


# THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE

SEP | OCT  
2025



## New Eyes on Old Controversies

What Is Penn First Plus?  
Contrarian Founder John Dickinson  
CRISPR Breakthrough



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**Amaechi Ndili**

Wharton MBA '97

UChicago LSI Fellow '24

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# History Lessons

It was already several years after the “Water Buffalo incident” that I came back to Penn to work at the *Gazette*, but the events and emotions of the time remained fresh in many people’s minds—as I learned whenever Sheldon Hackney’s name appeared in the magazine and prompted a stream of mostly angry and occasionally defensive letters, almost up to his death in 2013 [“Gazetteer,” Nov/Dec 2013]. This surprised me at first, but eventually I came to accept it as a kind of state-of-Penn-nature, so much so that it was a bit of a shock to read, in senior editor Trey Popp’s cover story, “The Hackney Files,” that none of the students in Jared Farmer’s HIST 2000: History Workshop had ever heard the term. (The course is designed to introduce students raised on the internet to archival research. Library card catalogs were also news to most of them.)

Taking advantage of the fact that the records of the Hackney administration had been unsealed after 25 years, as per University Archives and Records Center guidelines, Farmer decided to design a course built around them. In addition to the Water Buffalo incident, students dove into the archives to research controversies from the era over South African divestment; minority presence; and the Mayor’s Scholarship, a complicated lawsuit about the University’s provision of financial aid to Philadelphia residents.

Not coincidentally, the exercise also offered an opportunity to consider more recent history. “They lived through last year—I wanted to help them better understand it,” Farmer told Trey. The story details the coursework involved, and Trey also spoke with a number of the students—whose reflections are, well, more nuanced than mine would have been at 20 or so.

**Not coincidentally, the exercise also offered an opportunity to consider more recent history.**

Back then, I would have fit into the category of student now known as first-generation, low-income (FGLI), though I don’t recall being conscious of that as a status—except maybe after spring break when some peers came back with a tan and others of us had to be content with having banked extra work-study hours. Thinking

about it now though, I would have welcomed the resources offered by Penn First Plus.

In “Helping Hands,” Caren Lissner C’93—whose essay, “Close Your Eyes” [“Alumni Voices,” May/June 2025] dealt with her own family and economic challenges—details the history and goals of the program, and the growth of an alumni network dedicated to helping students find their way at Penn and thrive in the years following graduation as well.

Also in this issue, in his latest historical piece Dennis Drabelle G’66 L’69 writes about Founding Father John Dickinson, who was a trustee of an early iteration of the University. Though famous at the time as the author of *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, an influential collection of political essays, Dickinson is less well-remembered today than, say, Benjamin Franklin (with whom he occasionally battled). That may be because he considered his fellow delegates to the Second Continental Congress a bit too hasty about cutting ties with Britain—thus the article’s title, “The Prudent Patriot”—and absented himself from the final vote and signing of the Declaration of Independence. He went on to serve loyally in the revolution, though, and also to play a significant role at the constitutional convention in 1787–89.



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EDITOR John Prendergast C’80

SENIOR EDITOR Trey Popp

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Dave Zeitlin C’03

ASSISTANT EDITOR Nicole Perry

ART DIRECTOR Catherine Gontarek

PUBLISHER F. Hoopes Wampler GrEd’13

215-898-7811 fhoopes@upenn.edu

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR Linda Caiazza

215-898-6811 caiazza@upenn.edu

### EDITORIAL OFFICES

The Pennsylvania Gazette

3910 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111

PHONE 215-898-5555 FAX 215-573-4812

EMAIL gazette@ben.dev.upenn.edu

WEB thepenngazette.com

### ALUMNI RELATIONS

215-898-7811

EMAIL alumni@ben.dev.upenn.edu

WEB www.alumni.upenn.edu

### UNIVERSITY SWITCHBOARD

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### NATIONAL ADVERTISING

IVY LEAGUE MAGAZINE NETWORK Heather Wedlake

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WEB www.ivymags.com

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# Moving Penn Forward

Reinvention in progress at Weitzman Hall and across the University.

By President J. Larry Jameson

Throughout our nearly 300 years, Penn has navigated many periods of societal and technological change. In such moments, our University has repeatedly recognized an opportunity—and an obligation—to innovate in our teaching, research, and engagement with the world.

We are once again in a period of historic change. The headwinds Penn and higher education face are fierce. These include a rapidly shifting funding landscape, virtual learning and exponential advances in artificial intelligence, new research tools, rising public skepticism about higher education's value, and an imperative to serve learners across more stages of life and more parts of the world.

To meet today's extraordinary challenges and opportunities, Provost John L. Jackson Jr. and I recently announced the launch of *Penn Forward*, a University-wide strategic planning initiative meant to advance the key pillars of *In Principle and Practice* while positioning Penn to lead for the future.

*Penn Forward* focuses on six domains of bold, necessary action:

**Undergraduate Education and Innovation:** We must ensure that our students are prepared for lives situated in complexity, successful in personal fulfillment, and assuring societal contribution.

**Graduate and Professional Training:** We must get people into emerging and evolving fields or careers faster and less expensively, create more flexible pathways toward their goals, and support professional readiness across a wider spectrum of opportunities.

**Research Strategy and Financing:** We must secure new forms of support for our research ambitions and reimag-

ine approaches to innovation, while protecting the freedom and creativity essential for progress.

**Global Strategy and New Markets:** We must think across place and time—broadening Penn's reach geographically and serving learners, alumni, and partners throughout their lives.

**Access, Affordability, and Value:** We must make Penn even more approachable to those who can benefit from what we have to offer, clarify the cost and value of a Penn education, and more powerfully communicate its purpose and impact.

**Operational Transformation:** We must redesign Penn's administrative and operational architecture to support agile and entrepreneurial approaches to the opportunities ahead.

Working groups in each area, comprising faculty, staff, and students, will begin their work this semester, and some have already begun. The charge to each working group is straightforward. They will question our legacy assumptions, propose bold, implementable strategies, and stay grounded in Penn's values while making those values visible in our structures and operations.

Success will be measured by producing strategic clarity and executable choices that reflect Penn's distinctive strengths and rise to the scale of our moment. But success also means something harder to measure: fostering trust that the institution will act wisely, move with purpose, and adapt without losing the primacy of its values.

As I think about what this moment in history means for Penn, I think about a historic building on campus, currently being reborn just a stone's throw from my College Hall office. This handsome

red brick structure on 34th Street, opposite the Fisher Fine Arts Library, has been renamed Stuart Weitzman Hall for the once-in-a-generation philanthropy of leading alumnus and design maven Stuart Weitzman W'63. But it has had many past lives.

It was originally an orphanage for the daughters of soldiers and firemen, designed by the Philadelphia firm Cope & Stewardson (the masterminds behind the Quadrangle). Penn then acquired the structure in 1900 for the Physics Department. The laboratory would later be headed by nuclear physicist and future Penn president, Gaylord Harnwell Hon'53. For a time, it also housed one of the nation's largest Van de Graaff generators, used for atomic research. The building was repurposed again in the mid-1950s for Penn Nursing and yet again in the 1970s for Fine Arts.

In this latest chapter, Stuart Weitzman Hall will serve as headquarters for the Department of Fine Arts and an interdisciplinary hub for a range of endeavors, from energy research to exhibitions. This transformation keeps intact the soul of the place while equipping it to best serve future generations of students and scholars in a rapidly changing world.

In all that scaffolding and construction, guided by principles of careful preservation and creative reimagining, I see parallels to this moment for our University.

We will uphold our missions and values even as Penn, once again, responds to challenge with change. We will reinvent for this era and prepare our graduates and our institution for a future that we can scarcely imagine today. We will rebuild public trust, restore confidence in our value and integrity, and reimagine Penn for a new century of service and relevance, as Benjamin Franklin charged us to do.

We have a powerful opportunity and a real obligation. Together, we must choose to lean into our challenges and, as a united University, move Penn forward.



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# Trash heap (of praise), more on “Despair,” letters on letters.

## Eye-Opening Exposé

My Jul|Aug 2025 *Gazette* sat upon various tables in my house, its bright blue cover beckoning, and I did wonder if I would find time to read it. On two occasions it nearly made its way into the recycling, but I hesitated. I’m glad I did. Finally, here it is the end of July, and I sat up until midnight reading “Travels in Trashland,” Trey Popp’s interview with Alexander Clapp about his new, already highly regarded book, *Waste Wars*, and I just finished reading the accompanying excerpt, “Catfisher Lagoon.” My one-word summary: astonishing.

And so long overdue. Do the citizens of the wealthy world, wherever that may be, know this? Clapp’s subtitle, *The Wild Afterlife of Your Trash*, will make it hard to ignore now. The excerpt revealing, amongst other things, the secrets of Agboglobloshie is so well written and also hard to read. Hard not as in difficult, but hard as in eye-opening. I hope Clapp’s book will become a best-seller and win a Pulitzer Prize.

This particular issue of the *Gazette* had many good pieces but, for me, “Travels in Trashland” was the capstone.

*Catherine Carroll GNu’91, Dearborn, MI*

## Imaginative and Appropriate

Kudos to Gerard DuBois for his very imaginative and appropriate cover art for the Jul|Aug 2025 issue.

Reminds me of the “Planning P” [used in emergency management].

*Gene Laughlin W’62, Duwall, WA*

## We Can’t Escape It

I have enjoyed and looked forward to every issue of the *Gazette*. The “Travels in Trashland” article backs up some other



“My one-word summary:  
astonishing. And so  
long overdue.”

things I’ve read recently. Author Alexander Clapp’s quote in Trey Popp’s interview about plastics disposal being an “absolute nightmare” is on the money because it’s infiltrating our brains and our bodies. And we can’t escape it no matter what we do.

*Bill Staton WG’71, Charlotte, NC*

## Standard Bearer

Regarding “Beyond Salvation” [“Notes from the Undergrad,” Jul|Aug 2025]: Grand Prize Undergrad Essay contest? You gotta be kidding. No quibble with the topic, but the body of the paper reads like a lightweight freshman essay that looks forward to intellectual development hopefully to be encountered at Penn.

Ivy League standards seem to have slipped.

*Fred C. Bergamo D’64, Oradell, NJ*

## We Welcome Letters

Please email us at [gazette@ben.dev.upenn.edu](mailto:gazette@ben.dev.upenn.edu).

Letters should refer to material published in the magazine and may be edited for clarity, civility, and length. For more letters, visit [thepenngazette.com](http://thepenngazette.com).

## Cause for Despair?

I thoroughly enjoyed the story about Justin McDaniel and his Existential Despair course [“Welcome to Despair,” May|Jun 2025]. As a college professor myself, I plan to steal several of his ideas. But I couldn’t help noticing that a disproportionate number of the students quoted in the piece were from Wharton. Their descriptions of a Wharton education—“My brain was built for spreadsheets over these past four years,” says one of them—made it seem pretty narrow, dull, and impoverished. These students are, to paraphrase Professor McDaniel, paying more and getting less, and perhaps Penn ought to look hard at what passes for a college education at Wharton.

*Steven Conn Gr’94, Yellow Springs, OH*

*An occasional Gazette contributor whose book The Lies of the Land was reviewed in our May|Jun 2024 issue, the writer is also the author of Nothing Succeeds Like Failure: The Sad History of American Business Schools.—Ed.*

## A Beacon of Hope!

I have never felt better about despair! Your story about Justin McDaniel and his “unorthodox” courses may be the best I have ever read in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. His commitment to his students, their fortitude to sign up and abide by the course guidelines, and his support of them outside the classroom was inspiring. When so many of our institutions of higher learning are being questioned, I see a beacon of hope! Thank you for helping me to embrace despair!

*Paul C. Kelly WG’82, Yachats, OR*

## Learning about Lea

I attended the Henry C. Lea Elementary School at 47th and Locust Streets in

Philadelphia from second through eighth grades. I am now 85. At no time did I know anything about the person for whom my elementary school was named, except to be aware that our Lea spelled his name differently from the Civil War's Lee. Thank you for publishing a review of the new book *The Inquisition's Inquisitor: Henry Charles Lea* ["Arts," May/June 2025]. Now, for the first time, I know what an interesting man he was and that he was a "Penn benefactor" as well.

*Robert W. Tollen C'61 L'64, San Rafael, CA*

### My Life in a Ghost Building

I am so excited, I have to write! I just read "Architectural Afterlives" ["Arts," May/June 2025] about the book *Building Ghosts: Past Lives and Lost Places in a Changing City*. Thumbing through I immediately recognized the picture of 1830 Rittenhouse Square and couldn't believe my eyes. The ghost image outlined on

its side—1828 Rittenhouse Square—was home for me as I was growing up.

I am writing because author Molly Lester was quoted as saying she wished she knew who lived in the buildings that she and photographer Michael Bixler chronicled. I could recite who lived in each *unit* but instead choose to relate a few instances from my time while there.

In those days nothing was ever locked, anywhere, including the building entrance, so I never gave it a thought when I stepped over sleeping strangers in the main hall downstairs on my way to elementary school. As I got older, walking the dog at 2 a.m. was totally safe. We shared the bathroom with our neighbors ... no door locks.

When I was an undergraduate at Penn, I came home from class one day to find police crawling everywhere. A resident of 1830 had jumped, coming through my skylight. At age seven, I had a dear friend in 1830. We visited each after-

noon: he from his concrete balcony; me from my metal fire escape. However, times change, and as an older teenager I found a stranger crawling through our back window from that same fire escape.

Eventually the city condemned the building—rightly so; it was decrepit. Gone were the days of skating in the street, of my father finding parking at the sidewalk, and many other innocent activities theretofore taken for granted. We moved down the street to an upper floor in 1810.

Lots of memories still haunt me, and books [or magazine articles] where that address is mentioned make my nose itch.

Thank you for publishing that article and photo.

*Valentine M. Albright EA'58, Emerald Isle, NC*

### Disappointed

In response to Dr. Alan Deegan ["Letters," Jul/Aug 2025], who objected to the University of Pennsylvania's original

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decision to permit Lia Thomas to participate in the Penn women's swimming team, I actually supported that original decision and am very disappointed about Penn's capitulation to the Trump administration's pressure to force a reversal of their policy on transgender athletes ["Gazetteer," this issue]. Not only will Ms. Thomas's accomplishments

and records be officially nullified, but the settlement Penn agreed to will mean that transgender athletes will not have an opportunity to compete on the University's sports teams in the future.

The argument that this settlement will benefit women athletes is highly ironic, as the Trump administration is decimating the Department of Education and making student loans harder to get and more onerous to pay off. These policies will make it more difficult for women athletes to access universities and therefore to have the opportunity to participate in college sports.

The assertion that transgender women's participation in college sports is unfair to cisgender women is spurious and is another example of Donald Trump's demonization of certain groups of people for political advantage. Far from being some kind of existential threat to society, transgender people are in fact much

more likely to be bullied and to attempt and die by suicide.

I would have hoped that my alma mater would stand by its principles of fairness and inclusion, rather than cave in to the Trump administration's extortionate demands.

*Elise Auerbach C'81, Chicago*

**Common Sense at Penn**

I read the Jul|Aug 2025 edition of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* with interest.

I was astonished, however, to find there was no mention of the University's overdue apology to the members of the women's swim team.

Delighted to see a big dose of common sense at Penn. My compliments to the administration.

*Richard Samuelson WG'85, Anderson, SC*

*Penn's Title IX settlement was announced on July 1, after the issue went to press.—Ed.*

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**Why Not Try to Listen?**

Perhaps David Weiss ["Letters," Jul|Aug 2025] has spent a little too much time encircled by the vast numbers of liberals employed in academia and not enough time with those of us who generally "don't get trained in critical thinking." Instead of dining, working, enjoying the company of the 90 percent of liberal teachers in colleges who support your political beliefs, why not stoop down to our level and have a frank discussion of what this administration has been saddled with by its predecessor? Instead of accepting the opinions of those who are likely to parrot yours, why not try to listen to why Trump's approval ratings continue to climb?

The Democrats' only playbook is not to solve the immigration problem, not to attempt to lower taxes and reduce the deficit, not to curb spending, but to label Trump a Nazi, a king, a racist, and spin yarns predicting the pain we will suffer should the successes of this administration continue.

*Heff Heffernan C'68, Asheville, NC*



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# Counting Days

By Norah Rami [▶](#)

*"Time, chain of days and nights, is nothing but  
A name for breathing in and breathing out"*  
-Iqbal, *Saqi Nama*, Stanza No. 5

**Y**ou will decide to be friends with him after a speech he makes in your high school debate class on the first day of freshman year. The room will be windowless with fluorescent lights reflecting off the white walls of your suburban Texas high school, which was rumored to have been modeled after a prison. Each day, after class, you will stuff your loose papers in your bag to make sure you can walk to biology class with him. It will take him half a year before he decides to wait for you.

He is the smartest person that you have ever encountered. When you read, you will start muttering aloud to yourself, trying to memorize passages so that you can quote esoteric philosophies and percentages back at him whenever you get into an argument. You will want to be just like him. He will tell you that you are the first person to tell him that.

When you are not at debate competitions together, you will meet midway between your houses—the corner of your old elementary school—to sit outside and read. He will have read more than anyone at your school, and you will find yourself repeating the ideas he told you on these walks in your college seminars years later. You will never return his copy of *Notes of a Native Son*, instead packing it in your suitcase when you move to Philadelphia for college, ignoring his illegible notes in the margins when you return to it again and again.

Senior year of high school, you will pick him up for school each morning along with three other friends. He will be silent amid the chaos of the packed car, stuck between two brothers who incessantly argue about the last film they've seen. But on the way back home, it will be just the two of you, and he will become a different person. You will casually say *Love you* when you drop him off at the end of the day, the same way you

address your other close friends. At first, he will be shocked, scolding you for using the word too easily. But slowly, he will begin to return the endearment. Carefully, as though testing a hypothesis.

You will introduce him to the music that you and all your friends listen to. He will hate it at first. But eventually, you will both be screaming along to Haley Heynderickx's "Oom Sha La La." *I need to start a garden. I need to start a garden. I need to start a garden.* You will collapse into giggles, and Oom Sha La La will take on a meaning of its own. Part of a private language shared only between the two of you.

Some days after school, when you are avoiding going home, you will take him with you to the nearby forest to explore. The two of you will move and speak without direction, constantly trying to best the other with your wit. Ted Kaczynski. Logical Positivism. Aristotle. These are the topics you will discuss, though you knew nothing about them before you met him. Sometimes, the path will grow narrow. One of you will go up ahead, yelling back to the other. The Brazos River, full of mud and silt, snakes beneath you in a heavy malaise. You will point out it is the color of your shared skin and hear his laughter from among the trees.

He will be the second person on the invite list for your 18th birthday—right after the friend who insisted that you throw a party and two above your prom date. It will be a casual affair. He will show up early and nervous, toying with the top button of his button-down, paired with nice slacks. He will spend most of the party by himself in the corner, out of place among the shorts and high school gossip. This, he will admit, was the first party he had ever been invited to.

Before you leave for college, he will show up at your home. It will have been a while since you last met for a walk. He will admit that this is because his body has been in constant pain. The disease that had condemned his childhood to a

wheelchair is now declaring total war in the months before he is supposed to spread his wings for college. He will claim that today is a good day, that he wants to go for a walk as the two of you always do.

Here is how many days we have spent together, he will say, calculating a number well into the thousands—virtually every single day since the first day of high school. Here is how many days we have in the future if we see each other five times a year for the rest of our lives, he will say. It will be a small number. No, you will say, though your negation is more of a prayer than a fact. Our partners will be best friends. Our children will be best friends. We will have dinner once a month on Thursday. He will let you enjoy these fictions, though in truth, he hadn't expected to even make it to graduation. That night, he will tell you that every time he looks at the moon in New York, he will think of you.

Home from college for a week, it will take you a moment to recognize him on the side of the road, at the corner in front of your elementary school. He will be bigger than you now, with a beard and long, curly hair. He will no longer look like the timid boy whom you were always trying to protect; instead, as you will soon learn, he has become the type of boy who makes uncouth jokes at the expense of the girl he is seeing. But you will know it is him by the way he moves his hands while listening to music, even if no one is there. He will slowly turn around as you run toward him, calling his name, and before long, you will slip back into that familiar cadence. You will be surprised to hear that he reads poetry now, sending you some verses of Iqbal; after all, this is the boy who used to tease you as awfully romantic when you showed him your own poems. You will plan to meet up the next day. But when you get home, you will never follow up. You fear that you will never be able to understand him again. You fear that he no longer understands you. You wish you could turn back time.

You will see each other four times over the next year. Once, he will open his wallet and give you a Polaroid of the two of you from senior year. “I won’t need it anymore.” Another time, you will fight on a walk, and he will tell you that he doesn’t like the person he sees you growing into. You will bite your tongue instead of saying, *Back at you*. This will not be the first time that he attempts to call off your friendship, and you expect him to come back around, like he always does. But perhaps you don’t know him quite as well as you thought, because he never will apologize. You will not guess that both of your families will move out of this town in just a few years. You will not realize that this is the last time the two of you will walk this route together.

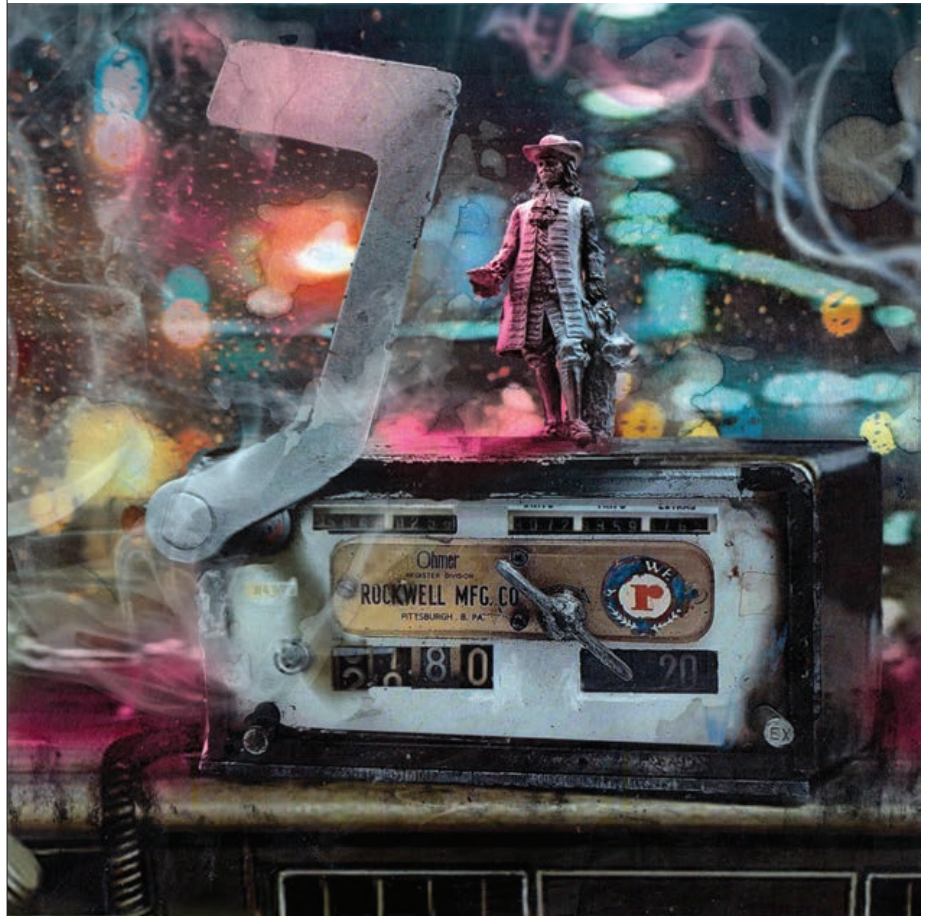
In February, you will visit New York and decide at the last minute to meet up with him at the art gallery where he works. You will wrap your arms around his shoulders as if holding him together. He will be solid and yours to protect again.

The walls will be a sterile white, harshly lit so as to feel otherworldly. Showing you around the exhibition, he will guide you to a pointillist painting littered with neon greens and pinks. The boy you knew would have scoffed at it. Instead, he will look down at his feet, his weight shifting like a pendulum. His hair will be longer now and much curlier than yours. He will tell you that he is sick again, his body pushing him to an edge that you will refuse to fathom, though he had long warned you of this moment.

We don’t talk anymore, he will say when you ask why he hadn’t reached out to you earlier. It will be neither a lamentation nor an accusation. It will simply be a fact. Two years before, he became the only friend to ever make you cry. Now you will simply nod and exhale.

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Norah Rami is a College senior and the editor-in-chief of the *Daily Pennsylvanian’s 34th Street Magazine*. This essay won first prize in the *Gazette’s* 2025 Undergraduate Essay Contest.



## Student Driver

Experiencing Philly’s Summer of 1980, at 20 cents a click.

By David Porter

### “So, you married?”

The question came out of the blue from the woman in the back of my cab. It was about 4:30 a.m. on a June morning in 1980, and I’d picked her and a man up on South Broad Street in front of the former Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, which had been closed between 1976 and 1979 after an outbreak of what became known as Legionnaires’ Disease.

They made an odd couple. She was a curvy, loud-talking blonde and he was a mousy, middle-aged professor type. After I’d dropped him off, she’d asked me to take her to Sixth and Cross Streets, so we set out toward the heart of South Philadelphia. It was my first night on the job and she was my first fare.

“Um, no,” I responded.

“Got a girlfriend?”

“Well ... yeah, but she doesn’t live here,” I said, silently wondering why I was offering details as if I was applying for a job.

Another pause.

“Know any guys who want to go for \$20?”

“Uh, I don’t know.”

“What about you?”

Not wanting to appear ungrateful, I stammered an excuse about just having started my night and not wanting to get off on the wrong foot with my new boss.

“But I am flattered, thanks,” I added.

Illustration by David Hollenbach

She shrugged. “OK.”

We pulled up to her address, a nondescript brick rowhouse that could have been on any of a hundred blocks in South Philly, and she fished in her pocket for the fare. The meter read \$7.55. She gave me a fistful of bills and change that came to \$7.90.

“I’m sorry, I would give you more,” she said. “But my husband would kill me.”

And so began my love affair with the city of Philadelphia, from behind the wheel of a red-and-white United Cab in the summer between my sophomore and junior years. I had a front-row seat to the whole gamut of human behavior staged by the sex workers, businessmen, fortune-tellers, drunks, amorous couples, tourists, and just regular folks I picked up. I took them to glitzy addresses on Rittenhouse Square and to the “invisible” outlying neighborhoods that only ever made the evening news when they’d been the site of a particularly gruesome crime.

There was plenty of that in 1980—the FBI logged more than 17,000 violent crimes in the city that year, including 440 homicides.

On a brighter note, Philadelphia’s sports-mad residents were witnessing the kind of year other cities’ fans could only envy: the 76ers and Flyers had reached their respective leagues’ championships, and the Phillies and Eagles would go on to title games with the Phillies bringing home their first World Series crown that fall.

On the streets, the picture was more complicated. Cities are in constant flux, but Philadelphia in 1980 seemed at a particularly significant crossroads. Frank Rizzo, the burly ex-police commissioner who oversaw a department beset with allegations of racism and misconduct, had left office after two polarizing terms as mayor. Change was coming for the physical city as well. The longtime prohibition on buildings higher than William Penn’s hat atop City Hall would be rescinded soon, and the aging Reading Terminal would cease operation as a rail

## The “bop switch,” a toggle that would make the meter go faster, was to be used judiciously.

hub but would revive the past glory of its public marketplace. But for now, burlesque houses still dotted east Market Street, and for every upscale restaurant there seemed to be at least two where scrapple was prominent on the menu.

Against that backdrop, I walked down to the parking lot by 30th Street Station one evening to meet my future employer, a rough-around-the-edges guy named Mike who operated a United franchise consisting of about a dozen cabs. Time has erased the details of who gave me his number, but had Google existed in 1980 I would have discovered that Mike had been a material witness in a murder trial a few years earlier and had been mentioned, but never charged, in connection with a separate murder-for-hire plot.

It didn’t take long for the rest of the cabbies to gather around and engage in a little impromptu hazing.

“I bet you don’t even know the city, man,” one sneered.

“Yeah, where’s Red Lion Road?” another demanded.

Mike ended the inquisition by informing me I’d start with the day shift, 4 a.m. to 4 p.m. Before long I moved to nights starting at 4 p.m., considered more lucrative for encompassing the afternoon rush hour as well as restaurant and bar traffic into the wee hours.

I settled into a routine: I’d walk from my rented room at Alpha Epsilon Pi near 40th and Spruce to get the Market-

Frankford El downtown, pick up my cab, and head out. Whoever was taking my cab for the day shift would usually drop me off at 40th and Walnut, where I’d pick up some breakfast at McDonald’s before heading back to the frat house to sleep. During the day I’d go for a bike ride or find a pickup soccer game at Franklin Field. I tapped into reserves of stamina I didn’t know I possessed, and soon the 12-hour shifts were no big thing, bolstered by the occasional stop at Jim’s Steaks on South Street.

The rest of the crew warmed up to me fairly quickly, aided by an exchange I had with Mike one afternoon. Our payouts were computed using counters that tallied the number of trips and 20-cent increments on the meter. United took a percentage and we got the rest plus tips. Whatever sorcery he practiced on those two numbers is still a mystery to me, but I didn’t care since the money was good. “I know you’re screwing me, Mike, but you know what—it’s OK,” I told him in front of the rest of the crew. They fell out laughing like it was the funniest thing they’d ever heard.

They were a diverse group in race, age, and demeanor. There was Marvin, Mike’s co-owner, a bilious, middle-aged white guy who never had much good to say to or about anyone; rumor had it Mike used to make him empty his pockets and socks after shifts to make sure he wasn’t skimming off the top. Frank, a middle-aged Black man, was probably the nicest to me; he’d been at the cab game a long time but had been a professional dancer in his younger years. Bobby and Juan were younger and more gregarious and would regale me with stories of bizarre fares they’d had. I can still see droopy, middle-aged Lenny heading out on his shift, a bottle of Maalox sticking out of his back pocket. When two Russian immigrants arrived midsummer they went onto the schedule as “Russian 1” and “Russian 2” and managed to rack up big numbers despite (or maybe due to) knowing almost no English.

