Adam S. Korengold C'94.

## 1998

**Joy Butts Bomba WEv'98**, Moosic, PA, a marketing professional in the publishing industry; Sept. 19.

**Randolph Betts Smith WG'98**, Philadelphia, a former newspaper reporter who went on to a career as a marketing executive; Aug. 21.

## 2006

**Rebecca Folkerts SPP'06**, Billings, MT, Aug. 20.

**David "Nicholas" Somich WG'06**, San Diego, a financial analyst for Verition Fund Management; Oct. 23, 2019.

## 2012

**Sarah G. Pitts L'12**, New York, a Brooklyn assistant district attorney known for her advocacy and pro bono work; Sept. 7. While at Penn, she was the associate editor of the *Journal of International Law* and a member of the Homeless Advocacy Project.

## 2013

**Susan D. Haas Gr'13**, a lecturer in the Annenberg School for Communication and the School of Social Policy and Practice at

### School Abbreviations

Ar	Architecture	GEE	master's, Electrical Engineering	HUP	Nurse training (till 1978)
ASC	Annenberg	GEng	master's, Engineering and Applied Science	L	Law
C	College (bachelor's)	GEx	master's, Engineering Executive	LAr	Landscape Architecture
CCC	College Collateral Courses	GFA	master's, Fine Arts	LPS	Liberal and Professional Studies
CE	Civil Engineering	GGs	master's, College of General Studies	M	Medicine
CGS	College of General Studies (till 2008)	GL	master's, Law	ME	Mechanical Engineering
Ch	Chemistry	GLA	master's, Landscape Architecture	MT	Medical Technology
ChE	Chemical Engineering	GME	master's, Mechanical Engineering	MtE	Metallurgical Engineering
CW	College for Women (till 1975)	GM	Medicine, post-degree	Mu	Music
D	Dental Medicine	Gmt	master's, Metallurgical Engineering	NEd	Certificate in Nursing
DH	Dental Hygiene	Gnu	master's, Nursing	Nu	Nursing (bachelor's)
EAS	Engineering and Applied Science (bachelor's)	GPU	master's, Governmental Administration	OT	Occupational Therapy
Ed	Education	Gr	doctorate	PSW	Pennsylvania School of Social Work
EE	Electrical Engineering	GrC	doctorate, Civil Engineering	PT	Physical Therapy
FA	Fine Arts	GrE	doctorate, Electrical Engineering	SAMP	School of Allied Medical Professions
G	master's, Arts and Sciences	GrEd	doctorate, Education	SPP	Social Policy and Practice (master's)
GA	master's, Architecture	GrL	doctorate, Law	SW	Social Work (master's) (till 2005)
GCE	master's, Civil Engineering	GrN	doctorate, Nursing	V	Veterinary Medicine
GCh	master's, Chemical Engineering	GRP	master's, Regional Planning	W	Wharton (bachelor's)
GCP	master's, City Planning	GrS	doctorate, Social Work	WAM	Wharton Advanced Management
GD	Dental, post-degree	GrW	doctorate, Wharton	WEF	Wharton Extension Finance
GEd	master's, Education	GV	Veterinary, post-degree	WEv	Wharton Evening School
		Hon	Honorary	WG	master's, Wharton
				WMP	Wharton Management Program

Penn; Sept. 25. She began teaching at Penn in 2004 as a research/teaching fellow at the Annenberg School (while also a PhD student) and became a lecturer in 2013. She taught the undergraduate communication internship seminar annually from 2014 through 2020. She also taught policy communications in the master of science in social policy program as a lecturer at SP2, from 2012 to 2019. In 2018, she became the internship coordinator for the Annenberg School. She also oversaw the Annenberg in Washington program and taught at other nearby universities, including Saint Joseph's, Temple, and Rutgers. Her daughter is Olivia C. Haas C'12.