The quality of the cabs we drove was ... inconsistent. The air conditioning would break, they'd idle too high or stall out, and sometimes you wouldn't be able to coax a car out of third gear. One, No. 587, was highly coveted because of an electrical quirk that would jump the meter 20 cents whenever you hit the horn. A fare had noticed it a while back and complained, but Mike, in his infinite wisdom, decided it wasn't worth fixing.

Then there was the infamous "bop switch," a toggle affixed to some of the cabs' steering columns that would make the meter go faster. It was to be used judiciously. "I had a guy tell me to turn the radio down, which I did," Juan told me once. "Then he said to turn it down again. So after I turned it down I reached right down and flipped the switch. I bopped the guy pretty good."

My adventure came to an end in August as I prepared to visit my parents before the start of school. On my last day I was sitting in a long line of cabs at the airport when I saw Juan gesturing wildly up ahead—he had snagged a South Jersey fare for me, the equivalent of a three-run homer in the ninth inning. I took the guy to Sicklerville, made enough to breeze through the rest of my shift, and turned in my cab for the last time.

Truths, particularly personal ones, often become self-evident grudgingly, over time. It took until a few years ago—sadly, on the occasion of the passing of an old friend I'd met in Philly—for me to appreciate that although I had spent my childhood and teenage years in a small college town in New England, I had really "grown up" in Philadelphia, arriving as an unsure 18-year-old and, over the next four years at Penn and 15 years afterward, developing a career and immersing myself in the city's rhythms and rituals. I'll always see the summer of 1980 as the start of that journey.

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David Porter C'82 spent more than 35 years in the news business in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New York City, most recently with the Associated Press.

# Diminuendo for a Dream

Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*, in seven gentle movements.

By Gerald Kamens



## ***Introit et Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy)***

On this Friday night in the summer of 1992, the work starts slowly. The orchestra begins, playing alone for just one measure before the large choir, behind the musicians, softly enters the drama, requesting, in Church Latin, eternal rest and lasting light for the soul of the departed one—possibly a deceased parent or other family member, or, maybe, some long-ago king or potentate.

I sit alone, crouched down in an end chair in the last row of this ancient cathedral—John Calvin's long ago church home—far back from the performers. I'm not supposed to be here. I'm just a worn-down American, clandestinely absorbing the sublime music rising from these intense, earnest Swiss men and women. They're mostly young, though there's some gray hair here and there, and mostly dressed in jeans and chinos, for this is a rehearsal. The scores of singers and instrumentalists are preparing for the real performance—which

will take place on Monday, since rehearsals, as I have discovered, are not allowed in the cathedral on Saturdays and Sundays. Alas, I can't be there on Monday. My work in Geneva has concluded, and I return to Washington, and my family, tomorrow.

This first movement ends with the choir calling to Christ several times, first urgently, then more quietly, until, finally, there is a very soft request for mercy.

## ***Offertoire (Offerings)***

The choir sings, "May the lasting light shine for them," and "Free the souls of the departed from eternal punishment and the deep lake." Heavy stuff.

Nobody seems to care that I've snuck, through a side door, into this cathedral, trailing the singers and instrumentalists as they arrived in buses, cabs, and private cars. The only other non-performers visible to me are two gray-haired women meticulously sweeping the worn stone floor behind me. Down in front, a young baritone

soloist is singing, beseeching God, all in Church Latin of course, to make departed souls transcend from death to life. His singing reminds me, also a baritone, of how and why I got to this place tonight.

The choir voices again pray that the departed souls may not fall into darkness.

### ***Sanctus (Holy)***

The choir gives praise in the highest to the departed one.

I suppose I'm feeling a bit sorry for myself. I can't imagine anyone giving me much praise for my labors these last four weeks, at the old League of Nations building in Geneva, that optimistic edificial attempt to attain a world peace that never came. I'm wrapping up my month-long effort to help the US prepare for the forthcoming "Earth Summit"—the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development—laboring five days a week on position papers and talking points for use by our high-level delegation to Rio de Janeiro next June. The conference's stated purpose is "to reconcile worldwide economic development with protection of the environment." It has been a painstaking task for us who have toiled in the Geneva vineyards: endless wordsmithing and syntactical haggling punctuated by often-combative evening forums with other countries' delegations.

A dreamy harp floats to the fore, then the organ, before the sopranos and altos join in, singing Holy.

### ***Pie Jesu (Holy Jesus)***

Again the choir asks for "eternal rest."

I go over again in my head how I got here tonight. One of my fellow worker bees said she'd read in a Geneva paper—her French was much better than mine—that there'd be a rehearsal the next night, at some church, of a choir singing Fauré's *Requiem*.

In years past, I'd sung that *Requiem* in my church choir back home. I even knew what the Latin words meant in English. I also knew that baritones were sometimes in short supply in choral groups.

So, with enormous chutzpah, I figured maybe I could ask this singing group if I, a visiting American baritone, could join their rehearsal for one night.

Once I found the "church," I discovered it was actually the immense and ancient Cathédrale Saint-Pierre. Next to its locked front door was a sign in French announcing the Monday performance of Fauré's *Requiem* by the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, one of the world's leading international orchestras. Mortified, I decided I must flee this place as quickly as possible. But, at the last minute, hearing faint strains of voices inside, I changed my mind and decided to don a cloak of invisibility, attempting to creep undetected into the building.

### ***Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)***

"Light eternal shine for them."

I study the bright, attentive faces of the young men and women in the choir. Not looking at all lazy, they seem about the same age, which makes me suspect they're a chorus from a local university or music conservatory—often where professional orchestras, like this one, get their choruses. At the age of 19, I sang, with the Penn Glee Club, in the chorus of Beethoven's glorious Ninth Symphony, in German, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and, later that year, again with that Orchestra, in the chorus of a concert version of *Carmen*. But my singing career was all downhill, prestige-wise, after that.

### ***Libera Me (Free Me, God)***

The baritone soloist sings alone. "Free me, Lord, from eternal death on that terrible day when the heavens will move and the earth will be shaken, when you come to judge the world with fire." The choir then sings, "I am trembling," followed by a very loud exclamation: "Day of wrath."

Earlier in the week, I had taken part in a heated debate with representatives of Zimbabwe, India, and a few other countries. Some nations wanted to explicitly articulate a world goal of eradicating poverty within 25 years. Speak-

ing for the US, on instruction from my bosses, I said such a goal was impossible and unwise to promise. Afterward, the Indian government delegate conceded to me in private that he knew that goal was impossible, but that the people of his country needed to hear it. To give them hope. I emerged from the whole discussion thoroughly depressed.

The choir ends softly, singing, "May the light always shine." Finally, the soloist and the choir again repeat, "Free me, God."

### ***In Paradisum (In Paradise)***

The choir sings, to conclude the *Requiem*, "May angels lead you to paradise."

I wonder, not for the first time, about the meaning of this word. What did paradise signify for the deceased individual for whom this Requiem was composed? What does it mean for these singers, and the players in the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande on this night? What does it mean for me? I come to no conclusion, for, as my churchgoing mother-in-law once told my wife, nobody really knows what happens after you die.

As I listen to the soaring words, tears suddenly fill my eyes. I suddenly realize how emotionally parched I've been feeling these last few days in Geneva. Is this why I ended up here tonight—not to sing a baritone part but seeking instead simply to be liberated by this glorious music?

Finally, the choir sings, gently, about finding "eternal rest." It is over.

Donning again my cloak of hopeful invisibility, I hasten down a side aisle to a rear door exit, getting there before the performers. Outside, hailing a nearby cab back to my hotel room, I finish packing for my departure tomorrow, fortified by a few glasses of cheap red wine.

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Gerald Kamens C'56 has worked in a mental hospital, the White House, the US Senate, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense but spent most of his government career in the US Agency for International Development, focused successively on Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and global environmental issues.



## Carnaroli Steps Down

Before departing for Stanford, Penn's long-serving senior executive vice president looks back at 25 years of transformative progress—and ahead to a new era of uncertainty for higher education. ▶

**Craig Carnaroli W'85 remembers visiting Penn on a college road trip in the summer of 1980**

with a friend whose mother pulled up at 34th and Chestnut Streets: “I saw the law school building, and that, to me, is what a university looked like,” he says. Had she picked a different spot nearby, he might instead have found himself facing a surface parking lot or a scruffy open field, legacies of the 1960s era of “urban renewal.” If the budding Wharton student had gotten a peek at the University’s books, he would have seen an institution emerging from years of shaky finances and deficit spending in the 1970s.

Conditions had improved considerably by the time Carnaroli returned to campus as the University’s vice president for finance and treasurer in 2000, after earning an MBA at Stanford in 1990 and working in finance for a decade at CS First Boston and Merrill Lynch.

Amid the controversies of his 12-year tenure in the 1980s and early 1990s (see this issue’s cover story), Penn President Sheldon Hackney Hon’93 had led a \$1.47 billion fundraising campaign (then the largest in higher education) and restored the University’s financial health. Then Judith Rodin CW’66 Hon’04’s *Agenda for Excellence* had further accelerated Penn’s fundraising prowess, enhanced financial aid programs, and improved relationships with Penn’s neighbors in West Philadelphia during her decade in College Hall.

While at Merrill Lynch and after he came to Penn, Carnaroli worked with Rodin and then-Executive Vice President John Fry in unwinding the financial difficulties faced by the University of Pennsylvania Health System in the 1990s. Named executive vice president—which Carnaroli likens to the role of chief operating officer—by President Amy Gutmann Hon’22 in 2004, he has been a key figure in the physical transformation of Penn’s campus, the explosive growth of the endowment, and the ambitious expansion of financial aid over Gutmann’s tenure and beyond, as well as in navigating the turbulent current era in higher education.

In a June statement announcing that Carnaroli was leaving Penn to become Stanford University’s senior vice president for finance and administration, President J. Larry Jameson praised Carnaroli’s “financial stewardship”—pointing to the increase in Penn’s “net assets from \$4.7 billion to \$31.0 billion”—as well as his role in contending with disruptions like the financial crisis in 2008, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the University’s ongoing response to real and threatened federal funding cuts.

Carnaroli says he’d been thinking for a while about what his next chapter would be. “With some of the turmoil we’ve experienced over the last few years, I felt I could be kind of a source of stability through some of these leadership transitions,” he says. “I just felt like it was

**“Whether we realize it or not, we’ve lived through a golden age of higher education.”**

the right time for Penn and the right time for me to pursue something different.”

Though he got his MBA at Stanford and worked in California for a year or so, “I’ve definitely been more of an East Coast guy,” Carnaroli says. He grew up in East Lyme, Connecticut, before coming to Penn to study. One of his “many reasons to be thankful” for that decision—in addition to the “lifelong friendships that you have from being here”—was a work-study job with Wharton’s Robert Inman, now the Richard King Mellon Professor Emeritus of Finance, he says. “That, plus my evolving interest in economics and finance, really ignited my passion around how the public and private sectors work together” and helped lead to a “whole career dedicated to nonprofit management and finances.” He cites historians Walter Licht and Rick Beeman as other influences while a student and later an administrator.

A self-described “sports junkie,” Carnaroli also enjoyed reconnecting with the Palestra and Franklin Field as a staff member.

Taking on the role of EVP allowed him to broaden his perspective from finance and

financial operations to the University’s overall management, Carnaroli says. That has included opportunities to engage with the broader community, such as by chairing the University City District board and supporting partnerships with groups focusing on workforce training, affordable housing, and other issues, as well as through Penn’s longstanding strategy for expanding local engagement through “where we hire, where we buy, who we use to construct. And I think that’s been very effective,” he says.

One memory “that sits with me most,” he says, was President Gutmann’s inaugural speech in Irvine Auditorium when she introduced the Penn Compact. “I just feel like that vision that she laid out really galvanized the community, and people wanted to identify with it. I always say it was quite prescient, what she wanted to emphasize” through the Compact’s goals of increasing access, integrating knowledge, and engaging locally and globally. “If you think about the issues we’ve dealt with over the last 20 years, those have been important ones.”

Another point of pride was helping get the long-gestating project to develop the former “postal lands” east of campus “to the finish line,” he says. That process had been started by Hackney and then-trustee chair Al Shoemaker W’60 Hon’95 in the 1980s and “greatly advanced” by Rodin, Fry, and then-senior vice president for facilities and real estate Omar Blaik, but it took until 2007 for Penn to acquire the land.

That led to the creation of Penn Park and a planning process to develop Penn Connects—the University’s master plan for growth and an example of Gutmann’s “great vision,” Carnaroli says [“New Campus Dawning,” Sep|Oct 2006]. Led by him and Interim Provost Peter Conn initially and then Provost Ron Daniels, working with the design firm Sasaki as consultant, it involved “the deans, students, thought leaders, faculty, trustees, I mean, everyone. It was a great sign of people coming together.”

In addition to Penn Park, “we’ve seen an incredible transformation of the campus over the last 25 years, physically,” Carnaroli says. Through judicious use of land within Penn’s footprint, the University has “been able “to expand in academic areas like data science and energy science, and to offer housing for students on campus, as opposed to in the neighborhood,” he says, and “I think the quality of the architecture has been quite good.”

The elimination of loans from Penn’s financial aid packages in 2007 “was a big move on our part, a big resource commitment. But again, Amy said, ‘This is a priority,’ and she made it a priority in terms of fundraising,” he says—and the board of trustees and alumni community responded. “The statistic I love is that undergraduates who graduate with debt is down to 19 percent from 80 percent.”

From a financial perspective, “what you’re trying to

do—which we were successful at—is to grow revenues other than tuition faster than inflation,” Carnaroli explains. “Philanthropy really took off under Judy and Amy. They raised the bar for what we needed to be raising annually.” And technology transfer “was completely transformed” under Gutmann’s leadership since the creation of the Penn Center for Innovation (PCI) [“Making Things Happen,” Jul|Aug 2024], with annual revenues now seven times what they were when PCI was launched. Similarly, the endowment contribution “used to be about eight percent of the academic budget. Now it’s close to 20 percent,” he says.

Traditionally, tuition has provided a third of revenue, sponsored research a third, and “everything else about a third,” Carnaroli adds. “That investment income and number—we’ve really strengthened the balance sheet over time.” But the growth of endowments at Penn and elsewhere has also contributed to mounting hostility toward higher education. “In the public sphere, [people say], ‘You have these big endowments, you don’t use enough of them,’” he says. “So, well, it was maybe a good financial strategy. We have to look at it maybe through a different prism of, is there a size at which, ‘Enough is enough?’”

Carnaroli is matter of fact about the University’s handling of the external crises of the 2008 financial meltdown and the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of the former, Penn benefited from the fact that

### ADMINISTRATION

## New Appointments Announced

Over the past few months, the University has announced a series of new appointments to fill key leadership roles. Here’s a look at some:

**Mark F. Dingfield began as Penn’s executive vice president in August**, succeeding Craig Carnaroli W’85, who had served in the role since 2004 [“Gazetteer,” this issue].

Dingfield had been Penn’s vice president for finance and treasurer since 2022, leading efforts to strengthen the University’s financial position and modernize core business operations. Among his contributions, he recently led the launch of the Quaker Commitment financial aid program to support middle-income students and families [“Gazetteer,” May|Jun 2025].

As executive vice president, Dingfield will oversee Penn’s business and administrative operations. Penn President J. Larry Jameson called Dingfield, who first came to Penn in 2017 as associate provost for finance and planning, “a principled, dynamic leader who brings intellectual rigor, financial acumen, and an instinct for collaboration.”

**David Meaney GEng’88 Gr’91 was named vice provost for research**, replacing Dawn Bonnell in the role on August 1.

The senior associate dean for faculty development and strategic initiatives as well as the inaugural Solomon R. Pollock Professor of Bioengineering in the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), Meaney began teaching at Penn in 1993 and “is a dynamic and deeply experienced leader, who is engaged in every aspect of research at Penn, from cross-campus partnerships, to space and capital planning, to initiatives in technology and entrepreneurship,” Provost John L. Jackson Jr. said in making the announcement.

**Russell Composto and Kelly Jordan-Sciutto were named the vice provost for undergraduate education and the vice provost for graduate education, respectively.** Both began on July 1 in these two new positions, which will assume many of the administrative and oversight roles of the deputy provost and what had been the vice provost for education.

Composto has been at Penn since 1990, serving from 2015 to 2023 as the associate dean for undergraduate education of SEAS, where he’s currently a professor of materials science and engineering.

Jordan-Sciutto has been at Penn since 2001, serving since 2017 as associate dean for graduate education and director of biomedical graduate studies in the Perelman School of Medicine and since 2022 as associate dean for organizational effectiveness in the School of Dental Medicine.

Both Composto and Jordan-Sciutto were first-generation college students and are “two of our most dynamic and innovative educators,” Jackson said.

**Mark Trodden began his tenure as dean of the School of Arts & Sciences (SAS) on June 1.**

A faculty member at Penn since 2009, Trodden is also the Thomas S. Gates Jr. Professor of Physics & Astronomy. He most recently served as associate dean for the natural sciences in SAS, where he oversaw seven departments and 15 centers and institutes, and he previously chaired the Department of Physics and Astronomy from 2014 to 2022.

“Dr. Trodden is a distinguished physicist, accomplished academic leader, and deeply respected member of the Penn community, and brings extraordinary breadth and depth of experience to one of the University’s most vital academic enterprises,” Penn President J. Larry Jameson said.

Stephen Fluharty C’79 Gr’81 had been the longest-serving dean in SAS history, before stepping down at the end of 2024 after 12 years.

“our endowment at that time was not as illiquid as the other university endowments,” allowing the University to avoid cutting budgets and laying off staff as aggressively as some peer institutions. “But ultimately, the recovery of the mortgage crisis was much faster than people anticipated. So I think, again, we were prudent that we didn’t overreact. We kind of trimmed where we needed to trim.”

COVID presented a mixed picture in financial terms, involving both reduced operational expenses during lockdowns and lost revenues for things like housing and business services. “That being said, it was very disruptive to our educational and research missions as well as to how people work,” he says, with effects that continue to linger. “There’s a long tail to this, unfortunately.”

He’s more concerned about what the future may bring. Last March, he and Provost John L. Jackson Jr. announced a series of cost-containment efforts sparked by the incoming Trump administration’s actions against higher education [“Gazetteer,” May/June 2025].

“Whether we realize it or not, we’ve lived through a golden age of higher education,” Carnaroli says. “Think about it: low interest rates, booming endowments, high levels of philanthropy, incredible demand, growing programs, online degrees. It’s been quite a boom period, with very relatively low inflation,” which benefits the financial model for universities.

The version of the endowment tax that survived in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act passed in July “came in lower than we’ve been forecasting—but still an increase over what we pay today,” Carnaroli says. If recent decades have resembled a golden age, “I think we’re now in a very uncertain age.”

The federal government seems to be pivoting away from “the model that we’ve had back to Vannevar Bush,” whereby the government provides research funding and universities “help create the innovations that fuel the economy,” he adds. “I think this administration wants to be more selective about what they fund and what areas they want to fund, and that will have a hit.” A range of impacts—from limits on indirect-cost recovery to reduced research grants, falling international enrollments, student loan changes, and endowment taxes—is “just going to change the operating model of the university.”

He expects universities to emphasize becoming “leaner administratively,” while “dealing with an environment, unfortunately, where there’s a lot of mistrust of higher education.” That’s “a shame,” he says, “because there are so many great people in our community that are doing wonderful things. But people have very strong feelings. This is where social media [comes in]. Things get blown up more than they deserve.”

Carnaroli suggests that Penn “should be planning for the future to be different. Therefore, I think it’s an op-

## GIFT

# Lurie Autism Institute Launched

**Penn Medicine and the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)** announced in June a joint initiative called the Lurie Autism Institute, thanks to a \$50 million gift from the Lurie family—the largest single donation to a US medical center focused on autism research across the lifespan.



Per the press release, the first-of-its kind institute will “strategically leverage CHOP and Penn Medicine’s strengths in autism research and translation to seek answers to the most challenging and important questions” around autism spectrum disorder (ASD), which

more than 75 million people worldwide are living with, including one in 31 children and one in 45 adults in the US.

The Lurie family has previously founded other centers and foundations to support individuals with ASD. Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie (pictured left), whose brother has autism, said in a statement that he hopes the institute can “unlock answers that have eluded the field for far too long.”

The Lurie Autism Institute aims to be a global hub for autism research that connects scientists, clinicians, families, students, and donors. Madeline Bell G’09, CEO of Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, said it will “build on the success of established programs like the Center for Autism Research at CHOP and the Autism Spectrum Program of Excellence at Penn by bringing the top experts in the field together to make breakthroughs in autism research and care.”

portunity to rethink how we’re organized and how we operate.” Acknowledging that “I’m out of my lane here academically,” he suggests potential adjustments in “how we cluster people with common research interests” across different schools and departments to promote more collaboration and stretch fewer research dollars further.

“I think the pressures will not abate,” he adds. “Before any of this happened, people worried about the cost of tuition.” While in practice financial aid often reduces the net price—what students and families actually pay—well below the full tuition rate, “you’ve got that kind of angst in the environment. So rethinking the models of how we deliver education is prudent for university leadership.”

Looking ahead to his new role at Stanford, Carnaroli recognizes that “universities are all a little bit different” and that he’ll “need to learn that environment and how they operate.” But there’s one general principle he’ll bring with him. “I subscribe to the Aretha Franklin School of Management,” he says. “Everything is about R-E-S-P-E-C-T. I just believe that if you respect everyone and you show them respect, you’ll get that back.”

He’ll certainly take away “incredibly fond memories” from his time at Penn. The outreach from staff colleagues, faculty, and students since his announcement “has been overwhelming,” he says. “I’ve gotten more from Penn than I put in. It’s bittersweet. I mean, I love the place.” —JP

# Why We Choose What We Choose

Annenberg professor Emily Falk's new book probes the human brain's value system.



**F**or Emily Falk, who studies how we make choices, choosing to take a job at Penn was easy. For one thing, it meant coming home.

Falk grew up in the Delaware Valley, got interested in neuroscience as an undergraduate at Brown, and went on to earn a PhD at UCLA. As a professor at the University of Michigan, she visited Penn to give a talk that her parents attended. Soon after, she jumped at the chance to conduct her work in neuroscience at the Annenberg School for Communication.

Falk—a professor of communication, psychology, marketing and OID (Opera-

tions, Informatics, and Decisions), the vice dean of Annenberg, and the director of the Communication Neuroscience Lab—could probably explain just what her gray matter was doing when she made that decision. The workings of the brain in such circumstances are at the center of her new book, *What We Value: The Neuroscience of Choice and Change*, published in April by W. W. Norton.

*Gazette* contributor Daniel Akst C'78 spoke with Falk about her research, the brain's "value system," and the role of other people in the choices we make.

## What can we learn from neuroscience about the choices we make and how we might make different ones?

When I started doing this research, I wanted to figure out how to help people make choices that would make them happier and healthier. I started out thinking about media campaigns—for example, how we might help motivate people to use more sunscreen and avoid skin cancer or to get more physical activity or quit smoking. When we measured activation in certain key brain systems, including the brain's value system, the self-relevance system, and social-relevance system, it helped us predict who was going to change their behavior. What's happening in these brain systems that might be useful for those of us who want to more deliberately make those kinds of changes? How do we coach people when we know that there are particular behaviors that would lengthen their life or make them happier?

## Can you explain what you mean by the brain's value system and how it influences the choices that we make?

When people think about values, some might think about moral values that we learn from our communities or our education or our religion. And some people might think about economics, like getting a deal online or at the store. Neuroscientists think about the output of the calculations that our brains are doing all day every day that produce our choices. First the

value system identifies what we're choosing between, and then calculates a subjective value based for each option on our past experiences, our current situation, our future goals. The value system is connected to other brain systems that help us enact the choice. After we make the choice, the value system keeps track of how it went. Did it go better or worse than I thought it would? That helps us learn and update for the future. We think: *That cake was delicious. I should definitely get it again next time at this bakery.* Or: *Ugh, that was way too sweet. I'm never getting this again.*

## Do people really weigh things as you suggest?

A lot of the time we do make choices on automatic pilot. But we can also choose to focus on different aspects of a situation to change how we feel about it. If you're looking for an apartment, maybe the realtor showed you something really awful to anchor you on that, and then they show you this apartment and it looks amazing. If they had taken you first to a beautiful penthouse that was out of your price range but had everything you've ever dreamed of, and then brought you to this place, it looks less appealing, right? But you can play that game too. You can decide the order in which you look at places and also who you take along with you. If you want to feel good about the cheaper apartment, go with an up-beat person who'll appreci-

ate the bay window and the beautiful light and who'll chat with the neighbors to help you make friends. With that person, the place might look pretty good to you. But if you go with your friend who's really skeptical and grumpy, that friend may say, *Ugh, look at the ceiling. I can see some water damage. And, Oh, this place is right next to a busy road. It's going to be super loud.* You'd make a completely different valuation even though you're standing in the same apartment. One thing I explore in the book is, how can we be more aware of these factors?

**You mentioned the self-relevance system and the social-relevance system. What are those?**

The self-relevance system makes calculations about who we are: *Is this me or not me?* One thing about the self-relevance system, though, is that it's producing sort of a caricature of who we are in any given moment. And that sense that this is me or not me can play into what we prefer and the choices that we make in ways that shape who we are—but can also limit who we are. For example, we know that there are strong societal norms about what kind of people do certain jobs—when you think about an investment banker or a nurse, different images probably come to mind. As a result, our identities can shape what we anticipate the rewards of particular actions to be. *Would I do well as an investment banker? Do people like*

## Ask yourself where you are getting your ideas.

*me tend to be successful in that role?* Also, when our brain thinks of something as “me,” it tends to think of it as good. “Not me” is more likely to be bad. Knowing this can be useful in thinking about decisions or goals that we have, both in playing to our strengths yet recognizing how we sometimes cling tightly to behaviors we've done in the past because they're part of who we are. That can make it hard to let go of those behaviors in favor of things that might serve us better in the future. In the book, I describe strategies—like values affirmation—to help us feel more open to change.

**Isn't neuroscience a double-edged sword? It might help us make our preferred choices. But it might also help profit-seekers and politicians influence us in ways we might not prefer.**

There are lots of tools that marketers and advertisers use to design and select messaging. Neuroscience can help people understand: What are the factors that shape decision making? What goes into the value calculation? Why do

self-relevance social rewards feel so powerful and how does that play into our value calculations? Maybe neuroscience can help people think more purposefully about how they want to set up their environments or their communities or how they want to spend their time. I think it's important for the knowledge to be in the public domain, so that people can be aware of what is possible. Just like any tool, these insights can be used for purposes that align with our values—or are counter to them. For example, I'm really concerned about the rise of AI, and the ability to make AI companions or customized platforms that will exert influence over people's decisions. People typically are not aware of how strongly others influence them, and agents created by these tech companies, who have strong profit motives and don't have our best interests at heart, will change our preferences and behaviors.

**Your book focuses not just on how neuroscience helps us understand and guide our choices, but also how it helps us come together.**

There's a bunch of interesting neuroscience showing the ways that our media environments drive our brain responses. So for example, if you and I watch the same engaging movie clip, our brain responses are going to be synchronized in certain key regions. And that synchronized response is particularly true for people who see the world in similar ways. When friends watch movie

clips, their brain responses are even more similar to each other than when strangers watch movie clips. Further, when different groups of people hear one backstory versus another one, the people who share the same backstory coming into the scan show synchronized brain responses with each other, but different brain responses from the people who are given an alternate backstory. That's true listening to J. D. Salinger stories, which are not explicitly political, and when we scan the brains of Democrats and Republicans watching the exact same news clips. Democrats show synchronized responses with one another but not with Republicans and vice versa. I think this has to do with the assumptions we bring to the table going in.

**What are the implications of that?**

We need to be more curious about the backstories, about the assumptions that people are bringing in beforehand. Ask yourself where you are getting your ideas, who are the authors of books that you've read recently or podcasts that you've listened to. And if all those people are really similar to you, you will have a more limited toolkit when you're trying to come up with new ways of approaching problems. We need to think about this so that we have some way of regaining a shared reality and identifying solutions to our biggest challenges.

At 10 months, KJ Muldoon was well enough to return home with his family.

# CRISPR's First Custom Cure

How Penn Medicine and CHOP achieved a historic medical breakthrough.



**KJ Muldoon was born on the first day of August in 2024** at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). Within 48 hours, the baby boy developed symptoms of a rare genetic disease known as CPS1 deficiency, which causes toxic levels of ammonia to build up in the bloodstream whenever a child eats protein. Fewer than one in a million babies are born with the condition, which carries a 50 percent fatality rate in early infancy and inflicts brain damage on many of the rest. Liver transplantation offers the best prognosis—but by the time afflicted babies are large enough to get one, they've often already suffered irreversible neurological injuries.

Yet after seven months of intensive care and a radically restricted diet at CHOP, KJ became an even rarer patient: the first in the world to be successfully treated with a personalized CRISPR gene editing therapy. Three months after that, his family took him home.

The pioneering breakthrough was the fruit of a collaboration between Rebecca Ahrens-Nicklas, director of CHOP's Gene Therapy for Inherited Metabolic Disorders Frontier Program, and Kiran Musunuru ML'19 GM'24, the Barry J. Gertz Professor for Translational Research in Penn's Perelman School of Medicine. Both are members of the NIH-funded Somatic Cell Genome Editing

Consortium—and they had started practicing for this moment about a year and a half before Nicole and Kyle Muldoon entered the labor-and-delivery unit to bring their fourth child into the world.

The physician-researchers had set out to solve the vexing problem of what are known as “N-of-1” disorders, in which a single person's unique genetic code requires a therapy so specifically tailored that it would only be expected to work on that individual alone—if it indeed worked at all. CPS1 deficiency is emblematic in that each case often arises from a slightly different inherited genetic mutation, making every patient somewhat unique.

Musunuru and Ahrens-Nicklas developed a process to use lipid nanoparticles to deliver a base-editing therapy to targeted cells—first on a petri dish, then in mice, then in cynomolgus monkeys. Their aim was to design, test, and deliver a bespoke gene-editing therapy to a human patient fast enough for it to make a difference. Similar gene-editing therapies have been administered to a small number of adults in recent years, but designing a personalized therapy for a specific patient (rather than for a pre-selected mutation) represented a new frontier.

They began challenging themselves with “time trials,” as Musunuru explained in a podcast interview at the American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy (ASGCT) Conference in June. “She [Ahrens-Nicklas] would give

me a variant and say, ‘How quickly can you solve this in a laboratory?’” he recalled. At the beginning, it took about a year and a half—which was too long “to be able to help patients,” he said. So they kept refining and practicing the process. Thanks in part to the skill and tenacity of Sarah Grandinette, a PhD candidate at Penn who “did the lion's share of the bench work,” the team compressed the timeline to approximately six months. And by the time KJ Muldoon was born, “we felt like we were in a good position to actually do it for real.”

As detailed in a May 15 article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Musunuru and Ahrens-Nicklas led a North American team spanning academia and industry to carry out the first-of-its-kind treatment. Within a month of KJ's birth they developed a patient-specific cell line, which was then used to generate experimental mice that effectively reproduced KJ's specific mutation. The customized therapy was tested on these mice, whose livers showed substantial corrective editing without worrisome side effects. Additional toxicology and efficacy studies were done in monkeys and on cell cultures. Armed with these positive results, the team submitted a single-patient, expanded-access Investigational New Drug application to the FDA when KJ turned six months old, and received approval one week later.

In late February 2025, KJ received his first infusion of the experimental therapy. The

low dosage appeared to work; doctors were able to increase KJ's protein intake without causing harm. That opened the way to two more planned infusions in March and April. Although KJ continued to need a medication used to manage high blood ammonia levels, its dosage was significantly reduced as the baby boy seemed to turn a corner.

ferred." That said, "he's doing well. He looks great, and he has gained a large amount of weight. Before we treated him he was in the ninth percentile for body weight for his age. Now he's in the 40th."

An editorial accompanying the *NEJM* report expressed hope that the breakthrough "could be transformational for N-of-1 disorders," espe-

**"Years and years of progress in gene editing and collaboration between researchers and clinicians made this moment possible."**

"He had this huge growth spurt," Musunuru recalled at the ASGCT conference. "He was really undersized—he wasn't getting enough protein because it would turn into ammonia and build up in his body and could cause injury to his brain ... but after the treatment we could give him a full amount of protein and he just thrived."

At 10 months, KJ Muldoon was well enough to return home with his family.

Since it's not considered ethically acceptable to biopsy the liver of a small child whose organ now seems to be functioning well, the extent to which KJ's liver cells were transformed through genetic editing remains unknown. "We don't actually know how well it worked in his body," Musunuru explained. "So everything has to be in-

cially if regulators were to validate the overall approach rather than require approval for each unique disease-specific application.

"Years and years of progress in gene editing and collaboration between researchers and clinicians made this moment possible," Ahrens-Nicklas said in a statement announcing the breakthrough, "and while KJ is just one patient, we hope he is the first of many to benefit from a methodology that can be scaled to fit an individual patient's needs."

"The point of this," said Musunuru, "is we want to be able to personalize for any patient—not just the patient who comes along who has the perfect variant, the right disease. That's the old way of thinking. We want to be able to help every single patient who comes our way." —*TP*

## A New Chapter for Penn Football

Amid an ever-shifting college sports backdrop, Ivy League teams can now participate in the football playoffs.



**S**itting in his office in mid-July, ahead of his 39th year at Penn, head football coach Ray Priore is thinking about some of the best Penn football teams he's ever seen.

There are the 1993 and 1994 squads that reeled off back-to-back undefeated seasons. The 2002 juggernaut that decimated almost everyone, and the 2003 group that followed with the program's last 10–0 season. And then there's the famed 1986 group that, a year before Priore arrived at Penn as an assistant coach, went a perfect 10–0 with a huge road upset win over Navy to boot.

It's fun for Priore and others to ponder how far some of those teams might have

gotten in the national playoffs had the Ivy League been eligible to participate.

Soon, they'll no longer have to wonder.

Starting this season, Ivy League teams will for the first time be allowed to compete in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) playoffs, with the conference winner getting an automatic berth. The Ivy League Council of Presidents reversed the longstanding league policy in December following a year-long process initiated by the Ivy League's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

"It's a great thing for the league," Priore says.

And a long time coming, too. It's been about 70 years

## HIGHER EDUCATION

## University Announces Title IX Settlement

**With millions of dollars of research money hanging in the balance,** the University reached an agreement with the federal government regarding the participation of transgender athlete Lia Thomas C'22 on Penn's women's swimming team in 2021–22.

In an email to the University community on July 1, Penn President J. Larry Jameson wrote that Penn and the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights resolved an investigation into Penn's compliance with Title IX for women's athletics that began in February after President Donald Trump W'68 signed an executive order aimed at restricting federal funding for educational institutions that allow transgender women to participate in women's sports.

Jameson reiterated that Penn was "in compliance with NCAA eligibility rules and Title IX as then interpreted" when Thomas, a former swimmer on Penn's men's team, joined the women's team after transitioning and completing more than a year of testosterone suppression treatment. Jameson added that Penn will "continue to adhere" to the NCAA's new rules that limit competition in women's sports to student-athletes assigned female at birth only, a change that was adopted in February following the Trump administration's executive order.

"Penn has never maintained a policy of its own regarding the participation of transgender athletes in intercollegiate sports," Jameson stressed. "Nor do we maintain our own policies related to other NCAA rules." Nevertheless, Penn found itself in the center of a heated national debate after Thomas set several program and Ivy League records and won an NCAA title in the 500-yard freestyle more than three years ago ["Sports," May/June 2022].

As part of the resolution agreement with the Department of Education, Thomas's three individual school records were scrubbed from the Penn Athletics website to "indicate who would now hold the records under current eligibility guidelines." Other actions the University took included "releasing a public statement reaffirming our commitment to fully comply with

Title IX in all of our athletic programs and to continuously adapt our practices as Title IX evolves over time," as well as sending apology letters to female athletes "who experienced a competitive disadvantage or experienced anxiety" due to Thomas's inclusion on the team.

Jameson noted that had the investigation gone unresolved, it "could have had significant and lasting implications for the University of Pennsylvania." Although his memo did not address federal funding directly, reports indicated that after the agreement the White House released \$175 million in previously frozen federal research funds earmarked for Penn.

"Penn remains committed to fostering a community that is welcoming, inclusive, and open to all students, faculty, and staff," Jameson concluded. "I share this commitment, just as I remain dedicated to preserving and advancing the University's vital and enduring mission."

The announcement made national headlines and elicited strong responses from people in the Penn community and beyond. The executive committee of Penn's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP–Penn) issued a statement asserting that "Penn has put a price tag on our values," thus making "all trans students, faculty, staff, and community members less safe, exposing them to renewed and emboldened harassment and discriminatory treatment." In an opinion piece for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Penn education professor Jonathan Zimmerman wrote that regardless of one's views on the "complicated question" surrounding the fairness of trans athletes competing in women's sports, the University "caved" to the federal government and apologized even though it knew it had followed the law. "What does it profit a university if it gains the whole world of federal dollars and loses its own soul?"

Other faculty members recognized the difficult challenge for Penn, which hasn't been the only university to strike a deal with the Trump administration to protect its funding and research operations. Penn Carey Law professor Claire Finkelstein told the *Inquirer* that the University didn't really have a choice and in a statement to the *Daily Pennsylvanian* noted that Penn's decision was "a reasonable one in an environment that is becoming increasingly unreasonable for all institutions of higher learning." —DZ

since Penn gave up big-time football to join the Ivy League ["The Price They Paid," Nov/Dec 2024]. The general principle since then has been that participating in a football postseason would disrupt final exams and run counter to the league's long-standing commitment of prioritizing academics.

Over time, however, the league's self-imposed postseason football ban felt increasingly archaic and unfair, especially as Ivy athletes in every other sport could compete for a national title. "There was never a good ra-

tionale, other than that's what we've always done," says Priore, who notes that coaches over the years have "always asked the question" regarding the postseason ban but had "never had the ability to push through" a change.

Why now? Priore chalks it up to student-athletes having "more voice" at a moment when the current crop of Ivy presidents seemed receptive. And in many sports, "we have our own Ivy tournaments now," Priore notes, meaning "Ivy League sports in general have grown and developed through the years."

If there are any traditionalists who'd still prefer that Harvard versus Yale and Penn versus Princeton conclude every season, rather than an FCS playoff game, Priore hasn't heard from them. He admits the news was "a little bitter-sweet" for members of past teams that were nationally ranked and could have "done some major damage" in the postseason. But current players, he says, are "really excited" to test themselves and now have an extra incentive for winning the league. "You just don't know until you get to that next level," he says.

As for disrupting final exams, Priore notes that the first two playoff games would be held before the exam period and would likely be somewhat regional. Only in the third round would potential conflicts emerge. But spring-season teams often face similar situations. And it's unlikely any of the original Ivy architects would compare the FCS (formerly called Division I-AA) playoffs to the big-money postseason bowl games that once made them shudder. Should the Quakers win the Ivies, they wouldn't be facing Alabama, Michigan, or any of the other

powerhouses of the Football Championship Division (FBS, formerly known as Division I-A). The best FCS teams are mostly out of the limelight and in the Great Plains—North Dakota State, South Dakota State, Montana—while the top local teams often include Villanova and Lehigh.

The Ivies are still a world away from the “money that’s in college sports right now that’s really influencing a lot of decisions that are being made,” Priore says. And, in some ways, that’s hurting them. The ease of the transfer portal and the allure of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) money and Power Four conference football spurred running back Malachi Hosley to transfer from Penn to Georgia Tech in December, about a week after he became the 11th Quaker to be named Ivy League Player of the Year and the first to win Offensive Player of the Year.

Hosley’s departure was a tough one to swallow for Priore, though he understood the rationale and praised the star running back as a “phenomenal young man” with incredible talents. “His instinct, his vision, his athleticism, you just can’t teach that,” Priore says of Hosley, who established himself as one of the top FCS running backs with 1,915 rushing yards and 16 touchdowns over his first two seasons at Penn, catching the attention of high-level programs.

Other players have transferred before, but usually they graduate from Penn first—like defensive tackle

Joey Slackman C’23, who won an Ivy League Player of the Year award the season before Hosley did, before finishing up his college football career as a graduate student at the University of Florida last year. Priore hopes Hosley leaving after his sophomore season doesn’t begin a trend, pointing out that over the years many of the program’s players have had scholarship opportunities coming out of high school but decided on Penn for the academics and “perhaps they got enough aid to make it affordable for their families.” Had the extra NIL incentive existed earlier, Priore wonders if someone like Justin Watson W’18 might have been “poached”—though with three Super Bowl titles since his graduation and a recent two-year, \$5 million contract from the Houston Texans, the wide receiver has demonstrated that an Ivy League grad can make it big in the NFL, as others have before him.

Still, Priore said he was “worrying every minute” about other players transferring—and is pleased that standout wide receivers Jared Richardson and Bisi Owens are returning for their senior season, along with kick returner and offensive playmaker Julien Stokes and defensive lineman Paul Jennings, among others. “I think once our kids get through their junior year, they’re less apt to leave for just a single year,” the head coach reasons.

Richardson, Owens, and the rest of the receiving corps will be catching passes from se-

nior quarterback Liam O’Brien, who assumed the starting role midway through last season when Aidan Sayin W’25 went down with an elbow injury. O’Brien—who set Penn single-game records for both passing touchdowns (six) and total touchdowns (seven) in a 67–49 win at Cornell last year—is “a little bit more mobile, more athletic” than Sayin and has developed “a great connection” with his receivers with impromptu summer training sessions in Central Park, Priore says.

O’Brien should also get solid protection as Penn returns all five starting offensive linemen, including preseason All-American Netinho Olivieri. “Our strength,” Priore says, “goes through the offensive line.”

On the other side of the ball, the head coach is confident the defense will improve, with Jennings and linebacker John Lista returning from injury. The key to capturing the program’s first Ivy title in nine years (and possibly becoming the first Ivy team to play in the FCS playoffs) will be figuring out how to avoid the narrow losses that caused the Quakers to stumble to losing conference records the last two seasons.

“They understand what the mission is,” Priore says. “We’ve worked hard on this. I think everyone understands that we’ve lost too many games by too few points.”

### Coaching Shakeups

After a disappointing 4–10 season last spring, Penn decided to part ways with Mike Murphy GEd’04, the win-

ningest head coach in Penn men’s lacrosse history. “While difficult, a change in leadership is needed to elevate the men’s lacrosse program to compete for Ivy and national championships,” athletic director Alanna Wren C’96 GEd’99 GrD’15 said in the announcement.

Murphy had led the Quakers since 2010, compiling a 109–96 record and a 44–40 mark in Ivy League play. He was named the Ivy League Coach of the Year in 2019 after guiding Penn to Ivy regular-season and tournament titles [“Sports,” Jul|Aug 2019].

Murphy was replaced in July by Taylor Wray, who arrived at Penn from nearby Saint Joseph’s University, a program he led to eight regular-season conference championships in 14 seasons. “It’s an incredible privilege to serve as a steward of more than 125 years of lacrosse history and tradition,” said Wray, an Edmonton, Alberta, native who starred collegiately at Duke and was an all-star player in the National Lacrosse League (NLL) for the Calgary Roughnecks and Philadelphia Wings.

Wren also announced a new head coach for the women’s volleyball program, with Tyler Hagstrom taking over for Meredith Schamun, who resigned in June to become the associate head coach at the University of Illinois.

Hagstrom comes from Bucknell, having earned Patriot League Coach of the Year honors last season after leading the Bison to their most wins in 30 years. —DZ

# The Hackney Files

For 10 budding history majors living through tumultuous times for Penn and US higher education, Jared Farmer's class on archival research methods doubled as a crash course on how the University navigated the culture-war clashes of another era.

By **Trey Popp**

**An** Ivy League presidency is not a carefree job, and Sheldon Hackney Hon'93 did not have to wait long to find out. Two days after the picketing of his inauguration gala by Black students protesting the "intolerable conditions" they faced on a campus where "pervasive" racism was met with "benign neglect," the genteel historian-turned-administrator got a bracing taste of what they meant. On the night of October 25, 1981, a series of phone calls vilifying the predominantly Black residents of DuBois College House with unprintable racial epithets culminated in a bomb threat that precipitated the building's evacuation.

Three months later, 300 students rallied outside a trustees meeting to protest the University's investments in companies doing business in apartheid South Africa. If the trustees thought they could simply outwait critics of their reluctance to divest, the four-year anniversary of that peaceful demonstration proved otherwise. On January 22, 1986, Penn students occupied College Hall for a "round-the-clock" sit-in that lasted 20 days, during which a symbolic wooden shanty was erected on College Green.

Facing page: Letter to the office of President Sheldon Hackney sent via fax by a Class of 1976 College graduate expressing criticism of "intolerance" and "limits of speech" on campus in connection with the 1993 Water Buffalo incident and theft of *Daily Pennsylvanian* newspapers. Administrators planned and tracked their responses to such letters using colored sticky notes.

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sent by Joan  
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The university has NO right to back that persuasion up with legislation carrying real penalties for non-compliance. The masses, washed or otherwise, must be left with the messy task of thinking for themselves and deciding which ideas are preferable - even if those masses are wrong. No matter how odious, the Nazis can march in Skokie.

The university has an obligation to make students think for themselves - especially when they would rather not. It must welcome them to the messy, impolite, unfair and highly competitive marketplace of ideas. It must also teach them to solve (or at least tolerate) their intellectual differences, without the policing power of a paternalistic governmental entity outside themselves.

Once it uses it's very real power to legislate acceptable limits of speech, and to impose real consequences for exceeding those limits, it MUST impose a chilling effect on the freedom of speech. That may not be its intent, but that effect cannot be credibly denied. This particular road to hell is indeed paved with good intentions.

If 14,000 issues of the D.P. are confiscated today, will every copy of the "Autobiography of Malcolm X" be stolen from Van Pelt tomorrow? Once you escalate from "speech-met-with-speech" to "speech-met-with-action", you, no matter your intentions, cannot control the outcome, which sooner, rather than later, will end in an Orwellian condition.

2. The factionalism on campus (and off) is a problem born of intolerance - not of people, but of ideas. The hallmark of current "political correctness" is the stance that if one person disagrees with another, he/she is an "ist" of some sort - racist, sexist, feminist. In the McCarthy era, it was "communist". That is not an overstatement. What we have here is pure and simple McCarthy-ism. It was just as wrong as a right wing tactic, as it is coming from the left. This is what kills debate and thereby destroys the possibility of finding solutions to anything.

Among the events vying for Hackney's attention before the sit-in was the unspeakably vile harassment of two local Black girls wearing Catholic school uniforms from the neo-Georgian windows of one fraternity on Locust Walk, and an alleged gang rape of an undergraduate woman at another. Among the incidents to confront him afterward was a hack of the Wharton School's ticker-tape machines to spit out the message "Fuck you Asians, Get Out of Wharton." Later a coalition of Philadelphia high school graduates and civil organizations sued Penn and the city, accusing the former of failing to fulfill contractual agreements with the latter around the provision of scholarships to Philadelphia natives; the plaintiffs included both Penn's Black Student League and a University association of Black faculty and employees.

Then, no sooner had that lawsuit finally been decided in favor of Penn—which meanwhile signed an agreement with the city to boost the recruitment of students from Philadelphia high schools while modestly expanding the financial aid available through the Mayor's Scholarship program—came what was destined to become the most notorious controversy of the Hackney era. In April 1993, national media flocked to a story about an unresolved and previously obscure disciplinary case stemming from the night of January 13, 1993. On that date, a Penn freshman struggling with writer's block responded to the celebratory clamor of a group of African American sorority sisters on the Superblock by shouting from his sixth-floor window: "Shut up, you water buffalo! If you want a party, there's a zoo a mile from here."

Although this was hardly the ugliest insult hurled at the Delta Sigma Theta sisters, its Israel-born source had the misfortune of being more memorable than the multitude of grimly unoriginal racial and misogynistic epithets rained down upon the revelers from other rooms. And the University's maladroitness handling of the aftermath furnished catnip for culture

warriors crusading against both political correctness and Hackney's recent nomination to chair the National Endowment for the Humanities—especially since it came to light right after the theft of 14,000 issues of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* by Black students infuriated by the racially charged columns penned by a right-wing undergraduate columnist.

**M**any alumni may regard these controversies as ancient history. Some might be wondering why, in 2025, the *Gazette* would see fit to dredge them up again. But for the 10 undergraduates in Jared Farmer's HIST 2000: History Workshop this past spring, the episodes were even more remote. In fact, they were utterly unknown. "Even other history professors I have talked to," College sophomore Liam Tan attested, "had no idea what the Water Buffalo incident was."

Farmer, the Walter H. Annenberg Professor of History, joined Penn's faculty in 2020 ["The Olden Bough," Mar|Apr 2023]. This spring he was tasked with teaching HIST 2000, which the department created several years ago as a way to introduce newly declared and prospective history majors to archival research. It's a methodology course, in other words, aimed at digital natives who've scarcely imagined the confusion and tedium awaiting anyone who hunts for insights within the endless boxes of committee reports, correspondence, meeting minutes, and unpredictable ephemera of an institutional archive.

As he contemplated how to hook and hold his students' interest, Farmer reflected on the tumultuous period they had all just come through. The 2023–24 academic year opened amid controversy over the Palestine Writes Festival—described by organizers as a celebration of Palestinian culture, but which national Jewish organizations, Penn Hillel, and more than 4,000 alumni signatories to an open letter asserted included many speakers with antisemitic views. Hamas's deadly October 7 attack on Israeli citizens supercharged

**Open expression and identity-based harassment. Diversity/equity/inclusion initiatives. Student activism and institutional neutrality. These debates have roiled campuses before. Why not set these College sophomores loose in the archive and let them draw their own conclusions?**

an already acrimonious campus debate over how to balance Penn's commitments to academic freedom and open expression with its duty of care to the University's Jewish community. By year's end, Penn president Liz Magill had resigned along with trustees chair Scott Bok C'81 W'81 L'84 and Faculty Senate chair Tulia Faletti; Penn's chapter of the American Association of University Professors had accused "unelected billionaires without scholarly qualifications" of "attempting a hostile takeover of the [University's] core academic functions"; and a 16-day encampment by protestors demanding divestment from companies "that profit from Israel's war on Gaza and occupation in Palestine" had been disbanded by Penn Police ["Gazetteer," Jul|Aug 2024].

"They lived through last year—I wanted to help them better understand it," Farmer reflected. "So much of what Penn went through [involved] issues that I actually think stem from the 1980s and 1990s." And it happens that Sheldon Hackney's papers are the most recent presidential files to be unsealed by the University Archives and Records Center, which abides by a 25-year mandatory closure period. Why not set these College sophomores loose in those boxes and let them draw their own conclusions?

So Farmer hatched a plan. He'd split them into four groups and assign each a topic. One team would examine the University's response to student demands for

(Top) Intramural letter from the late Student Financial Aid Director Bill Schilling C'66 L'69 to University General Counsel Shelley Green summarizing Penn's obligations to provide scholarships to Philadelphia residents in

exchange for the conveyance of certain real estate parcels from the city to Penn, which became the subject of litigation in the 1980s and 1990s. (Bottom) Subsequent letter from Green to the Philadelphia City Solicitor.

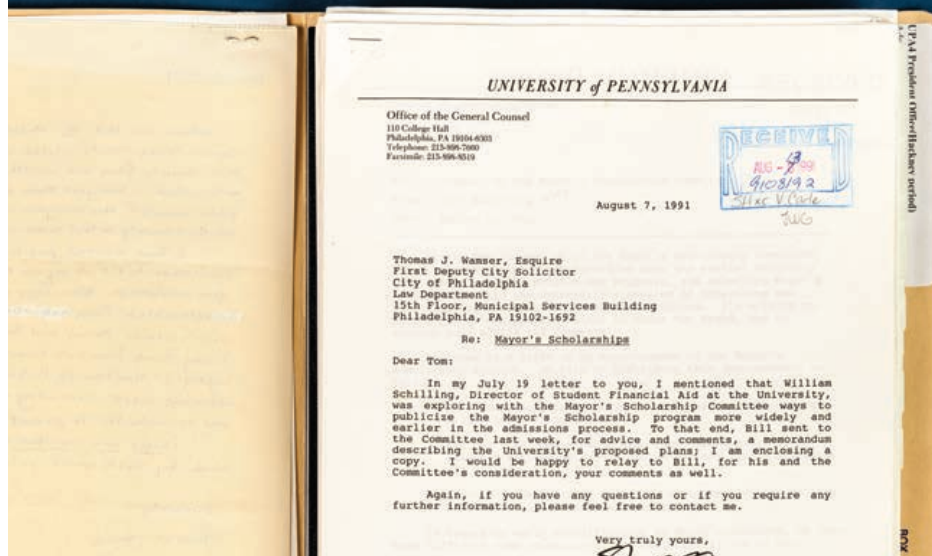
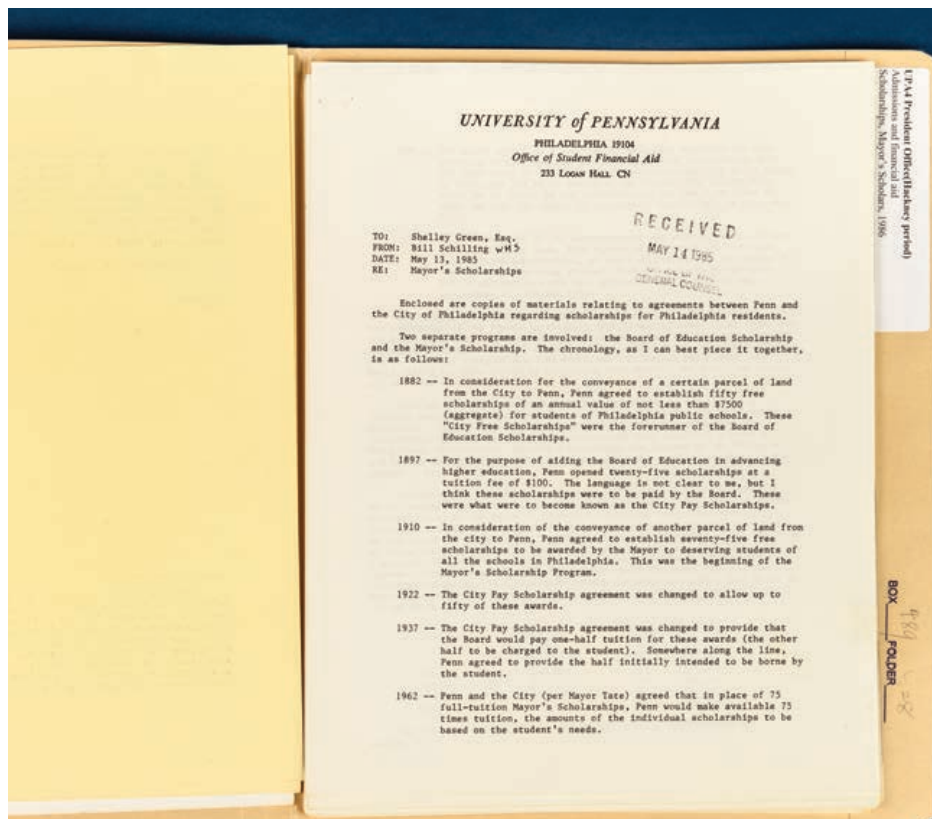
South Africa divestment. Another would investigate the Mayor's Scholarship dispute of the early 1990s along with other challenging aspects of Penn's relationship with the city of Philadelphia. A third would probe the Hackney administration's efforts to promote "Black presence" and "minority permanence" in the student body and faculty during the 1980s and early 1990s. The fourth would tackle the Water Buffalo affair.

Collectively, the projects would shed light on how a past administration dealt with issues that continue to reverberate today. Open expression and identity-based harassment. Diversity/equity/inclusion initiatives. Student activism and institutional neutrality. These debates have roiled campuses before. Through HIST 2000, Farmer aimed to give students the chance to discover the similarities and differences for themselves. His main aim was to teach them skills they'd eventually need to write a senior honors thesis—and that would serve them well in a variety of careers. But he also had another goal: "I hoped they would come to understand Penn better, and to see themselves as part of a larger history."

**F**irst they had to hone their interpretive and analytical chops. In late January they assembled in a classroom in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, on the sixth floor of Van Pelt Library, where Farmer flashed the image of a 3-by-5-inch library catalog card on a white screen.

"Does anyone know what this is?" he asked.

A couple students nodded. Most shook their heads. So Farmer cycled through images of three paper-based technologies that have traditionally made libraries and archives work: a catalog card, a checkout card, and an IBM computer punch card. Next he explained the two major library classification systems, contrasting the benefits and drawbacks of the Dewey Decimal System and the Li-



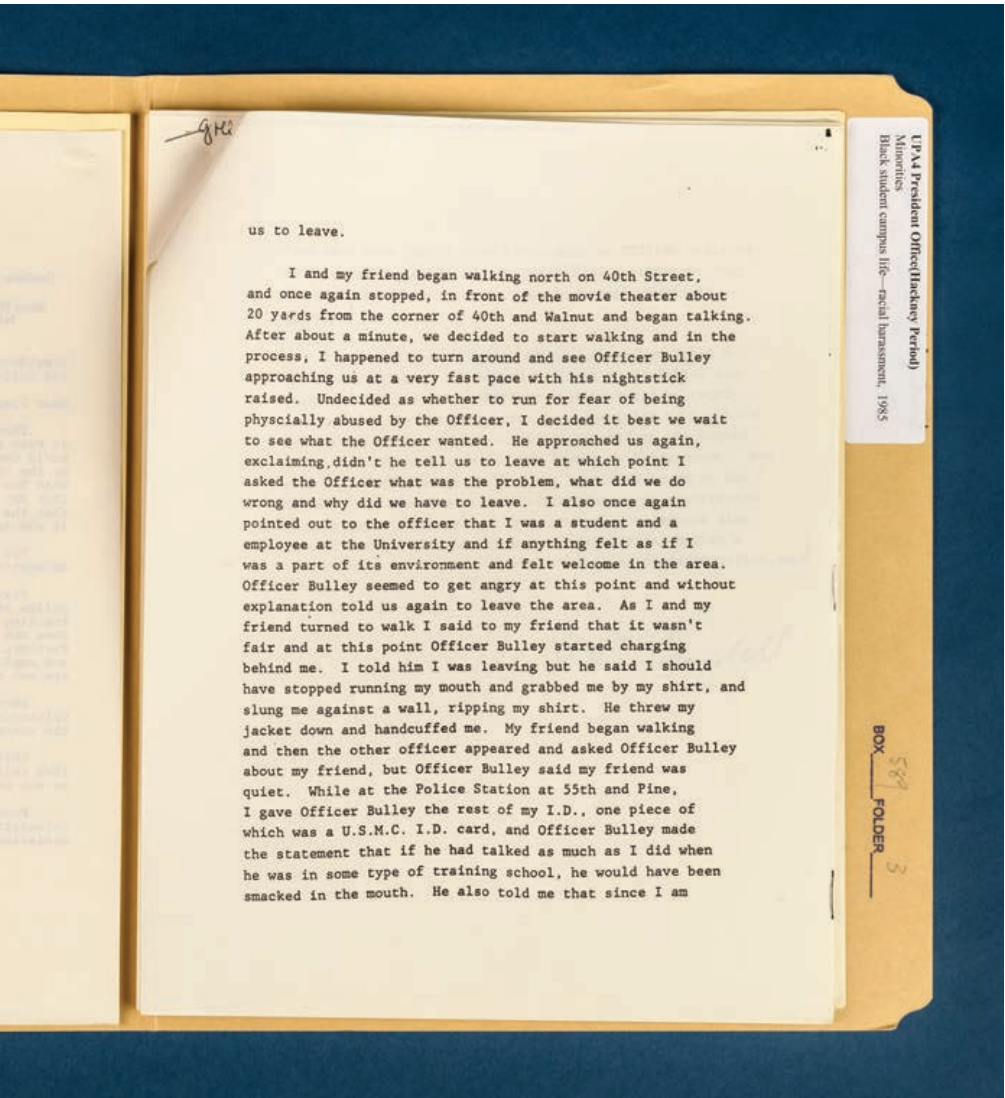
brary of Congress Classification that Penn, like most academic libraries, uses. Then he invited the students to reflect on their first assignment.