## Faculty & Staff

**Dr. Mar Jeanne "Mimi" Collins Blasco.** See Class of 1961.

**Emile Bruneau**, Philadelphia, a research associate and lecturer at the Annenberg School for Communication, director of Annenberg's Peace and Conflict Neuroscience Lab, and lead scientist at the

Beyond Conflict Innovation Lab; Sept. 30. He joined the Annenberg School in 2015, first as a visiting scholar and then as a research associate and lecturer. He established the Peace and Conflict Neuroscience Lab, which has a tagline that neatly summarized his professional mission: "Putting science to work for peace" ["Gazetteer," Mar|Apr 2018]. In addition to studying empathy, his research was concerned with metaperceptions, which concern how someone believes their enemy sees them—beliefs that are often harsher than reality. The lab also studied dehumanization, the degree to which people view outgroups as less than fully human—a strong predictor of violence against them. He was also the lead scientist for Beyond Conflict, a global nonprofit focused on reducing conflict and promoting reconciliation.

**Catherine R. Naulty Clauss.** See Class of 1950.

**Dr. Maria Delivoria-Papadopoulos**, Landsdowne, PA, professor emeritus of pediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine, former director of newborn services

at HUP, and a pioneer in neonatal and pediatric medicine; Sept. 11. She joined the faculty at Penn in 1967 as an instructor in pediatrics. She became an assistant professor in physiology and pediatrics a few years later, moving up to associate professor and then, in 1976, full professor of pediatrics, physiology, and obstetrics-gynecology. She also served as the director of newborn services and the intensive care nursery at HUP from 1974 to 1996. She was associate dean for International Medical Programs, and she was also an associate physician at CHOP. She retired in 1996. She is perhaps best known for performing the world's first successful ventilation treatment for premature infants in North America. She received continuous funding from the National Institutes of Health for decades for her research, as well as numerous awards, including the American Academy of Pediatrics Lifetime Achievement Award, Penn's Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching, and the Leonard Berwick Memorial Teaching Award from the Perelman School of Medicine.

**Renée C. Fox Hon'11**, Philadelphia, the Annenberg Professor Emerita of the Social Sciences, senior fellow emerita of the Center for Bioethics, and professor emerita of sociology; Sept. 23. She joined the sociology department at Penn as a full professor in 1969 and served as the chair of the department from 1972 to 1978. Ultimately, she held joint secondary appointments in the Perelman School of Medicine's departments of psychiatry and medicine, in Wharton, and in the School of Nursing. As a medical sociologist, her teaching and research involved firsthand, participant observation-based studies in the United States, Europe, Africa, and China. Her books examined topics including attitude formation among medical students, training for uncertainty, organ transplants, and bioethics. Her latest essay collection, *Explorations of a Mind-Traveling Sociologist* (2019), was published when she was 91 ["Gazetteer," May/June 2020]. She received numerous teaching awards, including

Penn's Lindback Award, and the annual Renee C. Fox Lecture in Medicine was established in her honor. She held 11 honorary degrees, and in 1995, the Belgian Government named her Chevalier of the Order of Leopold II.

**Susan D. Haas.** *See Class of 2013.*

**Edwin C. Hamblet.** *See Class of 1967.*

**Robert Marshak**, Philadelphia, dean emeritus of the School of Veterinary Medicine; Oct. 20. He was recruited to be interim chair of Penn Vet's department of medicine in 1956. Five years later, he was appointed a professor of medicine. During the 1960s, he researched bovine leukemia, and his work culminated in the establishment of the Bovine Leukemia Research Center, sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, at Penn Vet's New Bolton Center in 1965. He was named the ninth dean of Penn Vet in 1973, and he oversaw the construction of Penn Vet's small animal hospital, as well as the enhancements and additions to Widener Hospital at New Bolton Center and the building of the C. Mahlon Kline Center for Orthopedics and Rehabilitation. In 1983, he led the five-year, \$41.5 million campaign that accelerated Penn Vet's breakthroughs in cancer research, reproductive physiology, and pathobiology. Among other curricular innovations, he introduced a core-elective curriculum and launched the pioneering Program of Aquatic Animal Medicine and Center for Interactions of Animals and Society. He served as dean until he retired in 1987. In recognition of his contributions to the School, Vernon W. Hill II W'67 and his wife, Shirley Hill, established the Robert Marshak-Vernon Hill Scholarship Fund for VMD-MBA Training at Penn Vet and Wharton in 2016.