He had asked each of them to choose a row in the library stacks and scan every title of every book on at least 20

consecutive shelves, pulling out and skimming any volume that caught their eye. They were to time the exercise with a stopwatch and collect observations in a short essay that would note the call numbers of the first and last books in their shelf sequence, the minute mark

Extract from a 1985 complaint lodged by Black Wharton graduate student David Campbell WG'86 objecting to his racial harassment, abuse, and arrest on campus by a Philadelphia police officer despite

producing University identification. The incident became a flashpoint for Penn's Black Students' League, Graduate Minorities Council, and other campus advocacy groups.



**“I hoped they would come to understand Penn better, and to see themselves as part of a larger history.”**

stacks,” he reflected, “made me realize how much I missed looking through online databases for narrow searches. For my high school projects, I felt like I was on a particular time crunch to find sources that were directly relevant to the argument I had chosen.” Yet that mad dash to cherry-pick sources often produced “confused” arguments.

Izzy Feinfeld was struck by the way the Penn Museum’s library revealed a particular set of scholarly and institutional priorities. The Jewish history section, he noticed, documented some diaspora populations in considerably more breadth and depth than others. “It was interesting to see which areas of Jewish history have these 50-part collections, like on the Jews of Czechoslovakia—which are really not present for non-Ashkenazi Jews,” he said. “You can’t see that disparity when you’re searching for specific subjects” in a digital library database. Perusing physical shelves also fostered serendipitous discoveries. “There was a big book jutting out that turned out to be photos of European Jewry before the Holocaust,” he said. “I found it pretty moving.”

Several students commented on the challenge of deciding how to allot their time and attention. One spent the first five or 10 minutes “trying to read every word on every book,” which wasn’t sustainable. Another took exquisitely detailed notes by hand—but reckoned that it might have been overkill. And even students who found the exercise fun, as many professed to, could only muster their undivided attention for so long. Which was part of the point.

“When you encounter a huge amount of information, how do you decide what’s important?” Farmer explained retrospectively, as the semester wound down. “Of course you can tell a machine

at which their attention waned, and how this old-fashioned method of browsing compared to the search-engine keyword queries to which they are accustomed.

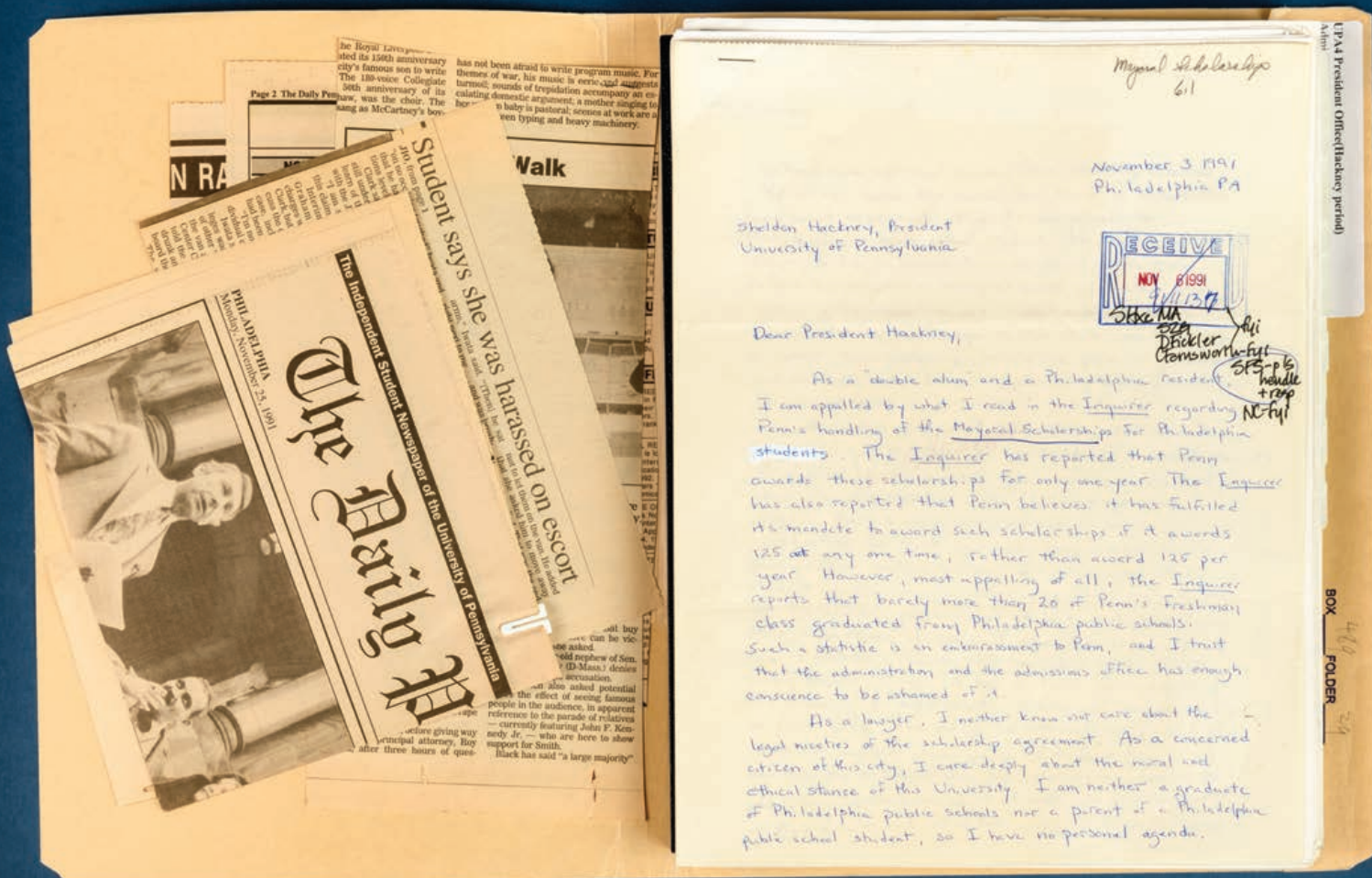
Most of the students had never perused library stacks at all. One sophomore intended to target the D section—world history—but had trouble finding it. So he ended up starting in KS, where books on African legal systems rubbed up against unabridged constitutions from India and other countries, a biography of Mohandas Gandhi, and volumes containing enclosed pamphlets that conventional book-digitization efforts would miss. Christian Chun confessed to getting “bored after 10 minutes” on Van Pelt’s third floor, so

started over on the fifth, where the library’s extensive Korean language holdings captivated him. “I’m second-generation, but don’t speak it,” he told the class—so he found himself snapping photos of old textbooks and Korean literature and texting them to his parents, who added their own gloss to volumes they recognized. Others noted how elements like due-date stamps, wear and tear, or duplicate copies could serve as proxies of a book’s popularity and scholarly influence, or lack thereof.

For Hayden Moore, the class’s lone freshman, the exercise crystallized how blinkered his typical approach to research had been. “Searching through the

1991 letter from a graduate of the College (1980) and Penn Law (1983) accusing Sheldon Hackney of taking “the moral low road” in the matter of Mayor’s Scholarships and admissions of Philadelphia residents.

“How can you claim to be a conscientious neighbor,” she wrote, “when you refuse to educate as many students as possible from the city to which you are inextricably linked?”



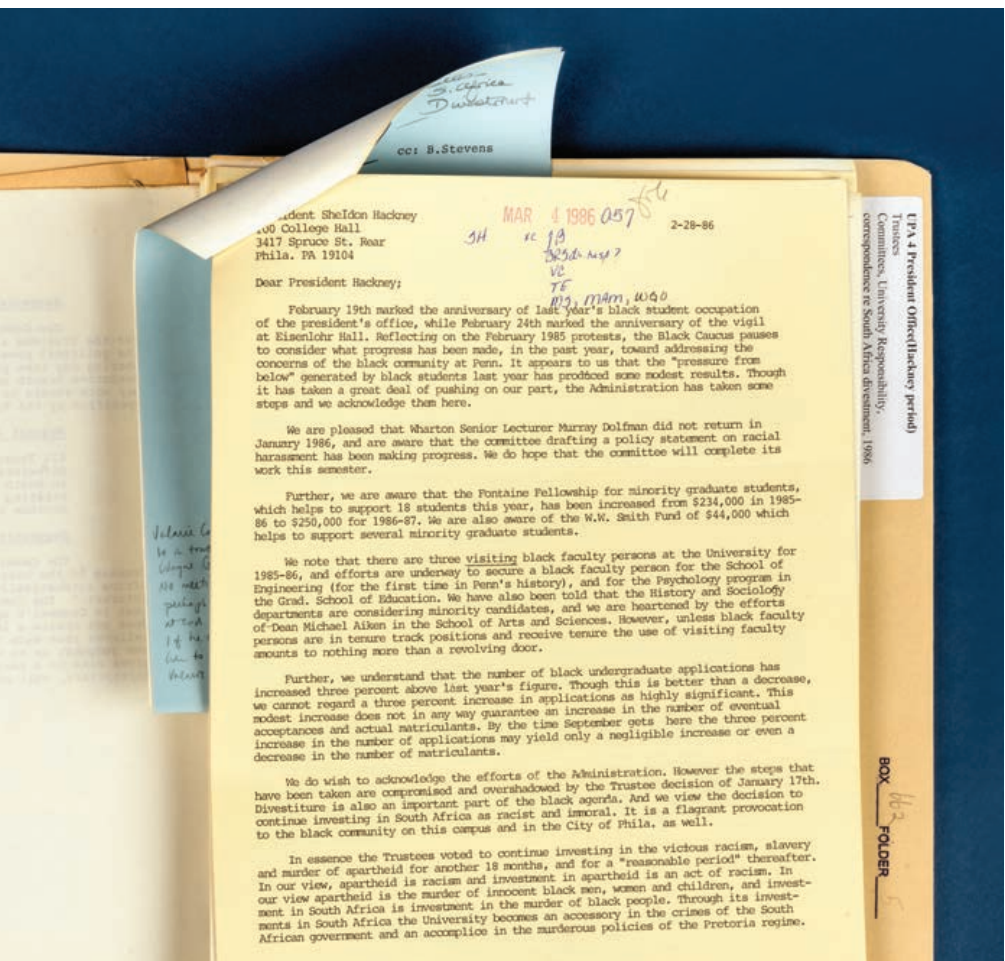
to do it—but you don’t know what its algorithm is. Really, the best way to do this is the analog way, through browsing. “But then you have to learn time-management skills,” he continued, “and develop the skills of differentiation that are critical to creating knowledge.” A lot of archival research boils down to figuring out how to go through a box of file folders efficiently and without getting overwhelmed. “Determining what I can ignore, what I can skim, what I must scan, what I must read carefully—that is such a great skill to have in life, if you do any kind of knowledge production or analysis. Or consultancy—this is also the kind of work they do. So it’s a really valuable skill for stu-

dents, even if they don’t write a thesis.” The class spent the first half of the semester wading deeper into the weeds. They mined a collection of handwritten courtship letters for insights about the Great Depression era. Farmer brought in Nikitas Tampakis, the director of application development at Penn Libraries, to teach them about the back-end infrastructure of library databases and the algorithmic biases of proprietary search engines. Penn Libraries digitalization specialist Jessie Dummer C’05 shared how she helped build the *Daily Pennsylvanian* archive. The class conducted an oral history interview with Joan Plonksi, a 40-year veteran of Penn’s history department who joined as a recep-

tionist the year Hackney became president, and who reflected on Hackney’s predilection for eating brown-bag lunches *en plein air* and making himself accessible to students. On March 3 assistant archivist J. M. Duffin welcomed them to the University Archives, acquainting them with the history, scope, purpose, and rules of the place where they would spend most of their time from there on out.

**“Even as a sophomore with a declared major in American History, I had never performed archival research,”** Arianna Baptiste reflected at the end of the semester. “I had not known that the University Archives even existed.”

1986 letter to Sheldon Hackney on behalf of the Black Students' League, Black Graduate and Professional Students' Association, and three other groups urging the Executive Board of the Trustees to approve a resolution to divest from companies doing business in apartheid South Africa.



different,” she continued, because “we were the ones charged with the task of creating new historical storylines and piecing together the pieces of Penn’s history.” The experience gave her a “profound appreciation” for all the curated historical analysis she has encountered in other courses.

That was a common refrain. “When I was younger, I always thought history was about learning the ‘facts’ about what happened,” reflected Arjun Kishore. But this course exemplified what the discipline of history is really about: “using available information to make arguments and create a stronger understanding of what happened.” Sometimes the available information is scarce. Other times it may be overwhelming. Either way, eureka moments can be a long time coming. “Historical research involves concentrated, concerted, and methodical searching,” as Kim came to appreciate, “and more occasional and sporadic finding.”

Archival research embeds intellectual challenges within organizational ones. Often the significance of any one document doesn’t become clear until you’ve reviewed hundreds of them, because only then does the broader context snap into focus. So you need to develop a system of sorting information into categories you may not know at the outset. Likewise, it’s only by mastering an archive’s contents that you can begin to sense its limits—all the documents that weren’t saved, or weren’t created to begin with, whose absence a conscientious historian must also take into account.

Trying to distill a coherent historical narrative from Penn’s archive and assorted secondary sources forced Farmer’s students to do something that turns out to be as rare in high school as it is in contemporary political punditry: truly proceed from evidence to conclusion. No successful student makes it through AP English without mastering the art of the “persuasive essay.” This staple of middle- and high-school writing pedagogy requires them to defend a position with evidence—which is precisely the order in which most students go

Baptiste and her partner, Sophie Gala, would be jumping into the deep end. Farmer gave them a list of 138 numbered folders spread across 35 boxes, from which they were to distill the Mayor’s Scholarship litigation against the backdrop of contemporaneous disputes over minority admissions and recruitment, city taxes and tax exemptions, charitable giving, and Penn’s relationships with Philadelphia public schools.

Other groups were provided with similar lists. Farmer didn’t ask them to write a history of each event, which would have required far more than three credit hours’ worth of work. Instead he charged them with creating a curated digital archive encompassing scanned documents from their boxes along with supporting material from secondary sources, accompanied by freshly created

timelines, glossaries, dramatis personae, capsule biographies, and explanatory summaries designed to serve as research aids for future users.

He invited me to attend their final presentations, after which each group shared its curated digital archive with me. For their last assignment the students wrote lengthy individual reflections about what they’d learned. These ranged from assessments of Penn’s responses to the specific episodes under review—and tentative comparisons to some present-day challenges—to revelations about how the process of historical inquiry actually works.

“In all of the history classes I’ve taken at Penn prior to this class, I studied history and the historical content that was placed in front of me by my professors,” Audrey Kim observed. “This class was completely

Undergraduate Admissions Office data table summarizing admission and matriculation statistics by race from 1978 to 1987. A second table compared Penn's minority admit and yield rates to those of 29 other US colleges and universities.

about it: choose a position, then Google your way to facts that support it. But when you don't really know the story of a controversy to begin with—and it has long faded from editorial pages and airwaves—sifting through the actual evidence is the only sensible way to start. As Hayden Moore reflected, “Working with archival materials made me realize that arguments arise out of source reading and interpretation,” not the other way around.

Not that it was all old-fashioned, analog searching. “Professor Farmer also helped me to unlock an entire world of databases that apparently Penn pays a lot of money” to access, remarked Arianna Baptiste. “I used databases like JSTOR and EBSCO but also HeinOnline, ProQuest, and NexisUni.”

Farmer also emphasized to the class that archival research involves conquering not just intellectual challenges but emotional ones. “History can be tedious,” he told them. “It can be boring. It can be overwhelming. And you actually have to manage these emotions. You have to do the critical thinking and the analysis, and you’ve got to be meticulous and all that—but also you are dealing with feelings.”

Several students credited the class with expanding their capacity for patience. Some others discovered that the “emotional management” aspect of historical inquiry can go beyond dealing with tedium. For example, the Hackney administration saved a prodigious quantity of angry letters sent by alumni in response to the Water Buffalo incident. They can make for dispiriting reading. Like others in his group, Christian Chun found it “shocking” to discover how many “Ivy League-educated people carried a blind rage” against not only campus administrators who struggled to navigate the tension between free expression and protection from racial harassment, but often against the Black sorority sisters themselves for having the temerity to object to poor treatment.

One correspondent likened Hackney and his “sleazy” deputies to Hitler and

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Table 1

Freshman Admissions by Race  
Matriculants of Fall 1978 - Fall 1987

Source: Undergraduate Admissions Office

	Apps	Admits	Matrics	% Admit	Yield % of Class
<b>Fall 1978</b>					
Black	432	228	104	55.11	42.71
Hispanic	138	59	25	42.81	42.41
Native Amer	11	8	5	74.51	82.31
Oriental	350	222	111	65.41	50.01
Other	6827	3824	1894	55.91	49.51
TOTAL	7768	4249	2119	56.01	49.21
<b>Fall 1980</b>					
Black	717	296	119	41.21	40.21
Hispanic	307	140	61	45.61	42.61
Native Amer	11	8	3	76.41	75.01
Oriental	726	264	109	36.31	41.01
Other	9507	5885	1880	40.91	48.41
TOTAL	11268	6591	2172	40.71	47.21
<b>Fall 1982</b>					
Black	599	324	125	54.41	41.41
Hispanic	274	122	52	48.21	40.21
Native Amer	12	8	2	66.71	25.01
Oriental	974	412	162	42.21	39.61
Other	8712	3720	1753	42.71	47.11
TOTAL	10571	4598	2166	43.51	45.81
<b>Fall 1984</b>					
Black	669	402	151	60.11	37.61
Hispanic	266	160	68	60.21	42.51
Native Amer	8	4	2	50.01	75.01
Oriental	1256	450	172	35.81	38.21
Other	9404	3655	1806	38.71	49.41
TOTAL	11603	6671	2200	40.71	47.11

LTPA President Office (Hackney Period)  
Minorities  
Black Resource Center, report, 1988

BOX 587  
FOLDER 2

Stalin while asserting that precious few of Penn's “black minority” were “truly eligible” to study at the University. A letter addressed “Dear Water Buffalo” bade the sorority sisters to “hide in the corner” but lamented that they were likelier to head to Washington, DC, to “wreck the country.” Others relabeled the Black students “hyenas,” “loud mouth rats,” and so on. “If they were so offended by the ‘N’ word (and I have no doubt that’s what was hurled at them from various floors),” wrote one alumna, “then they shouldn’t have been acting like the ‘N’ word.”

“Researching Penn’s history through this project was both intellectually clarifying and emotionally heavy,” reflected Shannon Hodges, a Black sophomore for whom the Water Buffalo incident was rife with “failures,” not the least of which was a “failure to recognize how Black students

were feeling on campus” at the time. From the vantage point of today’s “more inclusive” campus culture, it felt tragic that the Delta Sigma Theta sisters ultimately felt just as demoralized by the “corruption of the [University’s] judicial proceedings,” as they put it, as by the verbal abuse they had sustained to begin with.

Liam Tan was also struck by the “unexpected amount of emotions” the project elicited in him. As the son of parents who’d endured “undue harassment for being Chinese” as immigrants in both the US and Peru, Tan empathized with the sorority sisters—who ended up withdrawing their complaint after Penn’s poorly handled internal disciplinary process broke into the editorial pages of the *Wall Street Journal* and right-wing talk radio, where it was tried in a decidedly one-sided court of public opinion.

For Tan, who entered the semester doubting whether history was the right academic path for him, that emotional engagement ended up reinforcing his commitment to the major. “Something this project has illuminated is that I am, put simply, an emotional student,” he reflected. And “some of the most important parts of history are the ones that you can feel,” he continued, whether it’s “reading angry letters from alumni” or contemporaneous accounts about “the experiences of minority students at the time.”

**T**he point of this article is not to re-litigate any of the incidents the students studied in the archives. Nor, really, was that the object of the class. Farmer wanted to develop his students’ interpretive and analytical skills. He wanted to encourage them “to be more critical in their use of search-based research in digital formats and to be more aware of the unique advantages of browsing-based research in material formats.” And he also hoped that immersion in the archives would give them a “richer kind of historical context for thinking about the tumult of last year.”

The students’ final presentations and curated digital archives varied in terms of focal sharpness and comprehensiveness. But the semester seemed to have served as a constant spur to careful thinking.

“I’ve done secondary sources and academic articles before, but nothing beats sifting through hundreds of actual documents in an Ivy League archive,” reflected Christian Chun. “We got to see confidential letters and emails that no one in the public had ever laid eyes on. It made the research more tangible, less of a class assignment and more of an actual historical inquiry. I felt like I was peeking behind the curtain, getting a glimpse of the rarefied process of how decisions were made, how administrators responded, and how quickly events could snowball once publicized.”

Chun’s experience researching the Water Buffalo incident also opened his eyes to the perils of putting too much

faith in a single perspective—or even in your own moral sensibilities.

“My first instinct was to side with the sorority sisters,” he wrote. “That reaction was reflexive in me. I’ve been raised with a good sense of political correctness and an awareness of racial injustice. But as I read actual primary sources, letters, emails, and internal memos of the University, I realized the incident was far more nuanced. The student who shouted ‘water buffalo’ was not simply being racist, and the incident was more complicated than I had initially assumed. That experience has instilled in me the value of suspending judgment, of letting primary sources speak for themselves before rushing to conclusions. I now read news articles more carefully, cognizant of how easily accounts can become distorted. In fact, I saw firsthand how media coverage, like that of the *Wall Street Journal* on the Water Buffalo Case, can misrepresent key facts and sensationalize campus life at the cost of accuracy and fairness.”

And even as the students toiled in the Penn Archives, they were meanwhile watching a similar dynamic play out in real time. Over the course of the spring, the Trump administration revoked or froze scientific research funding to Penn and other universities under a variety of pretexts, driven largely by partisan-media portrayals of higher education as irredeemably “woke” [“Gazetteer,” May/June 2025]. Meanwhile Penn administrators responded to the pressure in various ways, including by scrubbing language about Penn’s commitment to “diversity, equity, and inclusion” from University websites.

“Some of the controversies we studied in class are almost eerily applicable to the political issues facing Penn’s campus recently,” observed Arianna Baptiste. Baptiste was also one of many students to emerge from the class with a newfound and unexpected sympathy for University administrators, past and present.

“The research helped to humanize the University’s administration even if I do not necessarily agree with the stances they

take or the policies they pursue,” she reflected. “Working with the Sheldon Hackney Presidential Papers showed me that a lot goes into the University’s creating a stance on a controversy. There are so many groups that want the University to take specific stances—some student groups might want the University to do one thing while donors, the Board of Trustees, parents, representatives and community leaders all might want the University to do something else, and the University is then tasked with trying not to upset too many people—or maybe even more importantly, to upset the wrong people.”

“What is clear from my research and other classmates’ research is that the University tries extremely hard to avoid controversy,” reflected Arjun Kishore. “In both the past and current moment the University prefers to move as little as possible on any political issues.”

If you sense a whiff of criticism in those comments, that’s no accident. Farmer’s students emerged from the class with a keen appreciation for how expediency can shape administrative decision-making.

“I understand that the [Penn] president is just a person trying to make the best that he can of the situation,” Baptiste continued. “On the other hand, however, I also feel that it is upsetting that the University seems to never take an actual enduring stance on any area—it simply tries to not step on anyone’s toes in the moment.”

And since political, economic, and other kinds of pressures can shift substantially from one moment to another, an institution’s responses serve as a reminder that no matter how much a university may venerate its own history or valorize a particular credo, it survives through constant adaptation. That process is rarely as inspiring as a lofty Latin motto, but it does serve as a sign of changing times.

“Consideration of key events from the 1980s and 1990s explored by the class prompt tentative conclusions about Penn’s shift away from morals-based rhetoric and towards proactive defensive responses,” noted Sophia Gala, who stud-

ied the Mayor's Scholarship dispute. She was struck by Hackney's public statement after Penn's legal victory in that case, in which he asserted that "our real challenge is not winning a lawsuit, but raising the community's awareness of the University's commitment to Philadelphia, including the educational opportunities at Penn."

Whether motivated by a desire to appear gracious in victory, or to reset town-gown relations riven by suspicion and mistrust, or to use the moment to build more momentum toward a perceived social imperative to diversify the student body, the authors of this statement were responding to circumstances that seemed to call for a semblance of moral leadership. So they "chose to include optional additional language addressing the concerns of those alleging harm by the university," Gala observed. "In contrast, the statements from Penn's administration in the spring of 2025 over rescinded federal funding address the topic of legal compliance without taking a stance on the underlying issue of withdrawal of government funds based on policies targeting LGBT Americans."

As a Black undergraduate toggling between archival research and current events, Baptiste marveled over how Penn's institutional tone could shift amid changing circumstances. "Even after it had been ruled that their obligation as agreed upon in the 1977 Ordinance was fulfilled," she observed about the Mayor's Scholarship litigation, "the University still threw itself into making new programs to engage with the West Philadelphia public schools community and the West Philadelphia community at large." Meanwhile, in the present day, "it was interesting for me to see Penn go from publicizing how much it cares about children of color in West Philly to all but dismantling DEI."

"Penn, whether it claims otherwise or not, is part of the world and its political and economic systems," reflected Hayden Moore. "It does not have a neutral or value-free presence. Choosing to divest from South Africa in 1988 was a political

**"That experience has instilled in me the value of suspending judgment, of letting primary sources speak for themselves before rushing to conclusions. I now read news articles more carefully, cognizant of how easily accounts can become distorted."**

statement. Choosing not to divest from Israel today is a political statement. I do not consider myself in a position to tell the University how it should spend its money, but I do find it frustrating that as a student I cannot find out, and that the University claims that it does not have any stance on the world's affairs.

"I find it a form of dishonesty that Penn supports the advancement of a diverse student body yet changes the meaning of diversity," Moore added. "Penn claims to be a world leader in academics but is in many ways a follower of political trends."

Of course many students recognized that their assessments of present-day administrative actions are hampered by the opacity of closed-door decision-making. A proper historical inquest may await the unsealing of Magill's and J. Larry Jameson's presidential papers 25 years from now.

Moore ended up feeling like his time in the archives gave him a better understanding of "the nebulousness and shortsightedness of people in power." But it also made Penn seem "like a more real place ... more alive and dynamic."

Shannon Hodges concurred. "It's easy to see Penn simply as a name," she mused in a summer interview. "But the University is a breathing machine. We met with a lot of people through this class. Dr. Farmer brought in different administrative officers, and talking with

them helped us realize that this is a physical place that people are running and putting their time and energy into."

Insofar as Farmer's twin aims were to get students excited about archival research and also "help them better understand the recent and ongoing issues affecting campus by examining controversies from the past," perhaps the final word should go to Audrey Kim, who'd never conducted research of this kind before.

"This was an amazing way for me to better understand the present moment where elite institutions, like Penn, are being scrutinized by the government for promoting DEI initiatives similar to those of the 1970s and 1980s," she reflected. "With all of the drama regarding the encampments and administration changes of last year and the current issues revolving around attacks on DEI initiatives, this archival project made me more aware of the way the Penn administration handles these campus issues. Furthermore, our research gave me insights into the limitations of the administration and its power to handle issues relating to race.

"I think I have more sympathy for the annoying and tedious nuts and bolts of administrative life," she added. "My archival research also provided me with insights into why the administration chooses to handle certain situations the way they do."

She also voiced a regret that could double as the best course review Farmer could have hoped for.

"I feel like there are still so many documents I didn't even get to scan through," she lamented. "While many of these documents were probably unhelpful to the general story we were piecing together, I feel like the project is unfinished because we did not get the fullest scope of information that was available to us. In some ways, I'm disappointed that we didn't completely close the circle on this historical story."

Or to put that another way: "I felt like a true historian."

# Helping Hands





Penn First Plus aims to level the college and early-career playing field for first-generation, low-income students and alumni at the University.

By [Caren Lissner](#)

W

hen Jonathan Muruako C'17 Gr'20 Gr'21 GM'22 SPP'24 applied to Penn from his small-town Mississippi high school, he didn't know much about

the University or the college application process and didn't have anyone around with the experience to help.

He'd never even visited the East Coast or been on a plane.

"I was in a pretty low-performing high school," he says. "We didn't have any AP courses. I just applied to all of the Ivy League schools. Everyone at my school, including my guidance counselor, thought [Penn] was Penn State. No one had anything to say."

Muruako's parents were Nigerian immigrants, and his father died when he was young. But his mom encouraged him to work hard. He became first in his class, started a recycling program at his high school, and worked bagging groceries.

A decade later, with several University degrees under his belt, he's an entrepreneur in Philadelphia leading a startup called Fitalyst, which provides online tools to empower students confronting the kinds of challenges he faced to "better allocate their time, effort, and campus resources." And he's part of a growing Penn network designed to build community and support among first-in-their-family college students and alumni who lack the resources that some Ivy Leaguers take for granted. When a student faces a family emergency, isn't sure how to pursue graduate school, or can't afford housing for an internship, this network is providing mentorships and resources to meet needs that have always been there but were largely hidden in the past.

Muruako falls into a category described as first-generation, low-income (FGLI, pronounced "fig-lee") at the University, a demographic that in 2024–25 included approximately 22 percent of undergraduates on campus, according to Marc Lo, executive director of Penn First Plus, a program founded in 2019 to

assist FGLI students with a hand up toward independence and security.

In the years since, the program has continued to evolve with a growing network of faculty, mentors, and alumni who want to make sure anyone trying to follow in their footsteps isn't alone. Penn First Plus, or PIP, defines itself broadly as "the hub of University efforts to enhance the academic experiences of students who are the first in their families to pursue a four-year baccalaureate degree or come from modest financial circumstances." But because other students may lack resources for a variety of reasons, the program offers help to any student who similarly struggles with a gap in resources.

Muruako—a biological basis of behavior (now neurology) major who finished his undergraduate degree before PIP was in place, but wishes he'd been able to call on that kind of help—says he's seen Penn First Plus become crucial in identifying unmet needs. He cochairs the Penn First Plus Alumni Association as a way to use the knowledge amassed during what he estimates are 22 semesters spent at the University to benefit current and future students. The alumni group seeks to "advocate for more visibility and representation of the PIP experience on University alumni leadership boards and governance" and to "build and maintain a supportive network for social and economic advancement through knowledge-sharing and mentorship."

### **Growing FGLI Presence on Campus**

In the years since Penn introduced its all-grant-based financial aid program in 2007—which covers the full cost of attendance for students with family incomes below a certain level, currently set at \$75,000—the proportion of FGLI students at the University has gone from one in every 20 undergraduates in 2005 to one in five. (About 45 percent of Penn undergrads overall receive some financial aid; the average package is around \$70,000. In the most recent expansion of the aid

program, the Quaker Commitment, the University will no longer include primary home equity in determining financial aid eligibility and will provide full tuition scholarships at minimum for students with family incomes up to \$200,000. ["Gazetteer," May|Jun 2025].)

In 2015, a student group called Penn First—which currently heads a list of eight or so FGLI student organizations on the PIP website—was formed. In an article titled "First Generation Students Unite" ["Gazetteer," Jan|Feb 2016], students spoke about being recruited by Penn but feeling adrift once they arrived on campus, navigating both academic challenges and social ones (like whether to skip a hallmate's birthday party at a fancy locale or scrimp elsewhere to afford the \$30 or \$40 cost), connecting first-gen students with each other and with alumni, and making the group more visible on campus through New Student Orientation (NSO) and other avenues.

In October 2016, a dedicated resource center was opened in the Greenfield Intercultural Center (GIC). "The FGLI Center consists of two rooms," a *Daily Pennsylvanian* article noted then, "a lounge for students and an office for two staff members." At the time, the staff focused on programs like a donation-based food pantry and a textbook library from which FGLI students could borrow books. Then in May 2018 Penn President Amy Gutmann Hon'22 and Provost Wendell Pritchett Gr'97 announced that the University would create a "Penn First Plus Office" for FGLI students and hire an executive director.

Brown University was considered the first Ivy League school to establish a dedicated program to identify and respond to the needs of FGLI students, with Penn close behind. In January 2019, Penn tapped Lo—who had previously worked as assistant director for assessment and evaluation at Brown, where he'd done graduate research into socioeconomic diversity at selective colleges—for the executive director position.

The announcement also promised the appointment of faculty codirectors in the humanities/social sciences and from a STEM discipline. Currently serving in those roles are Fayyaz Vellani, a geographer and lecturer in critical writing who is also the faculty director of the College House Research Program and Hill College House Fellow, and Russell Composto, Howell Family Faculty Fellow and a professor of materials science and engineering, who was recently named vice provost for undergraduate education [“Gazetteer,” this issue].

Initial programming efforts included the development of a pre-freshman week held in early summer to acclimate students to campus and partnerships with Career Services and the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF). COVID restrictions slowed things down somewhat, but in February 2021, a dedicated space—now known as the Shleifer Family Penn First Plus Center, thanks to an \$18 million gift from Scott Shleifer W’99 and Elena Shleifer [“Gazetteer,” Mar|Apr 2022]—opened in College Hall, with offices for counseling and meetings, as well as a lounge for students to chat or recharge.

### **A Boost on the Path to Success**

Students and recent graduates spoke with the *Gazette* about coming from families with few resources, not knowing how to navigate college admissions, and feeling different from their peers once they landed on campus. They wondered if they were the only ones with those feelings—but then, a little help or an encouraging word at the right time opened up new opportunities. Penn First Plus is meant to provide the resources to boost a student onto the path of success.

As described on the Penn First Plus website, the University’s definition of what makes a student “first generation” extends beyond having one or more parents or guardians who have not completed a bachelor’s degree. Also included are students whose parents or guardians have

## **Challenges have included food insecurity, dealing with health insurance, helping family members back home who were struggling financially, navigating medical school applications, and figuring out travel for research and internship opportunities.**

taken more than six years to complete a degree or who completed their degree outside the United States. Other eligible criteria include being the first person in a family to enroll at a “research university with the resources and opportunities a Penn education provides” or having a “strained or limited relationship” with any degree-holding family members.

Students from families with incomes under \$75,000—termed “highly aided” by the Office of Student Registration and Financial Services—receive priority for “supplemental funding opportunities within the limitations of the university resources” available from the program. However, since a bit more than half of all Penn undergraduates don’t require any financial assistance to attend the University, the website also suggests that perceptions of relative wealth and status may to some extent be in the eye of the beholder. “Therefore, while we may abide by financial aid policies in limiting access to funding opportunities, we do not police terms such as lower-income, limited-income, and modestly resourced given their subjectivity in this space.”

About 2,400 undergraduates used PIP’s services last academic year, says Lo, which is nearly a quarter of Penn’s total undergraduate enrollment. More than 70 percent of the students identified as both first-gen students and of limited income. Others fell into only one of the categories or sought support for

some other reason. Challenges have included food insecurity, dealing with health insurance, helping family members back home who were struggling financially, navigating medical school applications, and figuring out travel for research and internship opportunities.

Students find out about PIP through outreach both before and while on campus, Lo says, noting, “A member of the Undergraduate Assembly recently told me that it may be the most well-known resource on campus.” Interested students can take advantage of PIP in many ways: stopping into the Shleifer Family Center in College Hall for counseling, searching for an alumni mentor, applying for emergency funding for a tough situation, or finding another program to fit their unique needs. “If you stop by our office, we open at nine, and come at any point before 10:30, we might only have a few students here, but soon,” Lo says, “most of the seats are taken, and the couches are filled.”

The PIP staff helps students navigate challenges large and small—from borrowing clothes for job interviews, to professional development, to learning about careers. Penn First Plus works with the PennCAP college achievement program, academic counselors, mentors, and even helps students explore the cultural resources available in Philadelphia, Lo says.

The Penn Alumni point person for Penn First Plus is Aman Goyal GED’13 LPS’18 LPS’20, director of Penn Traditions, Young Alumni Programs, and Penn First Alumni & Career Initiatives. Goyal says that, years before the formation of PIP, he became aware of some of the challenges that first-gen and low-income students experienced on campuses—yet were hesitant or ashamed to share. In an outreach program for low-income students that he was involved with, one student confessed that his computer had been broken for a year, and he couldn’t afford to fix or replace it. So he did all his work in the library without telling anyone.

In a case like that, Lo says, PIP would help the student borrow, repair, or buy a computer if that was the most sensible option—because there’s an emergency fund for special circumstances that otherwise might put someone at an academic disadvantage. PIP’s first recourse is not always to provide funding directly, as the program sometimes helps a student find resources or to borrow what they need.

“Some students are food insecure,” says Lo, listing various historically unaddressed needs on campus. “If their financial aid is not enough to cover it, it becomes a conversation: ‘What additional resources are there? Do they need a different meal plan?’ We ask, ‘How can we come up with a plan so that you have a structure in place to meet your nutritional needs without having to come back to us to ask for more help?’”

A medical student shared in an interview that he had encountered setbacks and costs during his undergraduate career that he hadn’t anticipated, such as applying to graduate school (the fee to take the MCAT is \$345, and even with assistance, application costs are steep). Another recent University graduate—who wants to become a doctor because his mother died when he was young—revealed that he might not have found out about, or been able to afford, the research trips he took as a pre-med student without the help of Penn First Plus. Beyond financial assistance, the program also helps students make connections and seize opportunities that may not be obvious to someone from a family of more limited means.

“As a highly aided international student, I truly would not have been able to attend Penn—let alone thrive—without the support of Penn First Plus,” says Alejandra Andrade C’25 W’25, a recent graduate from Ecuador, who majored in international studies and business economics & public policy in the Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business. “From emergency assistance that helped

me manage unexpected challenges back home, to funding that made essential career-building experiences possible, PIP has supported me in moments that shaped my academic and professional path.”

### Expanding Alumni Involvement

While many University programs end at graduation, the administrators behind PIP realized that first-gen graduates will often still struggle after leaving campus. They need wise counsel, conversations, and resources that may be difficult to find in the real world. PIP has been expanding its alumni involvement—with a focus not just on alumni helping students but counseling each other as well.

Last spring, Ashish Rughwani EE’95 W’95, who cochairs the program’s alumni association with Muruako, helped oversee an online panel called “Penn First Plus Alumni: Entrepreneurial Ventures vs. ‘The Stable Option’” to lay out the pluses and minuses of each career path. Participants noted that FGLI students tend to be reluctant to take risks, even if they have a promising business idea. Their families, too, may find entrepreneurship too risky.

And first-generation students may take the first job they’re offered, Goyal adds, because they need to help families back home or to simply survive on their own without help. The mentorships and programs from other alumni aren’t a hand-out but a hand up, shepherding students toward avenues and opportunities available to them. Even if students do have a 9-to-5 job, there may be avenues to pursue a dream project on the side. “There’s this idea that your family already sacrificed so much to send you to college,” Goyal notes, “so even if you have a great idea, you can’t pursue it until later in life. That’s something I hear a lot.”

Three more virtual panels in the Penn First Plus Alumni Discussion Series—all available for streaming—were designed to provide FGLI alumni with tools for their post-graduation life: “A Measured Pace: The Basics of Financial Planning;”

“It’s Our Turn: Taking Care of Our Parents,” and “Looking After Our Health and Wellbeing.”

Rughwani—founding partner in the investment firm Dominus Capital, who grew up in India, Egypt, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom and now lives in New York—has a long-term goal to narrow the gaps that create obstacles for FGLI alumni. Those gaps include “the knowledge gap, financial gap, and the mental health gap,” he says. “I want to point them in the right direction of resources, whether it’s for health, financial planning, or entrepreneurship. We can tap into the same people who have navigated hardships and found their way through it and go back and help graduates still going through it. It’s been satisfying to see how open our first-gen, low-income community has been to helping other first-gen, low-income people.”

Whatever their circumstances, lots of Penn graduates don’t know about or take advantage of the career placement and other resources the University offers to students and alumni.

Penn First Plus is increasing awareness of those tools and adding new programs for alumni, says Elise Betz GED’03, the senior executive director of Alumni Relations. One such resource is Penn FLASH, a collaboration between the Greenfield Intercultural Center (GIC) and Penn First Plus, which is open to students and alumni who are first-generation, low-income, or of similar circumstances; who have an interest in and want to support the FGLI community; or who are/were members of the GIC family as students, alumni, faculty, staff, or friends. Penn FLASH is a platform for mentorship, networking, and other “flash” connections, and according to its website, it currently includes more than 900 community members.

With Penn FLASH, Betz says, alumni can fill out a profile to be a mentor and provide students with answers and life advice. “You can be a mentor without a [lifelong commitment],” she adds. “Stu-

dents could have a question about their career, or maybe it's 'I'm going to move to San Francisco and don't know anyone, can you help me?'"

Lisette Garza LPS'20 LPS'22, who was the first director of alumni and career resource initiatives for Penn First Plus, saw how impactful a program like PIP can be, and the necessity of offering resources after graduation. "One of my findings at Penn was that we took care of FGLI student as *students*," she says, "but they struggled the first two years after graduation. They couldn't find a job, or they got mired in family issues."

Some students had the "bootstrap mentality" in which they hesitated to ask for help, even mentorships, because they might take away from someone who could need it more. "It's been healing work, giving alumni the opportunity to talk about these experiences, and letting them contribute by mentoring," Garza says.

"At its most basic, this is a question of parity, of leveling the field, of insuring that our environments are diverse enough to even benefit the least privileged person in the room," she adds. "This is supporting these young people to survive and thrive. It would be a shame if someone with so much potential can't take off because they're missing social resources."

The University has been emphasizing the alumni aspect of PIP, which was a priority for Gutmann from the time the subject was broached around 2017, Betz notes. "We were the first school that had a director-level position focused on first-gen alumni," she adds. "Just because a first-generation student graduates doesn't mean that they don't need support. We wanted to be very intentional about creating a network of support that wasn't stigmatized, wasn't 'othered.' It was very much in the mainstream, integrated with alumni relations, reunions, and other work we do."

Goyal believes that today's students are more willing to talk about their challenges. In working with Wharton alumni

**"It helps to create empathy and understanding of the different class hierarchies in the United States and other societies, how that influences access to resources, and why it's important to open up these pathways."**

in the past, he found that "first-gen folks felt invisible," he says. "Within the culture of Wharton, there was a little more of the feeling that everyone else is from means, everybody is well-networked. I think the culture from the MBA population trickled down to the undergraduates.

"When a FGLI group was established for the Wharton alumni, people started coming out of the woodwork to say, 'Oh, I'm also experiencing this.' A professor might ask, 'Where's everybody going for Spring Break?' when first-gen students are staying on campus, or they may be working at work-study jobs to pay for their books. They're having to navigate a bit of a busier schedule because they have to work to make ends meet."

Garza, who is now a leadership development consultant with Independence Blue Cross, is the child of migrant workers in Texas. She graduated from the University of Texas and became a Fulbright scholar before being hired at Penn. "I knew I was first-gen, but never had any validation how challenging it was," she says. "Hearing the language to use [at Penn First Plus], it finally gave a name to these feelings. I'm tearing up. Everything was such a blur. I felt out of my element."

Betz says she often hears alumni saying they wish they had had such a program sooner. "They tell us that when they were in school, we didn't have any first-gen support, and it was almost stigmatized," she says.

### **Benefits Entire Community**

Lo notes that a program like PIP doesn't just help the students who are part of it—but helps all students on campus in different ways.

"It expands the bubble of awareness of how folks live their lives in the world," he says. "Imagine you're an engineer or an entrepreneur and your only frame of reference is designing products for people who can afford luxury goods. You're missing the majority of the population if you miss the folks who qualify for need-based aid. It helps to create empathy and understanding of the different class hierarchies in the United States and other societies, how that influences access to resources, and why it's important to open up these pathways."

Obviously, initiatives like Penn First Plus aren't going to completely close the gap between the wealthy and poor, but they can make sure those lacking in resources can see a path toward better opportunities and have a safety net if they hit an unexpected snag.

"This is probably one of the most impactful initiatives that Penn has undertaken over the course of the last couple of decades," Lo says. "We're thinking carefully about access and opportunities to all of what becomes the Penn experience. So many of the alums come back and tell us they wish Penn had undertaken this earlier. We're happy to see how—six years in—we're improving the academic health of our students, and that we're making a difference of how they feel about being in the Penn community. While there are still those signifiers of wealth out there, these students feel more and more like they belong."

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Caren Lissner C'93 is finishing up a memoir, *How We Became Homeless*. Her first novel, *Carrie Pilby*, was adapted into a comedy film. Find more of her writing at [carenlissner.com](http://carenlissner.com).





# The Prudent Patriot

There's a lot more to Founding Father John Dickinson than *not* signing the Declaration of Independence.

By Dennis Drabelle

**HE** is “a Shadow—tall, but slender as a Reed—pale as ashes,” John Adams wrote in a 1774 diary entry. “One would think at first sight that he could not live a Month. Upon a more attentive Inspection, he looks as if the Springs of Life were strong enough to last many Years.” The reedy paleface under Adams’s microscope was John Dickinson, a lawyer, writer, and public servant whose Springs of Life did indeed last many more years. Thirty-four of them, to be exact, at the end of which he had been president of the Pennsylvania Assembly, a Founding Father, and a trustee of the University of the State of Pennsylvania, as Penn was once called.

Throughout, Dickinson rarely saw issues in absolute terms. Take, for example, the series of actions he took—or refrained

from taking—with regard to the American Revolution: declining to sign the Declaration of Independence but fighting in the War of Independence and, after the colonies won, helping to draft the United States Constitution. If John Dickinson was a Shadow, it was a complex one, and examining it from all sides can lead to a more nuanced understanding of American revolutionary history than civics textbooks tend to provide.

**Dickinson was born to wealth on Maryland’s Eastern Shore in 1732.** His father was a tobacco farmer, and his mother was said to be “a distinguished woman of fine understanding and graceful manner.” They were both Quakers. In 1741, the Dickinsons moved to what is now Delaware but was then a part of

Pennsylvania known as The Three Lower Counties on the Delaware; there they built a house called Poplar Hall. When John grew up and showed an interest in becoming a lawyer, his parents approved. He read law in Philadelphia and passed the bar. In 1753, he moved to London and joined one of the Inns of Court to study law formally. In a letter home, he wrote of taking “as much pleasure in unraveling an intricate point of law as a florist receives when he sees some favorite flower, which he has long tended himself, at last unfold its glowing colours & breathe its sweet perfumes.” Londoners’ loose morals, however, took the young provincial aback. “It is grown a Vice here to be Virtuous,” he complained.

Three years later, Dickinson returned to Philadelphia and set up a law practice. He won some big cases, including one in which he defended a printer against a charge of libeling the Pennsylvania Assembly, which itself judged the case and found him guilty. Benjamin Franklin approved the Assembly’s action, but Thomas Penn, who had succeeded his father, William, as the colony’s proprietor, appealed the verdict to the King in Council. The result was a vindication of Dickinson’s contention that for the Assembly to act as both prosecutor and judge of a case in which it was a party was a travesty of justice.

In 1759, Dickinson was elected to a seat in the Lower Counties Assembly, which had broken away from the Pennsylvania Assembly because of dissatisfaction with being ruled by Quakers. With an eye toward a political career in the larger colony, Dickinson did not run for reelection when his term ended. His gamble paid off in 1762, when he was elected to fill the seat of a Pennsylvania assemblyman who had died. While in office, Dickinson maintained his law practice. One of his clerks was the brilliant Scottish immigrant James Wilson, who later worked with his mentor on the Constitution, taught law at Penn, and became a US Supreme Court justice before being

embroiled in debt and dying a fugitive [“Flawed Founder,” May/June 2011]. Dickinson also managed the plantations associated with Poplar Hall—a credential that later inspired him to call his masterwork *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*—and in doing so dealt with another kind of property: human beings. After wrestling with his conscience for years, Dickinson became the first Founding Father to free all his slaves.

In 1764, Dickinson and Franklin were again at loggerheads. The Penns’ overlordship had become increasingly unpopular, and Franklin’s proposed solution was to get their proprietary charter revoked and have Pennsylvania become a crown colony. Dickinson had the gumption to challenge Franklin on this, urging the Assembly to “let our resentment bear proportion to the provocation received; and not produce ... effects more fatal than the injury of which we complain.” As an example of such an unwanted effect, Dickinson cited the charter’s guarantee of religious freedom and warned that the sought-after change could lead to the establishment of the Church of England in Pennsylvania.

Franklin was not dissuaded. He went to England and contravened his instructions from the Assembly by submitting to the British Privy Council a petition for direct rule of Pennsylvania by the Crown. Although this was rejected, the petitioner’s reputation took a hit. Franklin’s biographer Walter Isaacson calls his handling of this matter “one of [his] worst political misjudgments. His hatred of the Penns [had] blinded him to the fact that most of his fellow Pennsylvanians hated taxes imposed from London more.”

**In the meantime, the relationship of all the American colonies to England had changed.** Parliament had passed the Stamp Act, which as explained by Dickinson’s most recent biographer, Jane E. Calvert, “required that all vellum, parchment, and paper receive an embossed royal stamp costing a specified amount; other-

wise, use of these materials would be deemed illegal and any business conducted with them null and void.” Dickinson decried the law for two reasons. First, he thought it was unfair, imposing burdens that fell most heavily on “merchants and people of little substance.” Second, he considered it an unconstitutional violation of the fundamental principle that those being taxed should have a say in the matter, which in this case they had not.

The slogan “no taxation without representation” (attributed to James Otis of Massachusetts) spread through the colonies, and the Pennsylvania Assembly sent Dickinson to New York as one of its representatives to the ad hoc Stamp Act Congress. It was clear to the delegates that the new law was unacceptable, but thanks in large part to Dickinson’s leadership they stopped short of fomenting a crisis, instead urging civil disobedience—resolving to conduct business as usual, as if the Stamp Act did not exist.

Though not himself a Quaker (for one thing, he couldn’t bring himself to forswear using force in a defensive war), Dickinson drew upon his familiarity with the faith to propound a democratic philosophy of human rights in *Friends and Countrymen*, a broadside he published in 1765. Rights come not from kings or governments, he asserted, but from God, and thus belong to every man. This expansive view of rights and equality set the tone for the treatment of rights in the Declaration of Independence 11 years later.

Dickinson tried a back-door approach to a reputedly sensible British statesman, William Pitt the Elder. In a letter to Pitt, Dickinson noted that sentiment for independence was growing in the colonies and that Parliament was to blame. He also made the dire prediction that a severance of ties with Britain would divide the colonies from one another, too, leading to “Centuries of mutual Jealousies, Hatreds, Wars and Devastations; till at last the exhausted Provinces shall sink into Slavery under the Yoke of some fortunate Conqueror.”

In March of 1766, the Stamp Act was repealed, but Parliament soon passed the Townshend Acts, so called after Charles Townshend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer whose brainchildren they were. One of the five new laws imposed taxes on paper, lead, and paint; another protected the East India Company against competition from tea smugglers; and a third pressured New Yorkers to quarter British soldiers on their land. Public response was so tepid, however, that Dickinson was moved to gather his thoughts into a thoroughgoing analysis of where Parliament had gone wrong.

**The British Constitution is not a document but an accrued web of precedents, rules, and relationships among the Crown, Parliament, and the people.**

As explained by the historian Forrest McDonald in his introduction to a modern edition of *Letters*, “Americans needed someone who could state their case in such a way as to make king and parliament out as radical innovators, and themselves as defenders of ancient traditions.” Dickinson became that someone. Adopting his persona of a farmer—albeit one who could cite Tacitus, Cato, Montesquieu, and Hume as readily as he could milk a cow—between December of 1767 and February of ’68 he published a dozen closely reasoned essays in the form of letters to “My dear Countrymen” in two Philadelphia newspapers; they were reprinted elsewhere in the colonies, as well as in London, Dublin, and Paris.

In his first letter, he took care to distinguish between the king and Parliament, assuring his majesty of the colonists’ fealty while taking the legislative body to task for passing the Stamp Act and others of its ilk. “Here we may observe an authority *expressly* claimed and exerted to impose duties on these colonies; not for the regulation of trade; not for the preservation or promotion of a mutually beneficial intercourse between the several constituent parts of the empire, heretofore the *sole objects* of

Dickinson wrote of taking “as much pleasure in unraveling an intricate point of law as a florist receives when he sees some favorite flower ... unfold its glowing colours.”

parliamentary institutions; *but for the single purpose of levying money upon us*. This I call an innovation, and a most dangerous innovation.”

In his third letter, Dickinson explained that he was writing the series “to convince people of these colonies that they are at this moment exposed to the most imminent dangers; and to persuade them immediately, vigorously, and unanimously, to exert themselves in the most firm, but most peaceable manner, for obtaining relief.” Elaborating on the qualifier “most peaceable,” he asserted that “*liberty* is a cause of too much dignity to be sullied by turbulence and tumult. ... Those who engage in [that cause] should breathe a sedate, yet fervent spirit, animating them to actions of prudence, justice, modesty, bravery, humanity and magnanimity.” Farther down in the same letter, Dickinson specified the tactic he would have the colonists use instead of turbulence and tumult: “petitions of our assemblies, or where they are not permitted to meet, of the people, to the powers that can afford us relief.”

In the 12th and last letter, Dickinson played cheerleader, assuring his fellow colonists, “You will *prove* that *Americans* have that true *magnanimity* of soul, that can resent injuries, without falling into rage; and that tho’ your devo-

tion to *Great Britain* is the most affectionate, yet you can make PROPER DISTINCTIONS, and know what you owe *to yourselves*, as well as *to her*.” Align his emphasis on sedateness, magnanimity, and petitioning with his fear that revolution might separate the colonies from one another, and you can see why he couldn’t wholeheartedly embrace the Spirit of ’76. Even so, the *Letters* were so well-received that, like Lord Byron, Dickinson woke up one day and found himself famous. His renown reached the trinket-begetting level, with his likeness appearing, in Calvert’s words, “on canvas, in miniatures, etched in copper, molded in gold, and carved in wood.”

In his private life, Dickinson had been courting Mary Norris, known as Polly, daughter of Isaac Norris, a longtime speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly. She and her parents were Quakers, and there was a roadblock: the risk of Polly’s being expelled from her meeting if, as John preferred, they wed in a civil ceremony. In 1770, at the ripe age of 37, he got his way—a civil ceremony it was. Dynastic as the marriage may have appeared at the time—the Norrises had an estate of their own, Fairhill, in Philadelphia—it proved to be a love match as well.

**F**riktion between the colonies and the mother country heated up until, in the fall of 1774, what became known as the First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. Composed of delegates from 12 of the 13 colonies (Georgia was the truant), the Congress set about formulating a Bill of Rights, a List of Grievances, and a petition to the king. Early in the going, Calvert writes, John Adams was “as star-struck [with Dickinson] as anyone,” recording in his diary “every detail of his interactions with the Farmer.” But Adams’s hero-worship waned after some of his drafts were edited or replaced at Dickinson’s behest. Adams took umbrage, for example, when Dickinson criticized his work as “written in Language of such asperity, as little

accorded with the conciliatory disposition of Congress.” Before long, Adams was dismissing his former hero as “delicate” and “timid.”

After the king rejected the so-called Olive Branch Petition, a Second Continental Congress convened on May 10, 1775, in what soon became known as Independence Hall, this time with delegates from all 13 colonies. Three weeks previously, British attempts to enforce the laws being civilly disobeyed had led to the battles of Lexington and Concord. “The impious war of tyranny against innocence has commenced in the neighborhood of Boston,” Dickinson lamented in a letter to a friend. “While we revere and love our mother country, her sword is opening our veins.”

Like many other Americans, Dickinson was resigning himself to what he called “this most unnatural and inexplicably cruel war.” But he recommended that preparations be accompanied by “Measures of Reconciliation,” including a second petition to the king. Even so, when Philadelphians formed a militia, he agreed to command it.

In January of that year, Thomas Paine had published his incendiary pamphlet *Common Sense*, which cited the fact the only a third of Pennsylvanians were of English stock to undermine the notion of England as the “mother country,” called reconciliation “a fallacious dream,” sneered at “the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot,” and excoriated George III as “the Royal Brute of Great Britain.” Yet Dickinson continued to resist the burgeoning independence movement, emphasizing a rationale that might be called “no independence without a plebiscite”—that is, don’t change our form of government without obtaining a popular mandate.

Undeterred, Adams published his *Letters of Novanglus*, characterized by Calvert as “essentially a blueprint for the structures of self-government.” Momentum for a rebellion increased, but Dickinson was unmoved. To the Pennsylvania

Assembly he declared, “I can defy the world, Sir, but—I defy not heaven; nor will I ever barter my conscience for the esteem of mankind! So let my country treat me as she pleases, still I will act as my conscience directs.” Speaking against the resolution for independence laid before Congress on July 1, he argued that the people would be right to “complain about our Rashness & ask why We did not first apply [for help] to foreign Powers, why We did not settle all Differences among Ourselves.” Adams then took the floor to make the cause for breaking away; by the time he sat down again, Calvert writes, “It was clear that in the vote to be taken the following day, Congress would declare independence.”

At this juncture, Dickinson tempered his conscience with realpolitik. Anything short of unanimity on the resolution would be taken as a sign of weakness, so rather than vote nay, he absented himself. And shortly after the Fourth of July, Colonel John Dickinson led his men into New Jersey to fight. Years later, he accounted for his seeming inconsistency by saying he felt obliged “whenever the public Resolutions are taken, to regard them tho’ opposite to my opinion as Sacred ... and to join in supporting them as earnestly as if my voice had been given for them.”

Dickinson’s military service didn’t last long; his battalion was called home in September, and he submitted his resignation. By the time the war ended, both Poplar Hall and Fairhill lay in ruins, but Dickinson still owned enough property to donate 600 acres to the new college named after him in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

**Owing to poor health, Dickinson was not at his best during the constitutional convention of 1787–89.** Nonetheless, he argued successfully for a bicameral national legislature, one with equal representation of every state (the Senate), the other with proportional representation (the House of Representatives), in order to keep the smaller states from being dominated by the larger ones. He also prevailed

in the debate over whether senators should be elected by popular vote or by state legislatures; he expected voters to elect the best men to their own legislatures, which in turn would send the best of the best to the federal senate. (This method lasted until 1913, when the 17th Amendment, providing for direct popular election of senators, went into effect.)

Another cause of Dickinson’s failed, however: making Americans face the evils of slavery by at least speaking frankly about it in the Constitution’s fugitive slave clause. Instead, Congress adopted the waffling language “person held to Service or Labour in one state ... escaping into another ... shall be delivered up on the Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.” “The omitting of the *Word*,” Dickinson noted, “will be regarded as an Endeavour to conceal a principle of which we are ashamed.”