**Catherine "Kaki" Hurley SantaMaria Marshall.** *See Class of 1945.*

**Dr. Harvey Nisenbaum**, Wynnwood, PA, professor emeritus of radiology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and chair of medical imaging at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center; Oct. 8. He joined Penn's Perelman School of Medicine as a

lecturer of radiology in 1993. In 1996, he became an associate professor and clinician-educator in radiology. Five years later, he became chairman of the department of medical imaging at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center, a position he held until 2018. In 2002, he also became an associate professor of radiology at Penn Presbyterian. He received many accolades, including the Perelman School of Medicine's Special Dean's Award, in 2015. He retired in 2019. In 2020, Penn's department of radiology created the Harvey Nisenbaum Award for Medical Imaging Research at Penn Presbyterian. It will be given for the first time in 2021. He served in the US Navy.

**Noah S. Prywes**, Rockville, MD, professor emeritus of computer and information science in Penn's School of Engineering and Applied Science; Sept. 21. In 1958, he was hired as an associate professor at Penn's Moore School of Electrical Engineering. Ten years later, he became a full professor in the School's relatively new department of computer science. He remained a professor of computer science at Penn for almost three decades, during which the department moved to Penn's School of Engineering and Applied Science. A pioneer in early computer technology, he created Multi-List, one of the first relational database management systems. Around the same time, he advanced and commercialized timesharing, the predecessor to today's cloud computing. In the 1980s and 1990s, he was at the forefront of automatic programming, nonprocedural specification systems, and reverse engineering, and the application of these technologies to parallel and distributed computing. In the early 2000s, he developed innovative speech technology for use in telephony. He retired in 1996. His sons are Menahem M. Prywes C'76 Gr'81, Daniel I. Prywes C'77 L'80, and Ron M. Prywes C'79.

**Ione Apfelbaum Strauss.** *See Class of 1954.*



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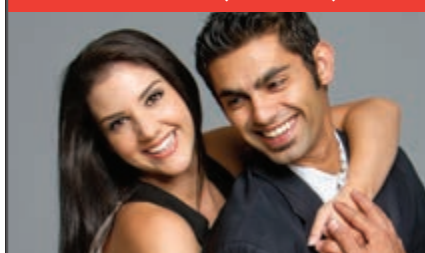
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# Celebrating Another Founder

**O**n January 17, the University recognizes the birthday of its founder, Benjamin Franklin. But more than a century ago, Penn used to celebrate the birth of another Founding Father.

George Washington's birthday, February 22, had been a University holiday since at least 1826, before petering out in the 1930s.

Originally observed in a chapel, and then in the library, the event usually included an orchestral performance, a reading of Washington's Farewell Address, a song from the Glee Club,

and a speech by the provost. The schedule expanded in 1895 to include an orator of the day, and the event moved to the Academy of Music. As the years went on, a student parade was added as well as the conferring of honorary degrees. (Penn had conferred an honorary law degree upon Washington himself in 1783.)

University Day attracted a host of dignified orators, including President William McKinley (1898), Brooklyn Mayor Seth Low (1899), Chinese Ambassador Wu Ting Fang (1900), Pennsylvania Governor Samuel Pennypacker (1904), and

President Theodore Roosevelt (1905).

In 1909, President-elect William Howard Taft graced the stage, giving a speech on "The Relation of the Learned Professions to Political Government." Washington's ascent to the presidency, Taft said, was due not to his profession or training but to his "high character as a man."

This photo was taken at the evening's alumni dinner, held in Weightman Hall. Some of the 800 guests can be seen sitting at various class tables, while the guests of honor, including Taft, are at the back.

During the Great Depression, the expense of University Day became harder to justify, and the whole celebration eventually dissolved amid a growing sense that if any Founding Father should have his own day at the University, it should be Franklin. —NP





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