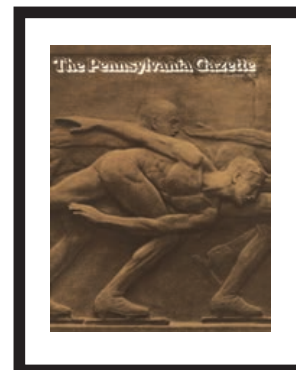
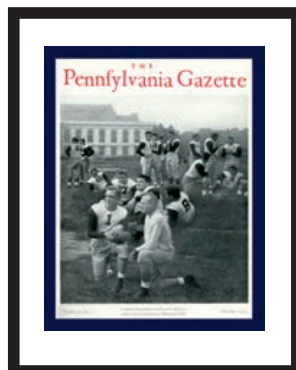
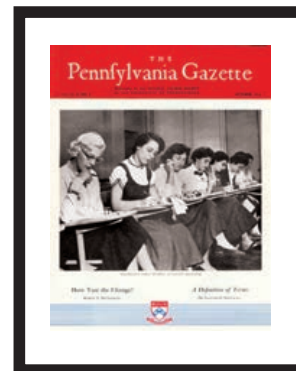
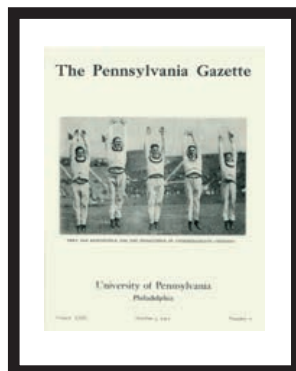
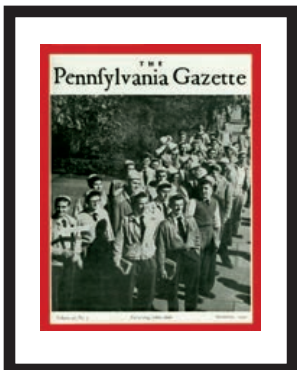
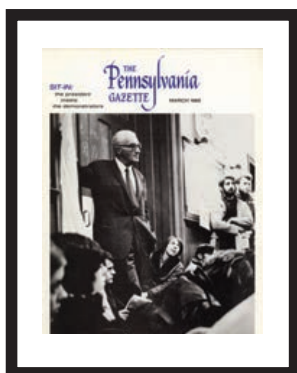
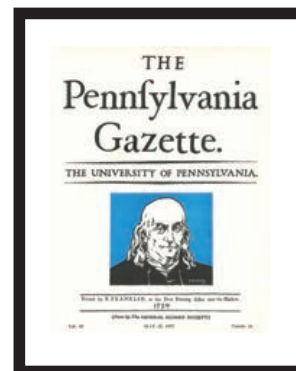
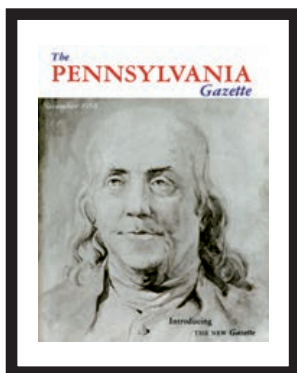
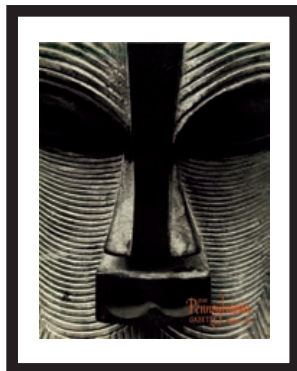
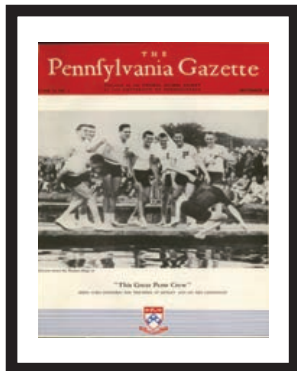
John Adams continued to badmouth Dickinson in the latter’s retirement, berating him, Polly, and their Quaker religion for their opposition to independence as well as for Adams’s defeat by Thomas Jefferson in the presidential election of 1800. Adams was both spiteful and wrong on the facts—John was not a Quaker, and he and Polly had nothing to do with Adams’s 1800 defeat—but historians tended to slight Dickinson’s foundational achievements until the publication of two revisionist biographies in the 21st century, William Murchison’s *The Cost of Liberty: The Life of John Dickinson* and Jane E. Calvert’s *Penman of the Founding: A Biography of John Dickinson*.

A man of immense learning, great powers of persuasion, and a conscience that was both strong and subtle, the Pennsylvania Farmer deserves the encomium given him by Calvert: “If there were a single individual who could be credited with bringing the United States into being, it would be Dickinson.”

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Dennis Drabelle G’66 L’69 is the author, most recently, of *The Power of Scenery: Frederick Law Olmsted and the Origin of National Parks*.

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## Calendar

### Annenberg Center

pennlivearts.org

**Sep. 26–27** Mark Morris

Dance Group

**Sep. 28** Branford Marsalis Quartet

**Oct. 2–5** New York Stage and Film:  
Plays in Progress

**Oct. 4** Soweto Gospel Choir

**Oct. 11** Jorge Luis Pacheco

**Oct. 18** Aakash Odedra Company

**Nov. 2** Cécile McLorin Salvant

### Arthur Ross Gallery

arthurrossgallery.org

open Tues.–Sun.

**Hung Liu: Happy and Gay**

Through Oct. 26

### ICA

icaphila.org

**Mavis Pusey: Mobile Images**

Through Dec. 7

### Kelly Writers House

writing.upenn.edu/wh/

**Sep. 3** Speakeasy Open Mic Night

**Sep. 10** PoemTalk: Pierre Joris  
& Jerome Rothenberg

**Sep. 11** Poetry Reading:

Therí Pickens & Yolanda Wisher

**Sep. 16** Should History and English

Get Along? (Al Filreis and William  
Sturkey in conversation)

**Sep. 17** Julia Elliott

& Stephanie Feldman

**Sep. 29** Live at the Writers House

featuring poets from the *Keystone  
Poetry* anthology

**Sep. 30** Careers in Journalism  
& Media: Mora Magid Mentorship  
Prize Panel

**Oct. 21** Poetry Reading: Greg Djanikian

**Oct. 22** Speakeasy Open Mic Night

**Oct. 28** Conversation with

Adelle Waldman

**Oct. 29** Poetry Reading:

Marcella Durand

### Morris Arboretum and Gardens

morrisarboretum.org

open daily

**Bees, Butterflies & Blooms**

**Garden Railway: World Pollinators**

Both through Sep. 30

### Penn Libraries

library.upenn.edu

**Made (by Hand) in the Midwest:**

The Contre Coup Press 1979–2019

**“My Soul is Anchored in the Lord”:**

Marian Anderson & Florence Price

Reinventing Aristotle (opening Oct. 3)

**Navigating the Past:** Histories of the

US Navy & Marine Corps, 1775–2025

(Oct. 10–11, conference open to

the public)

### Penn Museum

penn.museum

**Into the Blue:** The Pursuit of Color

**Preserving Assyria**

**Ancient Egypt:** Discovery to Display

**U-2 Spy Planes & Aerial Archaeology**

### World Café Live

worldcafelive.com

**Sep. 4** Dustbowl Revival

**Sep. 10** Dominique Fils-Aimé

**Sep. 11** Taj Farrant

**Sep. 13** The Feelies

**Sep. 16** Texas Headhunters

**Sep. 19** James McMurtry

**Sep. 20** The Hot Sardines

**Sep. 30** Kings Kaleidoscope

**Oct. 10** Jack & Jack

**Oct. 11** Surfer Girl

**Oct. 17** Ruston Kelly

**Oct. 22** Chaparelle

**Oct. 24** Infinity Song

**Oct. 25** Vincent Lima

**Oct. 30** S.G. Goodman

# Mavis Pusey at the ICA

Movement, emotion, and abstraction.



“I love buildings that’ve been torn down, though I hate to see them torn down,” the painter and printmaker Mavis Pusey (1928–2019) once mused. “You will see sadness and yet you see forms of movement and emo-

tion,” she continued. “I fantasize about what happened inside of them.”

The Jamaican-born artist reached her creative apogee in New York City during the 1960s and 1970s. Bucking art-world pressures to center her own racial or

sexual identity within her work, Pusey instead gravitated toward geometric rhythms and relationships. One abiding inspiration was the urban regeneration playing out in her Chelsea neighborhood, whose invigorating and messy gentrification she documented in paintings like *Within Manhattan* (1977) before that very dynamic ejected her from the apartment building where she long lived. Pusey also made hard-edge color field paintings that in some instances depicted recognizably human figures and in



others veered toward purer abstraction. In yet another vein, she channeled musical inspirations—be it guitar necks, vinyl record covers, or the sounds of the 1968 Paris student protests—into prints where angular geometries erupt against pulsing parallel lines to evoke the shifting tempos she sensed in her surroundings.

Penn’s Institute of Contemporary Art is presenting more than 60 of Pusey’s works alongside artist notes, correspondence, and other ephemera in a comprehensive retrospective that constitutes the first major museum survey dedicated to her. *Mavis Pusey: Mobile Images*, curated by Hallie Ringle, the ICA’s interim director and Daniel and Brett Sundheim Chief Curator along with Kiki Teshome of the Studio Museum in Harlem, is on view through December 7. —TP



## Move Mixer

Choreographer Jennifer Weber is on a roll.

**T**his is a heady time for Jennifer Weber C'00. “Dance is energy,” Weber says, and her personal style and hip-hop-influenced choreography embody it.

Broadway is just one of her current stomping grounds. Weber’s high-octane, Tony-nominated choreography levitates *& Juliet*, a jukebox musical remix of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. Now in its third year at the Stephen Sondheim Theatre, the show has become an international draw, with tours underway in North America as well as the United Kingdom and Ireland, and a production in Hamburg, Germany. The show has also toured Australia and Singapore,

and another production is opening in Toronto in December.

*& Juliet* repurposes the bouncy pop catalog of Swedish songwriter Max Martin (Kelly Clarkson’s “Since U Been Gone,” the Backstreet Boys’ “I Want It That Way,” Britney Spears’s “...Baby One More Time”). David West Read’s book of the musical embeds the songs in a fable of female empowerment, and Weber’s choreography blends pop, Broadway, and hip-hop moves.

“It’s not in one vocabulary. It’s not in one style. What draws it together is heart,” Weber says. “I love sampling ideas of classic theater, like a little bit of Fosse or a little bit of jazz. Which is also

very hip-hop—to sample lots of things the way DJs sample beats and rappers sample lines. It’s part of the culture.”

Martin is a less familiar name than the stars who have propelled his compositions up the pop charts: Spears, Clarkson, Taylor Swift, Katy Perry, Ariana Grande, Pink, and Justin Timberlake, among others. Weber describes Martin’s melodies as the “soundtrack of pop culture” and “the best songs to dance to.”

Luck played a part in Weber’s involvement in *& Juliet*. One of the show’s producers happened to catch the Off-Broadway production of *KPOP*, a musical about the Korean pop music industry that Weber had choreographed. (*KPOP* opened its short Broadway run in November 2022, the same week as *& Juliet*, earning Weber a burst of headlines and a second Tony nomination.)

Weber was invited to London in the summer of 2018 to choreograph Act I of *& Juliet*. It was a tryout of sorts. The collaboration, under director Luke Shepard, meshed and the show was nominated for nine 2020 Olivier Awards, including for Weber’s choreography. (It won three, all for its performers.)

“It’s very ‘old school meets new school,’” Weber says of the dances and design. “I tried to pull a lot of inspiration from classic, old-school hip-hop, stuff that’s not trendy. And for different songs, I was inspired by different types of vocabularies that seemed to match the story. Because when you’re making a musical, it’s not at all about, ‘How cool is the step?’ It’s about, ‘How does this tell the story?’”

In the song “Confident,” Juliet (who, in this version, decides not to kill herself) uses 1970s West Coast hip-hop moves to build up the self-assurance of a new romantic prospect named Frankie. “You see Juliet kind of invent the dance,” Weber says. The ensemble responds. “And then, eventually, Frankie picks up the dance,” and in the process “finds his confidence.”

Weber likens another memorable number, “Problem / Can’t Feel My Face,” to “a classic old-school American musical”

dream ballet. Ensemble members, dancing on two rotating turntables, are “embodying the voices in Juliet’s head” and “encouraging her to move forward with a new decision,” Weber explains.

The show’s most iconic number is the climactic “Roar,” in which Juliet finds her voice. Weber demonstrates an arm movement—“there’s no name for it,” she says, “it’s just the ‘Roar’ move”—that has inspired numerous pop-star videos. Katy Perry, who cowrote the song and made it a hit, “came to the show and did this move with the cast” after a performance, Weber says.

Weber’s career got off to an inauspicious start. Despite her youth dance lessons, she was rejected freshman year by every troupe at Penn. “I wouldn’t say I was any good at dancing,” says Weber, who majored in communication. “I was a late bloomer to the world of dance.”

She responded by founding her own group, Strictly Funk—which is still going strong almost 30 years later. “Dance just took over my life,” she says. “It was the best thing about being at Penn.” She had grown to love hip-hop from music videos and nights of club dancing. “I felt like it sat in my body in a way that felt really good—in a way that pirouettes did not feel good,” she says.

Shortly after graduating, she launched a professional troupe, Decadancetheatre, originally entirely female. “My creativity took me in different directions,” she says. “With Deca, we toured a lot, but we were also contestants on a reality TV show.”

The group became known for its hip-hop takes on classical music and ballet, starting with Stravinsky’s *The Firebird* in 2004. Then came Weber’s reinventions of Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons* and Tchaikovsky’s Christmas Eve ballet, *The Nutcracker*. “When we did *The Nutcracker*, it exploded,” Weber says.

Developed in 2013–14, *The Hip Hop Nutcracker* toured the country, and in 2021 a PBS broadcast of a performance (later streamed on Disney+) won a New York Emmy Award. *While You Were Gone*,

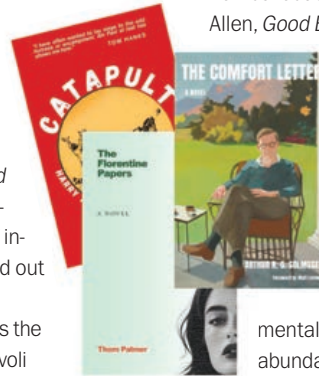
## BOOKS

### Writer to Publisher

**Daniel Akst C’78 has written a number of articles for the Gazette** (see “Why We Choose What We Choose” in this issue’s “Gazetteer” for the latest example). We’ve also written *about* him as the author of *We Have Met the Enemy: Self-Control in an Age of Excess*

[“A Shelf Full of Resolutions,” Jan|Feb 2011] and *War by Other Means: How the Pacifists of WWII Changed America for Good* [“Arts,” Jan|Feb 2023], evidence of his wide range of interests. He’s now branched out in a whole new direction.

Akst’s latest venture is as the founder and publisher of Tivoli Books ([tivolibooks.com](http://tivolibooks.com)), which aims to put out an annual slate of five or six titles “unjustly forgotten” after first publication as well as new works “overlooked by mainstream publishers,” according to its website. Releases so far, all reissues, have included novels centering on an art-world provocateur, the farcical romance of a struggling poet and a



“brainy and seductive food writer,” and a lawyer mixed up with a “hyperkinetic takeover artist.”

The last of these, *The Comfort Letter*, originally published in 1975, is by Arthur R. G. Solmssen L’53, a Penn Law alumnus who wrote several novels set in the world of old school Philadelphia law firms. Coming this fall are a new collection of essays from the critic Brooke Allen, *Good Bones: Glorious Relics from the Age of Reading*, and a republication of the “magical true story” *Catapult: Harry and I Build a Siege Weapon* by Jim Paul, which first came out in 1991.

In a January 2025 post on Tivoli’s blog, Akst acknowledged that “sensible souls will question the fledgling publisher’s mental health.” But he countered that an abundance of “good material, old and new,” plus the availability of online platforms and tools that have “democratized the process of book publishing,” mean that “someone with strong tastes and varied talents can make a go of this at a reasonably high level.”

To which we say, Amen, and good luck. And note that Tivoli is “wide open to manuscript submissions.” —JP

a short dance film that Weber directed and choreographed, won a New England Emmy in 2022. Another milestone, in 2020, was her exuberant choreography for the cheerleaders, zombies, and werewolves in Disney’s *Zombies 2* movie.

In 2017, Weber disbanded Decadancetheatre to take advantage of the opportunities coming her way. “I find the artistic process to be the biggest mystery of them all,” she says. “This morning, I was choreographing in my living room in front of my big mirror, making something for tomorrow. There are parts of *& Juliet* that are exactly what I prepped in front of my mirror by myself. And then there’s numbers that we changed 25 times over the course of building the show.”

Inspiration comes from the music, the story, and sometimes the performers themselves. “It’s really important that everyone feels good doing the movement,” she says. “I never want people to feel like,

‘Oh, I don’t dance like that. That’s not for me.’ I want them to find their own entry point, their own way of tackling steps.”

These days Weber’s slate is crowded. This summer found her in London, choreographing *Grease: The Immersive Movie Musical*, which combined film and theater. In September comes the debut of a musical stage adaptation of the 2004 romantic film comedy *13 Going On 30*. Like *& Juliet*, it will play at England’s Manchester Opera House. “I’m hoping we can make it two for two in the hit zone,” Weber says.

She also dreams of joining the ranks of Broadway director/choreographers, icons such as Bob Fosse, Susan Stroman, Rob Marshall, and Jerry Mitchell. “I want to give *Guys and Dolls* the hip-hop reimagination treatment,” Weber says. “I can just picture the crap shooters dance with all B-boys. It’d be amazing.”

—Julia M. Klein

# Four Mothers, Four Continents

A new book takes stock of motherhood in Japan, Kenya, Finland, and the US.

**A**bigail Leonard C'02 was an international journalist with three young children—the littlest just eight months old—when she swung her reporting to the highs and lows of new motherhood.

Her own experience had been unconventional, starting with a trans-Pacific move while pregnant. In Japan, she used an obstetrician who “sped across Tokyo behind the wheel of a ruby red convertible to deliver babies at three different hospitals,” she later wrote. The usual postpartum questions around sleep, feeding, and returning to work became even tougher with cultural differences layered on top. And through it all, “I was filled with a deep longing for home,” she wrote.

But as a journalist, Leonard wasn't interested in telling her own story, unique as it was. She had something bigger in mind: chronicling the lives of multiple new mothers around the world to see how that tender time unfolded—and how their countries' policies supported them (or didn't).

“The first year of motherhood and struggles of motherhood are underreported,” she says. “Treating it like a valid subject of reporting and documentation is really important.” *Four Mothers*, which came out in May, follows the pregnancies and first year of motherhood for Tsukasa in Japan, Chelsea in Kenya, Anna in Finland, and Sarah in the US.

Through Leonard's absorbing, deeply personal accounts, the book shows how different new motherhood can look from country to country.

Nordic countries are renowned for their pro-family policies, and *Four Mothers* confirms that many times over. Anna is among the 99.5 percent of Finnish moms who receive prenatal care at a public maternity clinic—including a special appointment focused on parenting phi-

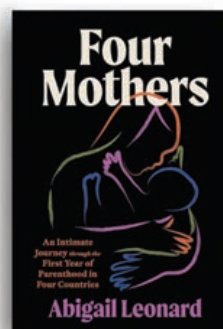
losophies and breaking intergenerational trauma.

Parents in Finland also get 40 days of paid leave before their child is born, which continues for almost a year after birth. “Latte pappas” fill city cafes and parks, sipping coffee and enjoying time with their new babies. Leonard writes that according to Anna, “the debate over working mothers [in Finland] seems so resolved that the conversation has largely moved on to fathers and non-birthing partners.”

Even as she struggles through a breakup with her baby's father, Anna is buoyed by government support; on top of her paid leave, there's a monthly child stipend, plus some extra given to single parents. She returns to her job part-time one year postpartum, though it's protected for three years. Finding quality daycare is a slam dunk, too.

Now compare that to Sarah, a happily married Utahn whose story will be much more familiar to American readers. Her husband returns to work a week after their daughter is born. Sarah has three months of protected leave, then she's back at her own job while juggling childcare, breast pumps, and lack of sleep. And despite an uncomplicated birth, her hospital bills are the highest of all four women.

“In the US, the last few generations have really failed parents in major ways,” Leonard says. “We've come so close on things like universal daycare and guaranteed paid leave, and then the same forces arise—sexism, racism and corporate greed.” She hopes her book will help “move the conversation forward” on policies that could improve life for new parents.



**Four Mothers**  
By Abigail Leonard  
Algonquin Books,  
288 pages, \$30.

It wouldn't be the first time Leonard's reporting has spurred change. After she produced a series for PBS on the caregivers—often spouses—of veterans with traumatic brain injuries, the US Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs requested a copy to screen. Then they established two federal programs to support those caregivers.

A story she reported for *Al Jazeera* revealed the dangers

that people in prisons were facing due to a private healthcare contractor. “The ACLU referenced our story in a legal case against the healthcare provider, and the provider ended up being kicked out from working in prisons after that,” Leonard says. “In both those stories, I felt like I contributed to helping make a better society for people. Journalism can do that.”

Before she became a professional journalist, Leonard dabbled in it at Penn. She wrote a few stories for the *Daily Pennsylvanian* and *34th Street* but mostly focused on her anthropology major. Those classes laid the groundwork for *Four Mothers*, she says, which at times reads like an ethnography in its level of detail, close observation, and historical context.

After a year in New Orleans with Teach for America, she moved to New York to pursue a master's degree in science journalism at New York University. Then she worked in TV journalism: ABC to PBS to *Al Jazeera*, with a short detour on political commentary shows.

But when her husband began making weekly commutes from their home in San Francisco to his company's Tokyo office, Leonard—pregnant with their first child—moved with him to Japan. As she

soaked up Japanese culture over the next six years, she also reported on it for major news outlets, relaying its challenges and triumphs to American audiences. For *Newsweek*: “Could Japan’s Shrinking Population Lead to Shrinking Rights for Women?” For *Time*: “This Japanese Island Lifted Its Coronavirus Lockdown Too Soon and Became a Warning to the World.” For the *Washington Post*: “For Some Expats, US Gun Violence Makes Japan Feel Like a Haven.”

Her family returned to the US in 2021 as a party of five, which is when Leonard’s work on *Four Mothers* began. “I sort of had in mind what I wanted,” she recalls: “middle-class, first-time moms in or near a city, because that sort of represents the world’s population. And I wanted geographic representation.”

With help from local reporting partners, Leonard followed the women for a full year. There were site visits, phone debriefs, texts, emails, photos, videos, and baring of souls. The result is a level of access and engaging prose that makes *Four Mothers* read like a novel at times. Here’s Chelsea in Kenya, back to work when her baby is three months old, trying desperately to pump milk on a short break:

*She scours the facility for a concealed corner where she can pump. Finally, she settles for the book room, a storage area for documents and other miscellany. It’s relatively private, but the air is dank and the stench of old paper turns her stomach.*

*As she unpacks her pump, she can already hear coworkers calling for her: Chelsea? Chelsea! A customer needs help!*

*[...] Suddenly there is a slash of light and before she knows what’s happened, she sees one of her coworkers silhouetted in the doorway. He is looking for a file but instead finds Chelsea, wide-eyed and half naked. He turns as quickly as he came and leaves the room, a flurry of frantic apologies trailing in his wake. Chelsea is stunned, then mortified. But she decides there isn’t much she can do—Ada still needs to eat.*

Leonard mostly kept her own experiences out of the interviews, but “knowing that I understood what they were going through, [these women] were able to open up,” she says. “I just tried to follow them wherever they wanted to go. They often went to these places that were sort of unexpected and pretty vulnerable.”

Like when Sarah, the Utahn, talked about her husband coming out as bisexual and requesting a polyamorous relationship. Or when Tsukasa in Japan revealed the sexual abuse she’d suffered in elementary school.

Surprises pop up in the research and facts Leonard weaves in, too: Only 40 percent of Japanese families have ever hired a babysitter. Some public hospitals in Kenya are so overcrowded that three or four women in active labor may share a single bed. Pain medicine is almost never used for births in Japan, so some doctors encourage pregnant women to diet to keep their babies smaller and make a medication-free delivery easier.

Still, it’s clear throughout the book just how far the US lags behind other countries in parental support. Japan has roughly 14,000 community centers for moms to meet up and enjoy activities with their babies and toddlers. It also has free daycare. In Kenya, new moms receive three months of guaranteed paid leave. And Finland has “a 100-year head start on us,” Leonard says, referencing their national maternity leave.

She says it’s been “really interesting” to hear American mothers respond to her book. They’re curious, angry, and motivated. When they ask her how to get involved, she directs them to the Chamber of Mothers, a grassroots group striving to improve maternal rights and support.

“I feel like we’re getting to this inflection point where people are realizing it’s unsustainable to go on the way we are and to think about other ways of moving forward,” Leonard says. “I just want the US to be better, and I think we can get there.”

—Molly Petrilla C’06

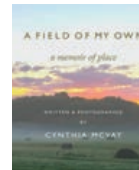
## Briefly Noted



### NOSTALGIA FOR THE FUTURE: New and Selected Poems

by Gregory Djanikian C’71  
(Green Writers Press, 2025, \$19.95.) These poems by the former longtime director

of Penn’s creative-writing program [“The Moment and the Poem,” Sep|Oct 2014] tackle subjects including romantic love and its difficulties, the horrors of the Armenian genocide of 1915, the émigré experience, the allure of landscapes, and our longing for what is ephemeral and elusive in life.



### A FIELD OF MY OWN: A Memoir of Place

by Cynthia McVay G’88  
WG’88 (Living in a Place, 2024, \$48.30.) In this ode to the Hudson Valley, occa-

sional *Gazette* essayist McVay [“Salvo,” Jul|Aug 2025] chronicles her intimate, two-decade relationship with a flagging orchard, building a pond and pollinator gardens, learning to forage for food and run a tractor, and relocating an enormous 180-year-old hand-hewn Amish barn to the property.



### SECRETS OF THE BLUE HAND GIRLS

by Rowana Miller C’22 (Sourcebooks Fire, 2025, \$12.99.) When the first letter appears in Kay Anderson’s locker, it carries one instruction: dye

your hand blue. Once Kay does, her life as she knows it will never be the same, in this secret society thriller written for young adults.



### COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP: Reflections from Netter Center Alumni

edited by Rita Axelroth Hodges C’05  
GEd’15 GrEd’24 and Michael Zuckerman C’61

(University of Pennsylvania Press, 2025, \$39.95.) In this collection of essays, Penn alumni tell how their lives were profoundly shaped by engaging with the West Philadelphia community, through Penn’s Netter Center, as students.

Visit [thepenngazette.com](http://thepenngazette.com) for more *Briefly Noted*.

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# The Organ Protector

How a longtime fan of the world's largest functioning pipe organ became instrumental in preserving it. ▶

**A**t age 71, Ray Biswanger C'75 climbs the ladders within the hidden seven-story labyrinth that houses the inner workings of the Wanamaker Grand Court Organ—the largest fully operational organ in the world—with the ease of long familiarity.

He shows off the workshop dedicated to keeping the instrument in top working condition, reeling off facts about the organ with equal mastery. Passing a row of metal organ pipes propped up against a wall, Biswanger notes that the largest of the organ's 28,482 pipes is more than 32 feet long and the smallest is just a quarter of an inch. He explains that the organ was built at the beginning of the 20th century “to be a symphony orchestra in pipes” and is powered by electricity, magnets, and wind pressure.

As the executive director of Friends of the Wanamaker Organ for the last 17 years, Biswanger guides the nonprofit organization's fundraising efforts for restoration projects and music performances. Earlier this year, he helped parties navigate the sale of the Wanamaker Building, the organ's home for more than 110 years and a beloved fixture in Center City Philadelphia, to keep the organ and its music available to the public.

“It's always ‘How can we help?’” Biswanger says. “We've worked ourselves into a position of trust here.”

The instrument that became known as the Wanamaker Organ was originally built for the 1904 St. Louis

World's Fair. Retail pioneer John Wanamaker purchased it in 1909 for his first Wanamaker's department store in Philadelphia, which opened two years later. The organ had to be taken apart and shipped from St. Louis in 13 freight train cars.

Wanamaker spared no expense, hiring organ experts to expand the instrument so its sound would fill the store's soaring, seven-story-tall Grand Court. Wanamaker “wanted the biggest and best organ in the world,” notes Biswanger. “The organ has a phenomenal sound because so much money was spent on making it the best it could be.”

The retailer loved staging publicity stunts to bring people into the store. He and his son, Rodman Wanamaker, arranged for the first notes of the Wanamaker Organ to be heard in 1911 at the exact time King George V of the United Kingdom was crowned in London. The store instituted daily organ concerts to attract and entertain customers.

The organ, bought by Wanamaker for a fraction of the \$105,000 it cost to build in the early 20th century, is valued today at more than \$79 million, according to the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ's website. For generations of people in the Philadelphia region, the organ is iconic, initially known for the store's daily concerts and later for its part in the beloved annual Christmas Light Show, which debuted in 1956. The Wanamaker Organ remained in the

Grand Court through the sales of the Wanamaker's store chain and the Wanamaker Building in the 1980s. A succession of department stores took up residence, with Macy's arriving in 2006.

## For generations of people in the Philadelphia region, the organ is iconic.

The Wanamaker Building was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1978 and both the Wanamaker Organ and the Grand Court are protected by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Yet when news broke earlier this year that Macy's was closing its Wanamaker Building location, questions immediately arose about the organ's fate. Biswanger's lifelong interest in the Wanamaker Organ put him in a position to help safeguard the musical landmark for the public.

The Wanamaker Organ first captivated Biswanger as a child when his parents took him to the department store's Christmas Light Show while visiting family in Philadelphia. “It was like Disney—that magic,” he says. Years later, as a Penn student, Biswanger gained practical skills in organ stewardship from the University's Curtis Organ, whose 10,731 pipes

make it the 11th-largest pipe organ in the world.

Biswanger followed in the academic footsteps of his father, Raymond A. Biswanger Jr. C'44 GEd'48 G'50 Gr'51, by enrolling at Penn. While studying for a degree in English and history, Biswanger also fundraised, organized concerts, and did restoration work for the Curtis Organ, located in Irvine Auditorium. “I was understudying for my future career without knowing it,” he says.

Biswanger, who worked as a journalist at *TV Guide* for more than 30 years, launched Friends of the Wanamaker Organ with other organ enthusiasts in 1991 to raise funds for repairs after parts of the organ sustained water damage. Biswanger became the nonprofit organization's executive director in 2008. He says his best decision as the head of the organization was recruiting restoration expert Curt Mangel, who's worked on many historic organs in the region, to bring the Wanamaker Organ back to top form. Friends of the Wanamaker Organ has raised more than \$11 million for ongoing restoration and concerts, and it has 1,500 members around the world.

Biswanger visits the Wanamaker Organ every week to help the restoration team with projects, discuss concerns, and provide the occasional tour. One thing he doesn't do is play the organ, although he took lessons years ago. Because the organ's capabilities are more extensive than most, there's a learning curve for

anyone who sits down at the console to play, Biswanger says, adding, "It was never going to be my career."

Macy's closure of its Philadelphia location posed an unsettling end of an era. The Friends of the Wanamaker Organ held a series of concerts to mark the occasion in March, with approximately 10,000 people showing up to listen. By June, New York real estate company TF Cornerstone secured ownership of the building. The developer plans to renovate the building for residential, retail, and office use, but has pledged to keep the organ accessible to the public and will work with the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ to take care of the instrument. The Philadelphia Visitor Center recently announced a fundraising campaign to continue the light show tradition, with the support of Friends of the Wanamaker Organ and the developer. And Opera Philadelphia will host a series of pop-up concerts featuring the organ this fall, before renovations on the building begin.

Although the Wanamaker Organ will no longer be the historic centerpiece of a bustling department store, Biswanger remains optimistic about the instrument's importance—and the emotional connection people have with its music.

"Buildings change purposes over time," Biswanger says. "You just have to work with people and steer them in the best possible direction."

—Samantha Drake CGS'06

## Power and Parties

What the days (and nights) are like for an international lobbyist and nightlife entrepreneur.



### During major social events in Washington, DC,

there's a good chance Vinoda Basnayake L'08 is there making sure people have a good time.

Basnayake is the owner of Versus, an entertainment company that owns five bars and lounges around the nation's capital and hosts pop-up parties at exclusive venues including embassies and Formula One races.

In April during the White House Correspondents Dinner weekend, his company ran the bars at embassy and media parties, making sure legislators, television hosts, and diplomats had plenty to drink.

His nightclub, Heist, where staff sometimes place stickers over patrons' camera phones to encourage privacy, has also hosted politicians and celebrities, including Drake, LeBron James, and

Dave Chappelle. Michelle Obama hosted a birthday party there in 2018. In January, Snoop Dogg dropped in after a performance. "I partied with him that night," Basnayake says. "There was bottle service, and the DJ started playing Snoop's hits when he came to the club."

Basnayake doesn't simply own some of DC's most exclusive nightlife establishments. As the first chairman of DC's Commission on Nightlife and Culture, a position he has held since 2020 and to which he was just reappointed in June, he also helps them work more efficiently with city officials.

During the pandemic he helped secure funding for nightclubs and bars that had to temporarily shut their doors. When it was time to reopen, he helped pass legislation for how to do so safely. "The nightclubs wanted it," he says. "If you're a responsible operator, and you're doing things properly, you're incentivized to want regulation."

Basnayake's most recent win was helping to change dram shop laws, which held businesses responsible for damage caused by people who got drunk on the premises, and thus made for "absurd amounts in nightlife insurance premiums," Basnayake says. "We were able to get that law changed, and everyone's insurance premium came down to a reasonable level."

While his nights are often filled with parties, by day Basnayake is an international lawyer, lobbyist, and consultant whose clients include

Qatar, Senegal, and Jamaica. “I’m very, very busy,” he laughs. “But it’s all fun.”

He also promises that his story, with its various components, makes sense—once you hear it.

Basnayake fell into the nightlife industry by accident. Born and raised in Washington, DC, he knew about a lot of the city’s bars while attending college at Georgetown, developing a reputation for taking so many people out that nightlife and concert venues asked him to be an official promoter. “They would call me and say, ‘Hey, you know, we’d love it if you came in with your friends, and we’ll give you a free table or free drinks,’” he says. “That turned into, ‘We’ll give you 20 percent of the table, 20 percent of the day.’ It was very organic.”

After graduating from Georgetown with a degree in finance and international business, he turned his attention to planning tours for musicians. “My crowd was international, so I thought I could bring in people who were blowing up in Europe or blowing up in Asia and didn’t have a US following yet,” he says. He sold out a tour with British singer Jay Sean and threw pop-up parties, including some at government buildings.

He realized having more sophisticated legal and financial skills could come in handy, so he applied to a joint program between Penn Law and Wharton. “I was never going to go to a law firm and practice law,” he says, admitting he

was brutally honest about this on his admission application. “I appreciate that Penn let me in. Maybe someone said, ‘Thank God, this is the least boring admissions essay I’ve ever read.’”

He studied international public policy and secured an internship one summer working at the International Trade Commission. His worlds collided when his nightlife company, then called the Night Life Agency, threw a summer soiree at the building where he worked. That evening he was approached by Barbara Boggs Sigmund, a Democratic politician who was married to Tom Boggs, a lobbyist in DC. She told Basnayake that she was impressed with his people skills and that he should meet her husband.

Boggs hired Basnayake on the spot. “I had never thought about a career in lobbying, but the way that Tom presented it to me was like, ‘Look, all these people who are ambassadors, kids of heads of state, heads of state themselves, they seem to trust you with discretion. They’re going out with you, so if they trust you in one sector, they will probably trust you in another sector,’” he says.

“That was such a valuable lesson for me because I realized what differentiated me,” Basnayake says. “I had genuine relationships with my clients, and they knew that they could count on me, and they knew they could trust me with anything.”

After that he developed two professions simultaneously: nightlife entrepreneur and international lobbyist.

For the former he launched a new company named Ver-sus to operate permanent venues. In 2010 he opened his first: Eden, a four-story nightclub with LED lights, a tiki bar, and a rooftop. It was only a few weeks old when the Backstreet Boys rented out the roof after one of their concerts. At the time a big news story in DC was about two people who’d crashed a

ple governments including Qatar, Korea, Sri Lanka (both of Basnayake’s parents are Sri Lankan), India, Sudan, Senegal, and Jamaica. One of his more fun projects was helping Will and Jada Pinkett Smith produce a movie in Jamaica called *Sprinter*, a feat that earned him an official Hollywood title. “I’m the executive producer of that movie along

“I appreciate that Penn let me in. Maybe someone said, ‘Thank God, this is the least boring admissions essay I’ve ever read.’”

White House state dinner during the Obama administration. “The same people tried to get into the Backstreet Boys party, and security was like, ‘We’re really sorry, you can’t get in. You’re not on the list,’” Basnayake says. “The next day above the fold in the *Washington Post* was a story that DC’s hottest new nightclub has tighter security than the White House.” Lines started forming nightly.

In the daytime hours he worked for Boggs, then for the law firm Nelson Mullins, and eventually for himself. During the pandemic he started a lobbying company called VS Global. His rolodex includes former presidents, celebrities, musicians, and politicians.

He is or has been a registered foreign agent for multi-

with my coproducers Will and Jada Smith,” he says, laughing. “It’s pretty amazing.” He has also helped Qatar sponsor events at the Kennedy Center, including an autism awareness gala.

Meanwhile, as part of his role with the DC government, Basnayake recently traveled around the country to study how other cities work with their nightlife industries. “We should make sure that they don’t operate on the fringes and aren’t something that everybody knows is happening but no one is directly communicating with,” he says. “The way cities should approach nightlife is that this is a very active, valuable part of the community, not a bad word.”

—Alyson Krueger C’07



## Figure Skating It Out

How an unlikely and decorated athletic career on the ice led to a rewarding one in medicine.

**W**hen Ami Parekh C'12 first stepped onto the ice at seven years old, she ended her exhilarating debut with a split chin and a trip to the emergency room. "I thought I was done with trying that sport out after that happened," she recalls. But two years later, watching her older sister take lessons, she found herself begging her par-

ents for another chance at ice skating. From that moment, she was "hooked for good." What followed was an unlikely transformation: the girl who was "always [the] worst at everything" in gym class made history as the first person to represent India in an international senior figure skating competition. "I am pretty sure anyone who took a

look at me back then would not have guessed how sports would change my life," says Parekh, who despite being born in New Jersey and raised in the US, competed for India at the 2007 World Figure Skating Championships and became an eight-time Indian ladies' champion.

Today, Parekh is a physical medicine and rehabilitation physician who's also certified in electrodiagnostic medicine, balancing a demanding medical career with motherhood and her continued involvement in skating through the Chicago Youth Foundation, where she serves as executive director. Her journey from ice rinks to medical clinics—with an important stop at Penn along the way—illustrates how seemingly disparate passions can ultimately converge into a meaningful career.

Growing up in a South Asian family where, she notes, "a sedentary woman is often idealized" and athletics weren't encouraged, Parekh's skating career was unconventional from the start. "Our family had no athletes whatsoever at any stage of their lives," she says. It was her physician father who first took her to that public skating session, unknowingly setting her on a path that would shape her life.

The sport demanded everything. Figure skating, she notes, "is a year-round sport with grueling hours of on- and off-ice practice." By age 12, she had gone from dreading gym class to winning junior competitions representing the US. She pioneered something entirely new in the skating

Ami Parekh, seen here competing for India at the 2014 Four Continents Figure Skating Championships, retired from ice skating soon after this event to focus on a medical career.

world: performing the classical Indian dance Bharatanatyam on the ice. When she found out India was becoming a new, provisional member of the International Skating Union in 2003, she decided to represent the country internationally. The path wasn't easy—she competed with minimal sponsorship "since no one in the country knew who I was and what figure skating was at the time." But she was glad to help "bring the sport to India," which she says, "gave me a new mission, a new purpose in ice skating."

But at 19, shortly after competing at the 2007 World Figure Skating Championships, a major back injury forced her to quit. "It was horrible timing and led to a lot of self-reflection about my purpose in life and the grueling process of re-inventing my identity," recalls Parekh, adding that she gutted through the event, despite the injury almost forcing her to withdraw and the media attention causing her to feel overwhelmed and burnt out. This crisis, she notes, is "not unique to me, actually, but one that many elite athletes face when an injury completely stalls their dreams and warps their whole idea about who they are."

Aspirations for a career in medicine, however, had been there all along. "I actually wanted to be a doctor as early as my toddler years," she says. Her father's influence was strong—when he brought her to work with him as a four-year-old, "I found what he did fascinating."

After coaching young skaters full-time while studying

Parekh teaches skating and ice sports to underserved children at the Chicago Youth Foundation, where she serves as executive director.

for standardized tests, Parekh began her college journey at Wesleyan University, before transferring to Penn two years later. “I was yearning for a city experience and direct exposure to other types of science professionals and business education,” she says. The move also made practical sense—her family and coaches were still in Delaware, where she had spent part of her childhood, and she wanted to return to training. (She notes that over the years she worked with some of the best jump and spin coaches and choreographers in the world, who’ve also coached Olympic medalists including Oksana Baiul, Scott Hamilton, Tara Lipinski, Sasha Cohen, and Sarah Hughes L’18.)

At Penn, Parekh found her groove. Majoring in biological basis of behavior (now neuroscience) with a minor in South Asia Studies, she conducted research with Abass Alavi in the department of radiology and nuclear medicine. She also danced with PENNaach, an all-female South Asian fusion dance troupe, and Penn Ballet. And remarkably, after a five-year retirement to recover and focus on her medical career goals, she returned to competitive skating.

“After having quit skating for several years, I spent most of my junior year working really hard, playing catch-up with courses as well as with skating,” she recalls. The challenge was immense: relearning double axels and triples in her twenties as an “adult” skater, “when most usually start retiring,” she



“Being able to mentally switch gears and compartmentalize became almost second nature.”

says. It also required strict discipline and time management, though having a rink on campus helped her squeeze in some practice between classes. During her senior year at Penn, she returned to international competition at the World Figure Skating Championships. Her figure skating fire rekindled, she continued to compete for the next two years, though failed in her attempt to qualify for the Winter Olympics at the 2014 Olympic Trials. She then retired again after getting into medical school.

The skills from skating proved invaluable in medical training. “Being able to mentally switch gears, and compartmentalize during almost all stages of my life, while also

balancing my mental and physical well-being, became almost second nature,” she says, adding that “learning from mistakes, and then promptly moving on, was key.”

Her athletic background led her to physical medicine and rehabilitation, a specialty where “teamwork is mandatory.” Working with exercise physiologist Kat Arbour had sparked her early interest in anatomy, physiology, and sports science. And the athlete-centered care model she experienced daily as a competitor informed her approach to medicine.

Perhaps most challenging was having children during training, but motherhood ultimately enhanced her medical practice. “Being a mother has

100 percent made me a better doctor,” she says. “It has made me fully understand what it is like to sacrifice myself to support life and care for another human being.”

Today, Parekh continues to bridge her two worlds through the Chicago Youth Foundation, bringing “ice sports to the underserved populations” and providing free ice time and equipment to racial minorities and low-income families. After nearly losing all programming during COVID, the organization now operates at four rinks, partnering with the Chicago Blackhawks Foundation and the City of Chicago.

For current students juggling multiple pursuits, her advice is to “become experts in those realms,” she says, “and then as time passes you will likely automatically find creative ways to combine your passions into a new kind of career path.”

—Tasmiha Khan

# DOMESTIC

## ALABAMA

Marta Self, WG'03  
marta.self@gmail.com

## ARIZONA

**Phoenix**  
Christopher Kaup, L'91  
president@pennclubaz.org

## CALIFORNIA

**Los Angeles**  
Mason Bryant, C'17  
pennclubla@gmail.com

### Orange County

Jeannie Quan Hogue, C'88  
penncluboc@gmail.com

### San Francisco

Susan Louie Shinoff, G'06, WG'06  
president@sfpennclub.com  
Pratik Shah, C'05  
pratik.h.shah@gmail.com

### San Diego

Robby Foss, C'92, GED'92  
pennclubsd@gmail.com

### Silicon Valley

Harper Cheng WG'22  
svpennclub@gmail.com

## COLORADO

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## CONNECTICUT

### Fairfield County

Candice Moore Babiarz, C'88  
Sara Nelson Goertel, C'98  
fairfieldpenn@gmail.com

### Hartford

Denise Winokur, WG'73, GR'81  
d.winokur@comcast.net

### New Haven

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## DELAWARE

Linda Farquhar, WG'93  
pennclubdelaware@gmail.com

## FLORIDA

### Boca Raton/Ft Lauderdale

**Palm Beach**  
Pamela Harpaz, ENG'94  
penngoldcoastalumni@gmail.com

### Central Florida

Rachel Scheinberg, C'98  
rachel494@yahoo.com

### NE Florida/Jacksonville

Jeffrey E. Bernardo, W'92  
jeffreybernardo@yahoo.com

### Miami

Gracie Kaplan-Stein, C'08  
miamipennclub@gmail.com  
Melissa Pierre Kelly, C'01  
melissamiamirealtor@gmail.com

Astrid Rondeau, C'16  
astridrondeau@gmail.com

### Sarasota & Manatee Counties

Emil Efthimides, C'75  
pennclubsarasota@gmail.com

## Southwest Florida

Jodi Grosflam, C'83  
jodigrosflam@gmail.com

### Tampa

Arianna Beetz, C'16, GRW'22  
connect@beetzbydrari.com

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

Kate Armstrong Lee, C'80  
katealee@alumni.upenn.edu

## HAWAII

### Honolulu

Raj George C'95  
rajgeorge@gmail.com

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

Neal Jain, ENG'99, W'99, WG'06  
president@pennclubchicago.com

## INDIANA

daralumni@dev.upenn.edu

## IOWA

daralumni@dev.upenn.edu

## KENTUCKY

### Louisville/Lexington

Oliver Ardery, WG'10  
oliver.ardery@gmail.com

## LOUISIANA

### New Orleans

Lydia Cutrer, WG'06  
Rebecca Sha, C'10  
penncluboflouisiana@gmail.com

## MARYLAND

### Baltimore

Jameira Johnson, C'19  
pennclubbalt@gmail.com

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Boston

Heena Lee, C'95  
info@pennclubofboston.org

### Worcester

Margaret Saito, W'94  
Tony Saito, D'95  
drtonysaito@alumni.upenn.edu

## MICHIGAN

Kapil Kedia, ENG'00  
president@pennclubbmi.org

## MINNESOTA

### Minneapolis

Dan Rutman C'86  
dan\_rutman@alumni.upenn.edu

## MISSISSIPPI

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## MISSOURI

### Kansas City

Keith Copaken, C'86  
kcopaken@copaken-brooks.com

### St. Louis

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## MONTANA

Jay Weiner, C'92  
pennclubbmt@protonmail.com

## NEVADA

### Las Vegas

Seth Schorr, C'99  
vegasquakers@gmail.com

## NEW JERSEY

### Central New Jersey

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

### Metro New Jersey

Liz Camp, C'98  
lizcampfla@gmail.com

## NEW MEXICO

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## NEW YORK

### Central New York

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

### Long Island

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

### New York City

Laura Loewenthal, C'88  
president@penn.nyc

### Rochester

Robert Fox, W'87  
rafox4455@gmail.com

### Westchester/Rockland Counties

David Blatte W'86  
Robyn Shapiro C'01  
president@pennclubwestrock.org

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Charlotte

James Powell, C'76  
jagp1954@gmail.com

### The Triangle

Steve Strickman, ENG'85, WG'92  
pennclubofthetriangle@gmail.com

## OHIO

### Cleveland

Mary Ellen Huesken, C'86  
maryellenhuesken@gmail.com

### Southwest Ohio

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## OKLAHOMA

### Tulsa

Nikki Sack, C'03  
tulsapennclub@protonmail.com

## OREGON

### Portland

Amy Remick, C'00  
amyremick@gmail.com

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Bucks County

Susan Vescera, GEd'92  
pennbucksalumni@gmail.com

### Central Pennsylvania

Brian Krier, ENG'91, W'91  
penncentralpa@gmail.com

### Lehigh Valley

Paul Ferrante, LPS'09  
pennclublehighvalley@gmail.com

### Northeastern Pennsylvania

Anthony T.P. Brooks, C'89  
tonybrookswb@gmail.com

## Philadelphia

Michael Krone, C'19, L'24, WG'24  
info.pennclubphilly@gmail.com

## Western Pennsylvania

Donald Bonk, C'92  
donald.m.bonk.c92@alumni.upenn.edu

## PUERTO RICO

Arianna Galan, C'12  
arianna.galan@gmail.com

Daniel de Jesus Garcia, W'11  
danieldejg@gmail.com

## RHODE ISLAND

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Emily Chubb, W'06  
epchubb@gmail.com

## TENNESSEE

### Memphis

Sally D. Feinup C'06  
sallyfienu@gmail.com  
Chris Przybyszewski C'98 CGS'00  
przybyszewski1@gmail.com

### Nashville

J.J. Anthony, C'09, GED'14  
pennclubofnashville@gmail.com

## TEXAS

### Austin

Catherine Tien, C'12  
tiencatherine@gmail.com

### Dallas/Ft. Worth

Laura Lai, ENG'02  
Thomas Trujillo, W'98  
dfwpenn@gmail.com

### Houston

Kazi Indakwa, W'89  
pennhoustonalum@gmail.com

### San Antonio

Kyle Jones, GRD'16  
sapennclub@gmail.com

## UTAH

Art Warsoff, W'83  
adwarsoff@comcast.net

## VIRGINIA

### Hampton Roads

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

### Central Virginia

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## WASHINGTON

### Seattle

Belinda Buscher, C'92  
Jim Chen, SEAS'07  
pennclubseattle@gmail.com

## WASHINGTON D.C.

Vivian Ramirez, C'96  
pennclubofdc@gmail.com

## WISCONSIN

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

# INTERNATIONAL

## AFGHANISTAN

Sanzar Kakar, ENG'05  
sanzar@alumni.upenn.edu

## AUSTRALIA

Kyle Farley, G'01, GR'06  
Julie Ballard C'89  
daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## BELGIUM

Aisha Saraf, W'11  
aisha.saraf@gmail.com

## BERMUDA

Julia Henderson, WG'09  
pennbermuda@gmail.com

## BRAZIL

Annie Kim Podlubny, WG'03  
annie.kim.wg03@wharton.upenn.edu

## BULGARIA

Rado Lambev, C'01  
radi123@yahoo.com

## CANADA

**Toronto**  
Christian Kellett, G'09, WG'09  
Daniel Yeh, ENG'99, GEN'03  
presidents@pennwhartontoronto.com

## Vancouver

Lucy Cook, C'95  
daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## CHILE

Danielle Gilson, C'86  
danielle.gilson@gmail.com

## CHINA

**Beijing**  
Gary Zhao, WG'95  
president@pennclubbeijing.com  
beijing@alumni.upenn.edu

## Shanghai

Renee Shi, GED'11  
renee.shi@tcgcapitalpartners.com

## Shenzhen

Bailu Zhong GL'14  
egretlulu@hotmail.com

## Guangzhou

Gene Kim, W'92  
gene@pennclubgz.com

## COLOMBIA

Daniel Vasquez W'90  
Daniel Willis, GR'17  
daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## DENMARK

Alexander Kalum GL'22  
alexander.kalum@andersenkaer.com

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Gisselle Rohmer, WG'09  
grohmer@ifc.com

## ECUADOR

Juan Carlos Salame, W'03  
juan.c.salame@gmail.com

## EGYPT

Mariam Georges, ENG'10, GEN'11  
mariam@challengeforxng.com

## FRANCE

**Paris**  
Jackson Gu, C'17  
jacksongu@alumni.upenn.edu

## GERMANY

Maliha Shah, C'06, GEN'06  
malihashah@gmail.com

## GREECE

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## GUAM

Patrick Wolff, Esq., C'70, GED'71, G'74  
atty.patrick.wolff@gmail.com

## GUATEMALA

Sofia Zaror, W'13  
sofia.zaror.wh13@wharton.upenn.edu

## HONG KONG

Dina Shin, W'10, GEN'25  
Kevin Lo, W'07  
pennclubhkhk@gmail.com

## HUNGARY

Istvan Szucs, C'95, ENG'95  
istvan@pobox.com

## INDIA

**Bangalore**  
Ravi Gururaj, ENG'89, W'89  
rgururaj@mba1999.hbs.edu

## Delhi

Priyanka Agarwal, W'97  
priyanka@tcil.com

## Kolkata

Anil Vaswani, ENG'97  
anil.vaswani@wesman.com

## Mumbai

Sneha Nagvekar, GL'17  
snehanag@pennlaw.upenn.edu

Arti Sanganeria C'08, ENG'08  
arti@alumni.upenn.edu

## INDONESIA

Nicole Jizhar, W'16  
pennwhartonindo@gmail.com

## IRELAND

Alicia McConnell, C'85  
ajm4071@gmail.com

## ITALY

**Milan**  
Monica Buzzai, CGS'01 GR'07  
pennclubmilan@gmail.com

## Rome

Erica Firpo, C'94  
erica@ericafirpo.com

## JAMAICA

Deika Morrison, ENG'94, W'94, WG'08  
deika@alumni.upenn.edu

## JAPAN

Raymond Wong, C'90, W'90  
pennclubjapan@googlegroups.com

## KAZAKHSTAN

Maksutbek Aitmaganbet, GED'18  
maksutbekaitmaganbet@alumni.upenn.edu

## KENYA

Kisimbi Kyumwa Thomas, NU'02, W'02  
thomaski@stwing.upenn.edu

## KOREA

Myoung Woo Lee, WG'94  
info@pennclubkorea.org

## KUWAIT

Majed Alsarheed, GEN'01  
malsarheed@yahoo.com

## MALAYSIA

Chin San Goh, C'15  
gohchinsan10@gmail.com

## MEXICO

Luis E. Izaza, GL'12 WEV'12  
lizaza@izaza.com.mx

## NETHERLANDS

John Terwilliger, W'83, C'83  
pennwhartonclubnetherlands@gmail.com

## NICARAGUA

Alberto Chamorro, W'78  
ecisa@aol.com

## PANAMA

Gina Faarup de Cochez, W'01  
gfaarup@cochezycia.com

## PHILIPPINES

Marco Antonio, W'95, WG'04  
daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## POLAND

John Lynch, WG'89  
polandpennclub@gmail.com

## ROMANIA

Victor V. Constantinescu  
vconstantinescu@birisgoran.ro

## SINGAPORE

Jing Zhang, WG'09  
pennwhartonsg@gmail.com

## SWEDEN

Stephanie Bouri, C'00  
stephanie.bouri@gmail.com

## SOUTH AFRICA

Cynthia Ntini, C'06  
daralumniclub@upenn.edu

## SWITZERLAND

Emma James, C'14  
connectemma@gmail.com

## TAIWAN

Wellington Chow, WG'89, G'89  
wellington.chow@gmail.com

## THAILAND

Sally Jutabha, WG'90  
upennthailand@gmail.com

## TURKEY

Kerem Kepkep, EE'96, GEN'97  
kkepkep@yahoo.com

## UAE

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## UNITED KINGDOM

daralumniclub@dev.upenn.edu

## VIETNAM

Linh Thai, WG'06  
linhthai@gmail.com



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“It’s been a good life,  
and there’s more to come!”

—W. Curtis Schade C’67

## 1958

**Stuart Gellman W’58** was recently honored by Hospice and Palliative Care Buffalo in New York, at a groundbreaking ceremony for a new building named the Stuart Gellman Family Pavilion. The pavilion will accommodate over 400 people for staff meetings, as well as memorials and community events. The pavilion will be the centerpiece of a large area on the campus to be known as the Pathways of Remembrance.

## 1961

**Eugene Elander G’61** has earned a PhD in economic systems from European-American University in Paris. His academic work focuses on an economic system he calls Cooperatism. He writes, “In Cooperatism, all economic interest groups are represented in decision-making by cooperatives.” These cooperatives, he explains, “are governed by the equivalent of the system of checks and balances in the political structure of many modern nations.” Eugene has been “striving for decades to secure the trial adoption of Cooperatism in one or more nations,” and he now focuses on European nations, as a dual citizen of Sweden and the United States.

**Michael Zuckerman C’61** see **Rita Axelroth Hodges C’05 GEd’15 GrEd’24**.

## 1962

**N. Bruce Rogers C’62 G’63** writes, “This past spring, I published a new nonfiction book, *Why You Should Be Religious*. It is part sociological, part physics, part biology, and overall religious, embracing not only Christianity but also Judaism and Islam.”

**Steve Stovall W’62 ASC’63** participated in three races this summer in Colorado. On June 7, at a 5K in Evans, he won first place in the 80-and-over age category; on June 27, at a 5K in Thornton, he won first place in the 80-and-over category; on July 4 at a 4K in Boulder, he won second place in the 80-and-

over category. He humbly adds that he was the only runner over 80 years old in two of the races and came in second in a race with only two octogenarian runners. “For better or for worse, I wore my Penn red-and-blue singlet in each event,” he writes. “At this age (84), I don’t improve my times, I train hard to delay the slowing process.”

## 1963

**Carolyn Rosen Boiarsky CW’63** writes, “I have been living in Hammond, Indiana, for the past 30 years, where I am a professor of English at Purdue University Northwest. The area reminds me of the area around the Philadelphia airport with its industries and oil refineries that you see as you drive over the Platt Memorial Bridge to catch your plane. After 25 years here, I discovered that I was living within 10 miles of a Superfund site. I returned to my first career as an investigative reporter for United Press International and began investigating the site. My book about the 1,100 mainly minority residents who were summarily evicted from their homes because of the pollution from the nearby industries was recently published by Purdue University Press and is available at Barnes & Noble and from Amazon.” Carolyn’s book is titled *Lead Babies and Poisoned Housing: Environmental Injustice, Systemic Racism, and Governmental Failure*.

## 1964

**Stuart Resor C’64** writes, “As I was leaving Penn in the spring of 1964, I overheard the Beach Boys’ new song ‘Wendy’ playing loudly from the Architecture department. Later, in Puerto Rico, I heard more Beach Boys songs and thought, ‘California’s got to be a great place!’ Little did I know that through a chance of luck, I would cross paths with them in California. I had sent the San Diego Padres baseball team a note saying I had just finished restoring my 1946 Mercury Woodie

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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.

Wagon and I would offer it to them for any purpose. About one week later, I got an unexpected call from Padres marketing executive Andy Strasberg, asking me if I would like to drive the Beach Boys up to the stage for a postgame concert. I said, ‘Definitely!’ and then about fainted. Soon that would all take place, and then began a great connection to the Beach Boys, their families, and all their concerts near enough to use the Woodie Wagon over and over again!”

**David B. Zwirn C’64 L’67** writes, “The note from my classmate **Stuart Resor C’64** brought back a fond memory [“Alumni Notes” May|Jun 2025]. I, too, was there when Grace Kelly came out of the Van Pelt Library and impressed us all. Stuart mentions Grace’s father, John Kelly Sr. Both he and his son, known in sports as **Jack Kelly Jr. C’50**, were world-class rowers. Jack is one of the Penn alumni to win the coveted Sullivan Award, given annually to America’s most outstanding amateur athlete. The other two are **Joe Burk W’34 Hon’88**, who, like Jack, was awarded the Sullivan for rowing, and **Barney Berlinger Sr. W’31**, who won for track and field. Few, if any, colleges can boast three Sullivan Award winners. Wasn’t Margaret Majer, Kelly’s mother, the University’s first female physical education instructor?” [Ed. Note: Yes, it’s true that Margaret Majer taught physical education for women at Penn, although she was not the first. She succeeded Ethel Loring, and you can read more about her on Penn Archives’ website, [tinyurl.com/MargaretMajer](http://tinyurl.com/MargaretMajer).]

## 1965

**Arthur L. Finkle WG’65**, a court mediator and Jewish educator, has been designated as an Advanced Practitioner of mediation/ar-

bitration by the Association for Conflict Resolution. Arthur has taught numerous courses in political science, history, and public administration at Rutgers University, Rider University, Kean University, SUNY, and community colleges; written 26 books; and penned hundreds of professional articles.

## 1967

**W. Curtis Schade C'67** is long retired and living in Lake Oswego, Oregon. A French major at Penn, he went on to get his master's and PhD. After a stint in college admissions work, his career was mostly in private, independent schools (two of them boarding schools) in Missouri, Connecticut, Maryland, and Utah, as a teacher, coach, and administrator. In retirement, he did college counseling, educational consulting, and helped start and run a summer program in Paris, whose primary focus was community service. Curtis writes, "A lot of tennis and skiing early on, Rotary and volunteer work, travels, keeping in touch with friends. It's been a good life, and there's more to come!"

**Amy Shelanski CW'67** continues her long career as a real estate agent with Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Fox & Roach in Philadelphia. With no plans to retire in the near future, she'd love to hear from Penn alums in the Philly area. Reach out to her at amy.shelanski@foxroach.com.

## 1969

**Chris Kurz C'69 WG'71** is the author of *Why Not You! The Entrepreneur's Playbook: 50 Years of Wisdom for Business Success*. Chris writes, "The book identifies four characteristics of a successful entrepreneur—Passion, Attitude, Continuing Education, and Pearls of Wisdom—and then looks at business disciplines—finance, marketing, personnel, DEI, etc.—with important things to know in each area. Pearls of Wisdom are the things you learn over your career that you wish you knew when you started." Chris says the book is based on his experience starting with a Wharton MBA and pursuing a successful entrepreneurial career in real estate and finance.

## 1970

**Dr. Peter J. Barbour C'70**, a retired neurologist and now full-time writer and illustrator, has written a new book for young

adults, *Fifteen Keys*. He shares, "Set in the late 1800s, in the Pacific Northwest, three teens set out on a journey to find 15 keys that will help them to enter adulthood. Challenges from weather, terrain, and a host of odd characters threaten to defeat them. Will they succeed? Each experience is a life lesson that helps them to reach their goal."

**Stuart M. Widman W'70**, of Chicago, received a Fulbright (Specialist) Award in 2024 to teach commercial arbitration from October to November 2024 at the Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law in Bhutan. That was his sixth overseas teaching or consulting engagement in arbitration or mediation, having previously done programs in Nigeria (1974–1976, 2014), Lesotho (2013), Cuba (2014), and Nepal (2015). Stu still has an active commercial arbitration and mediation practice at Widman Law Offices LLC, in Chicago.

## 1972

**Bruce Olster W'72** shares that he "launched a credit fund in early 2025 to provide capital for new home construction through independent mortgage bankers throughout the US (wyndoncapital.com/debtfund). A 35-year passion germinated at Wharton and became an industry-leading expertise. I am joined in this venture by another Penn alumnus, **Ted Demiris W'24**."

**Deborah R. Willig CW'72**, managing partner at Willig, Williams & Davidson, has been named a 2025 Pennsylvania Super Lawyer for employment and labor law by *Super Lawyers*.

## 1973

**Seth Bergmann GEE'73** writes, "On June 1, I completed the American Cancer Society Bridge-to-Beach 66-mile bicycle ride from Philadelphia to Ventnor City, New Jersey."

**Jeff Lawrence C'73** was inducted into the International Maritime Hall of Fame in New York City on May 21. Jeff practiced international transportation law in Washington, DC, for over 40 years. After merging his boutique transportation law firm into the Philadelphia-based Cozen O'Connor law firm in 2010, he headed Cozen's Transportation and Trade Practice Group, until his retirement in 2023. He currently is the managing director of a maritime industry transportation utility company, heads a trade association of 10 major containership carriers, and advises a

number of shipping industry companies and associations. Jeff and his wife of 52 years, Donna, live in Silver Spring, Maryland. Their children and 10 grandchildren live on the East and West Coasts of the US and in Israel. He writes, "Full retirement beckons somewhere down the road."

## 1975

**Mary Donaldson-Evans Gr'75**, having turned to creative writing after retiring from her position as Elias Ahuja Professor of French at the University of Delaware in 2011, has published two books with British press Austin Macauley. The first, *Behind the Lines: A Soldier, His Family and the 10th Mountain Division*, was inspired by the discovery of hundreds of letters exchanged by her parents during World War II. Released in July, the second, *One Foot in the Grave, the Other on the Treadmill: Reflections from Over the Hill*, is a whimsical collection of essays on aging written over a period of 30 years. Both are available on Amazon and in e-book format. For more information and links to short stories, visit marydonaldson-evans.com.

**Sam J. Rabinowitz WG'75** writes, "Retiring after 42 years in small business, I have reawakened my creative side. My musical, *Arthur Reborn* (arthurreborn.com), has received several table readings, and last year an abridged staged reading was performed at the University of Nevada, Reno. My monologue, *A Breath of Fresh Air*, is scheduled to be performed twice this year, following its premiere performance last year. My poem, 'When You Have to Say Goodbye,' was recently published in print in two poetry journals. I am currently writing my next musical. As [filmmaker and comic book writer] J. Michael Straczynski has said, 'Never surrender dreams.' I continue to pursue mine."

**Mark L. Silow C'75** received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the *Legal Intel ligencer*. He is currently chair emeritus of Fox Rothschild, after helping to grow the law firm from a Philadelphia-centered office of 200 attorneys to a national firm of 1,000 attorneys in 29 offices across the US.

## 1976

**Dr. Robert Fleisher GD'76** is the author of *Bulletproof Healthcare Practice: Risk*

*Management Essentials for Clinicians*. From the book's description: "It's a practical, no-nonsense guide to help clinicians minimize their legal exposure while providing exceptional patient care."

**Emily Squires Levine C'76**, an artist living in Philadelphia, is showing her work in an exhibit called *Growing Towards the Sun* at the Courtyard by Marriott Philadelphia South at the Navy Yard from July 15 through November 4. Emily uses layers of polymer clay to create patterned canes that are then sliced into the components that make up each piece. Pictures of her work can be found at emilysquireslevine.com.

**Bruce M. Ludwig L'76**, retired partner at Willig, Williams & Davidson, has been named a 2025 Pennsylvania Super Lawyer for employment and labor law by *Super Lawyers*.

## 1977

**David Chanko W'77** has started his 49th year in education, having begun as a teaching assistant at Arizona State University in 1977. Will he make it to 50? "Only one more Grand Canyon University adjunct-professor contract to go!" he writes.

## 1978

**Dr. Linda Rhodes V'78** announces her upcoming book, *Breaking the Barnyard Barrier: A Woman Veterinarian Paves the Way*, to be published in February by the University of Nevada Press. She writes, "The book is a memoir about my struggle breaking into large-animal vet medicine in Utah and Idaho in the late 1970s, where all the vets were men and all the farmers were Mormons. Although it is a story of that time, it is also a commentary on the struggles women face as they attempt to succeed in a profession traditionally dominated by men. Veterinary medicine has become feminized over the last 50 years, with the majority of graduates women, but still in large-animal medicine, there is a bias against women, and there continues to be a pay gap, with women making 80 percent of what men in comparable jobs make."

**Steven Weisz C'78 GEd'79** exhibited his photography under the banner of Art Imagined Photography at the historic Basilica of San Carlo in Milan, Italy, in 2024. His work has continued to tour internationally, with recent highlights including a feature at Miami Beach's Art Deco Weekend in Janu-

ary and Expo Metro Barcelona's Art Tunnel in June, showcased at the Passeig de Gràcia Metro Station. Next up is an exhibition in December in Hong Kong, where his photographs will be displayed along Hennessy Road, a well-known shopping district in Wan Chai. Through these global showcases, Steven continues to share his artistic vision with audiences around the world. More on his work at artimagined.photo.

## 1979

**Kimberly Haas C'79** see **Derek van der Tak C'82**.

## 1980

**Marc H. Morial C'80** was one of the recipients of a Penn Alumni Award of Merit for 2024 ["Homecoming 2024," Jan|Feb 2025]. Marc is the president and CEO of the National Urban League, a civil rights and urban advocacy organization, and was recently inducted as an inaugural member of the New Orleans Walk of Fame, as well as the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame. His book, *The Gumbo Coalition: 10 Leadership Lessons That Help You Inspire, Unite and Achieve*, is used in leadership classes at several American universities; and the HBO Max documentary *The Gumbo Coalition* chronicles his work alongside that of a Latino civil rights leader. He is also host of *America's Black Forum*, a nationally syndicated television show. Marc was featured in our Mar|Apr 2005 issue ["Man in a Hurry"].

**Stu Morse C'80** announces the launch of Agent Career Education, an online digital course and mentorship company for real estate agents. As founder and chief education and strategic officer of the company, he says, "The disappearance of traditional mentorship and today's broker-centric training produces an 80 percent failure rate among newly licensed agents. We find this unacceptable and are countering it with innovative course content and digital mentoring that is truly agent-centric." He adds, "There goes my (drinking a highball) retirement plans."

**Jody Schuhart C'80 WG'84** writes, "Last July, **Scott MacDougal WG'84** and I sold the SaaS [software as a service] business we've been building for 25-plus years. And then we retired on January 1! We've

been living in/on Fox Lake, Illinois, for 10 years, and enjoy boating with our dog Odin. Our two daughters live in Skokie, Illinois, and L.A. ... no grandkids yet. Retirement is good so far—more reading, golf, three-plus daily walks with Odin. On the docket: more boating, visiting friends and family we haven't seen enough, starting a new hobby or two, and lots of travel—Scotland and Portugal this year; Greece, Croatia, and Africa next year."

## 1981

**Dr. Charles L. Bennett M'81** received the first AC Buehler Chair in Medicine and Economics at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and the Kellogg School of Management and subsequently the inaugural SmartState Chair in Safety and Efficacy at the University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy. In 2023, Simon and Schuster published his biography, *Taking on Big Pharma: Dr. Charles Bennett's Battle*, authored by Julius Getman and Terri LeClerq. The book covers his research in identifying 50 of the most serious pharmaceutical-adverse drug reactions in the setting of hematology and oncology. Charles shares that the Buehler Endowed Chair was awarded by Penn President J. Larry Jameson, who was dean of the Feinberg School of Medicine at the time. The audiobook is read by actor Stephen Lang, who appears as Colonel Quaritch in James Cameron's *Avatar* franchise. Two Oscar-winning producers, Al Ruddy and Grey Fredrickson, assisted Charles in completing a movie based on the book. Charles is particularly focused on oncology, having been treated for his own prostate cancer in 2006, which was diagnosed just as he received his first endowed chair.

**J. Noel Hubler C'81 G'95** is the author of a new book, *Race and the Politics of Fear: A History of an American Oligarchic Construct*. He writes, "This book traces the oligarchic construction of race from its creation in the Colonial period and through a study of four major figures. James Madison helped formulate the Constitution to provide protection for the Southern oligarchies and was a founder of the Democratic-Republican party dominated by Southern interests. John C. Calhoun's theory of the concurrent majority provided a blueprint

for the South's political strategy in the Jim Crow era. Ben Tillman redefined race primarily as a feeling as an excuse for the South's violent oppression of the Black community. Ronald Reagan retooled the traditional racist myths and made them palatable to a national audience."

## 1982

**Martin Kimel C'82** writes, "At the end of May, after years of work, the book I co-authored with my late father, *The Pessimist's Son: A Holocaust Memoir of Hope*, was published. While the book is written for a general audience, I am honored it has been acquired by many leading academic libraries, including the Wiener Holocaust Library (London), Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Princeton, Penn, NYU, Rice, McGill, the University of Toronto, the University of Texas–Dallas, and Auburn University at Montgomery." More information can be found at [martinkimel.com](http://martinkimel.com).

**Zenos Frudakis FA'82 GFA'83**, a sculptor known for his public monuments and portrait statues ["Sculpting a Life Story," Nov|Dec 2024], has created a 10-foot bronze statue of Muhammad Ali—the nation's largest of the boxer and civil rights activist—in downtown Lewiston, Maine. The work depicts the young Ali in a moment of poised triumph and "reflects Ali's grace, strength, and moral courage," Zenos said in a statement. "He was a true original—a man who stood firm in his convictions and inspired the world through his words and actions as much as his fists."

**Derek van der Tak C'82** and **Kimberly Haas C'79** were married on October 11, with their three daughters and their partners in attendance. Derek is a pianist and music educator, having taught in Friends schools for many years. Kimberly is a journalist and, since 2019, serves as a staff writer for *Hidden City Philadelphia*. Prior to that, she worked in radio at WHYI, as the founding executive producer of the program *Echoes*, and as music director of WXPB. The couple lives in Philadelphia.

## 1983

**Dr. Stan Savinese C'83** has been promoted to full professor of medicine at Penn's Perelman School of Medicine. Stan is the medical director of Penn Medicine Hospice.

## 1984

**Julie Dobrow ASC'84 Gr'87**, a professor at Tufts University and director of its Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, has written a new book about two activists whose marriage challenged the gender and racial norms of their time. *Love and Loss After Wounded Knee: A Biography of an Extraordinary Interracial Marriage*, comes out from NYU Press in November.

**R. May Lee C'84** has been appointed president of the Olin College of Engineering. Previously, she was vice president and chief strategy officer for institutional impact at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

**Scott MacDougal WG'84** see **Jody Schuhart C'80 WG'84**.

## 1985

**Matthew Elliott GA'85**, a principal at Elliott Architects, was one of the 200 architects included in *Forbes* magazine's 2025 list of America's Top Residential Architects.

## 1986

**David Blatte W'86**, class president, writes, "Greetings '86ers! We want you! We are kicking off our 40th Reunion (yes ... our 40th!) and looking for classmates to help with the planning. Also why not join our Class Board as well? What better way to stay involved with Penn and our class than to be a Class Board member? Lots of perks!" David asks fellow classmates to reach out at [dclatte@gmail.com](mailto:dclatte@gmail.com), adding, "Don't be shy!"

**Keith Moskow GA'86**, a partner at Moskow Linn Architects, was one of the 200 architects included in *Forbes* magazine's 2025 list of America's Top Residential Architects.

## 1987

**David L. Richter W'87 EAS'87 L'92** shares that he "achieved another milestone on the path of lifelong education," earning his sixth degree, an MS in civil engineering from Columbia University. David was also recently promoted to executive vice president, chief growth officer, and chief legal officer at Atwell, a national engineering and construction firm.

## 1988

**Cynthia McVay G'88 WG'88**, an artist, writer, and frequent contributor to the *Gazette*, has authored her first book, *A Field of*

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*My Own: A Memoir of Place*. From the book's description: "As a single working mother, Cynthia sought a weekend escape from New York City, a piece of green, a place to call her own. One blustery winter day, she falls in love with a meadow and her life is forever altered. She renovates the modest cottage, builds a pondish-pool, creates pollinating, native gardens from orphans and strays, learns to forage and runs the tractor. A decade in, as architect and general contractor, she moves an enormous 180-year-old hand-hewn Amish barn to the property to make her sustainable home." In August, Cynthia gave a reading from her book at an event jointly hosted by PennNYC and Wharton Alumni Club New York. More information is available at [whartonny.com](http://whartonny.com).

**Toby Usnik GEd'88** and Samir Kanuga have coauthored a new book, *Connecting the Dots: Building Your Network and Legacy*. From the description, "This book delves into the art of networking across generations, teaching readers how to engage with anyone and build strategic relationships that resonate with their life's purpose."

## 1989

**John Budd W'89** has been named the CEO of the Oklahoma Department of Com-

merce, after working in philanthropy for three years. He writes, “This is my second stint in government service. After overseeing state operations during the pandemic, I’m looking forward to focusing on creating growth and opportunity for Oklahomans.”

## 1990

**Dr. Louis Marion C’90 D’94 G’94** received an award for clinical excellence at Noris Medical’s Global Implant Conference in Tirol, Austria, where he presented his techniques in implant dentistry for survivors of oral cancer. He currently works at two offices: in Center City Philadelphia at 15th and Locust and at the Dental Partners of 5th Avenue in New York’s Upper East Side. He recently attended his 35th Reunion at Penn, noting the “wonderful festivities.” Louis invites alumni contact at [dr.louismarion.dp5th@gmail.com](mailto:dr.louismarion.dp5th@gmail.com).

**Dr. Christopher A. Troianos GM’90** was the keynote speaker at the 2025 annual meeting of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, which had over 1,400 registrants from across the world. The title of his talk was “The Importance of Physician Leadership in Today’s Healthcare Challenges.” Christopher serves as the Enterprise Chair of Anesthesiology at Cleveland Clinic and is a past president of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists and the National Board of Echocardiography.

## 1991

**Virginia Adams O’Connell G’91 Gr’01** is author of a new book, *Remission Quest: A Medical Sociologist Navigates Cancer* (Temple University Press). From the book’s description: “As a medical sociologist, Virginia Adams O’Connell long studied the health-care system and people navigating illness. Then, in 2019, she confronted her own reality of being diagnosed with primary bone lymphoma. ... *Remission Quest* chronicles how the reality of living with cancer changed her perspective on what she had studied.”

## 1995

**Rachel Levy C’95**, executive vice president of motion picture music for Universal Pictures, has been invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

**David C. Mays EAS’95** is the 2025 recipient of the Charles R. O’Melia Distinguished Educator Award, presented by the Associa-

tion of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors “for sustained and outstanding teaching and research contributions and inspirational mentoring” as an associate professor in the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver). The path leading to this award began over 30 years ago in West Philly, where he worked as a physics tutor at Penn and volunteered as a fourth-grade reading tutor for the School District of Philadelphia. These experiences led him to Teach for America, where he taught high school drafting in St. Martinville, Louisiana. That experience inspired his graduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley, which led to his current engagement at CU Denver, where he recently finished his 20th year. David notes he “would be delighted to guide anyone curious about a career of teaching, research, and service,” and he can be contacted at [David.Mays@udenver.edu](mailto:David.Mays@udenver.edu).

**Dan Schorr C’95 G’95** recently released his second novel, *Open Bar*, about a high-profile sexual misconduct scandal at a prominent university. *Open Bar* is based on Dan’s experience as a former New York sex crimes prosecutor and current sexual misconduct investigator and hearing officer at his firm Dan Schorr, LLC. More information is available at [danschorrbooks.com](http://danschorrbooks.com). He writes, “The Penn English department greatly inspired me to pursue my dream of writing fiction, and I’m incredibly grateful for the wonderful professors and classmates I had at Penn.”

**Mike Singleton C’95** has released a book of children’s poetry, titled *Poetry Party*. From the book’s description: “Each story explores important life lessons celebrating differences, embracing kindness, building confidence, and finding courage in everyday challenges.”

## 1996

**Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Jeff Krilla G’96** was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal by the US Navy “for his extraordinary heroism on December 25, 2015,” when he “saved the lives of three individuals caught in a dangerous ocean rip current in Miami Beach, Florida,” according to the press release. This medal is the highest non-combat decoration awarded for heroism by the US Navy. “According to the award citation, LCDR Krilla, while spending time with

his wife on Christmas Day, witnessed three tourists being pulled out to sea by strong currents. Without hesitation and with no regard for his own safety, LCDR Krilla immediately plunged into the water and battled the intense waves for 45 minutes, swimming hundreds of yards offshore to reach the children in distress, towing them to safety.”

## 1997

**Kara Blond C’97** has been named the director of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and Smithsonian Affiliations. In this role, she will oversee efforts to share Smithsonian content through traveling exhibitions, foster collaboration among partner museums and cultural organizations, and expand unique learning experiences nationally.

## 1999

**Signe Cohen Gr’99** and Rabia Gregory, both professors of religious studies at the University of Missouri-Columbia, are co-editors of a new book, *Confluences: Religion, Health, and Diversity in Missouri*. From the book’s description: “Contributors to this volume explore connections between religious affiliation, race, gender, ethnicity, epidemiology, and attitudes towards health and medicine in Missouri from the nineteenth century to the present day.”

**Anita Mastroieni GGS’99 GrEd’10** retired from Penn after 30 years, most recently as associate vice provost for Graduate Education. She writes that she “misses the students and Penn colleagues, but not the daily commute!”

**Luretha McClendon Tolson C’99** has joined Halloran Sage as a partner in the law firm’s New Haven, Connecticut, office.

## 2000

**Kunal Bajaj EAS’00 GEng’00 W’00**, cofounder and CEO of CloudExtel, was recently featured in a *Business India* cover story (May 22, 2025). In the article, Kunal reflects on his journey from Penn to founding India’s first full-stack network-as-a-service company, and the evolution of India’s digital infrastructure landscape. It can be read at [tinyurl.com/KunalBajaj](http://tinyurl.com/KunalBajaj).

**Melanie Redmond Richter C’00** recently accepted a position as the associate executive director of the George and Mary Kremer

Foundation, a Florida-based nonprofit that provides Catholic elementary schools nationwide with tuition assistance grants for children from financially challenged families. Additionally, Melanie renewed her Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP) designation from the American College of Financial Services and serves on the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals—Greater Philadelphia Chapter as its treasurer.

**Larry Wiltshire EAS'00** has been appointed to the board of directors for the Mann Center. Larry is managing partner at Eastmond Parker, a boutique management consulting firm with expertise in bank regulation.

**Philip Yoon C'00** has been elected as chair of the House of Delegates for the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA), the rulemaking authority of the PBA. The chair presides over the House meetings throughout the year and serves as an officer of the PBA's Board of Governors. The position is for a two-year term.

## 2002

**Scott R. Elkins G'02**, CEO of Zeus Fire & Security, has won the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2025 Award for the Greater Philadelphia region from Ernst & Young LLP. From the press release: "A second-generation fire and security entrepreneur, Scott built Universal Atlantic Systems into a thriving business before leading its acquisition and becoming the founding CEO of Zeus in 2022. Since then, he has transformed Zeus into one of the fastest-growing, tech-enabled life safety companies in the nation, completing 17 acquisitions, doubling profits, and expanding to nearly 800 employees across seven hubs."

## 2005

**Sherri Hope Culver CGS'05**, a professor of instruction at Temple University and director of the Certificate in Children's Media, has published a new report, "The Quality Question: Why Children's Media Must Aim High" (<https://centermil.org/2024/10/16/new-research-report-released/>). In addition to teaching, Sherri also directs the Center for Media and Information Literacy and hosts the podcast *Kids Talk Media*.

**Rita Axelroth Hodges C'05 GEd'15 GrEd'24**, associate director of Penn's Netter Center for Community Partnerships,

and history professor emeritus **Michael Zuckerman C'61** have edited a new book together, published by Penn Press, *Community-Engaged Scholarship: Reflections from Netter Center Alumni*. [Read more about the history of the Netter Center in "Ode to Ira," Jul|Aug 2023.]

## 2010

**Molly Johnsen C'10**, a Vermont-based writer and teacher, is scheduled to publish her debut poetry collection, *Everything Alive*, in October.

## 2015

**John A. McCabe LPS'15** has written a new novel, *Reiko and the Visitor: Can Two People, One Irradiated in Nevada, the other in Hiroshima, Meet and Transform Us All?*

## 2018

**Peter Kong GEng'18** is the author of a new book, *Snowbound: A Pressland Adventure*. From the book's description: "Intrepid researcher Mirana Orbelian will stop at nothing to uncover a mythical plant that could heal her dying father. But when her Himalayan expedition is ambushed, she's forced to ally with Alex Pressland—a rogue ex-military pilot with a shared history that haunts them both. Together, they face ruthless Soviet commandos, deadly blizzards, and betrayal."

## 2020

**Anne Trumbore GrEd'20** has published her first book, *The Teacher in the Machine: A Human History of Education Technology*. She shares that the book uncovers "the surprising history of education technology and its political, financial, and social impact on higher education and our world." She adds, "Penn's journey in online learning and my own intersect directly with this history. I was hired by Wharton in early 2015 to start Wharton Online to help expand Penn and Wharton's reputation as early leaders in the online learning space. While leading Wharton Online, I also earned my EdD from GSE. Those experiences, and the questions they raise, are woven throughout the book."

## 2021

**Erika T. Lin G'01 Gr'04** has been awarded an American Council of Learned Societ-

ies Fellowship for her book project on the birth of theater in Shakespeare's holidays. An associate professor at the CUNY Graduate Center, she was one of 62 scholars selected from a pool of over 2,300 applicants.

## 2022

**Rowana Miller C'22** has written her first young adult novel, *Secrets of the Blue Hand Girls*, described by the publisher as "a propulsive secret society thriller that is unapologetically queer, irresistibly twisty, and directly questions powerful institutions with a creatively treacherous plot." A past winner of Penn's President's Engagement Prize, Rowana is the founder and executive director of Cosmic Writers, a nonprofit that provides creative writing education for kids and teenagers ["The Unexpected Entrepreneurs," Sep|Oct 2024].

**Emilio Martínez Poppe GCP'22 GFA'22**, an artist who works for New York City's department of cultural affairs, exhibited his first large-scale public art installation May 23–June 11 in Philadelphia's City Hall courtyard with Mural Arts Philadelphia. *Civic Views* celebrates "the city's municipal employees and their diverse perspectives on Philadelphia through poetic documentation of their office windows," Emilio writes. "I actually began working on *Civic Views* in 2021 when I was a fine arts and city planning dual degree graduate student at Penn, first exhibiting the work in my MFA thesis exhibition." More information and links to news coverage of the project can be found on his website, [emiliomartinezpoppe.com](http://emiliomartinezpoppe.com).

## 2024

**Ted Demiris W'24** see **Bruce Olster W'72**.

## 2025

**Dominique J. Carroll G'25**, a partner at the law firm Fox Rothschild, has received the 2025 Professional Lawyer of the Year Award from the Garden State Bar Association. From the press release: "The award recognizes attorneys who are respected by colleagues for their character, competence, and exemplary professional behavior." Dominique focuses his practice on intellectual property litigation involving patents, trademarks, and copyrights.

## 1945

**Francis H. Loughran W'45**, Lansdale, PA, May 1, at 99. He worked in his family's real estate company and the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command. He served in the US Navy Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity and the NROTC.

**Irwin Waldman W'45**, Wilson, WY, Oct. 1, 2020. At Penn, he was a member of Beta Sigma Rho fraternity, the Glee Club, and the ROTC. One son is Dr. David Waldman C'74 D'79.

## 1946

**Dr. S. Morris Goldberg V'46**, Lafayette, CA, a retired veterinarian; Sept. 13, 2024, at 101. He served in the US Army.

## 1947

**Dr. G. Leonard Emmel III M'47 GM'51**, Gainesville, FL, a retired physician; March 24, 2024, at 100. He served in the US Army during World War II and the Korean War.

**Hollister Benjamin "Ben" Sykes ChE'47**, Westfield, NJ, a retired executive at Exxon-Mobil and an adjunct professor of entrepreneurship at New York University; June 13, at 101. He served in the US Navy during World War II. One son is Robert B. Sykes EE'80.

## 1949

**Dr. R. Leonard Weinberg D'49 GD'54**, West Hartford, CT, a retired orthodontist and professor of orthodontics at New York University; June 5, at 99. He served in the US Army during World War II.

## 1950

**Hon. Harry C. Schaub C'50**, Philadelphia, a retired attorney; May 11. He was a longtime honorary consul general representing Austria in eastern Pennsylvania. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. His wife is Kathryn K. Deans-Schaub L'82, senior advisor for Penn Carey Law.

**William F. Schmitt EE'50 Gr'70**, Kennett Square, PA, a retired computer engineer at UNIVAC; May 1. Later, he became an associate professor of computer science at Temple University. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a founder and technical director for WXPEN.

**Jean Kitchen Grey Smith CW'50**, Exton, PA, former group manager of software

for Unisys; July 17, 2021. At Penn, she was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority and Sphinx Senior Society.

## 1951

**Eugene J. Gottesman W'51**, Westport, CT, an entrepreneur and founder of New York Yellow Pages Inc., an independent directory business; Dec. 17. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity.

**Emile A. Mika GEd'51**, San Antonio, TX, April 6, 2024, at 99. He was a veteran of World War II, participating in the D-Day landings at Normandy, for which he was later knighted and awarded the French Legion of Honor medal by France.

**Lloyd E. Shaffer W'51**, Phoenix, AZ, a retired executive at Prudential and president of CPI Pension Services; Feb. 13. He served in the US Army during the Korean War. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity, Mask & Wig, Penn Band, and WXPEN.

**Dr. Scott D. Skillern M'51**, Granger, IN, a retired dermatologist; Feb. 12, 2024, at 99. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

**Dr. Edwin S. Sved D'51**, Saint Petersburg, FL, a retired orthodontist; March 8. He served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II. One son is Daniel W. Sved C'79.

**George Valchar WG'51**, New Canaan, CT, a retired executive at General Motors; Jan. 11, at 99.

**Richard H. Wilson WEv'51**, Media, PA, former chairman of Wilson Safe Company, which sells and repairs safes and vaults; May 4, at 100. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

**Dr. George L. Wischaupt D'51**, Lancaster, PA, a retired dentist; May 14, at 102. He served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II.

## 1952

**Selma Cohen Cohen CW'52**, Philadelphia, a retired children's social worker; May 20. At Penn, she was a member of WXPEN. One daughter is Emily M. Cohen C'81.

**Eleanor Rutala Leonard SW'52**, Mays Landing, NJ, a psychiatric social worker for the Veterans Administration in Washington, DC; Jan. 15.

**Dr. Robert J. Luchi M'52 GM'56**, Mission, KS, a retired professor of medicine at Baylor College; March 23.

## 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.

**Marvin W. Morse W'52**, West Palm Beach, FL, retired owner of a typewriter distribution company; July 4. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Nu fraternity and the rowing team. His daughter is Elizabeth Morse Levine C'78 (Peter M. Levine C'75), and one grandchild is Evan M. Morse EE'04.

**Dr. Richard W. Nagler C'52**, Boca Raton, FL, a retired physician; May 15. He served in the US Army. One son is Dr. Robert S. Nagler C'80.

**George C. Pollard C'52**, Basking Ridge, NJ, a retired bank executive; May 9. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of the Glee Club.

**Dr. John E. Quatroche V'52**, Punxsutawney, PA, a retired veterinarian; May 19, at 103. He served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II.

**Harold A. Sukonik W'52**, Margate City, NJ, a past president of the Philadelphia Home Builders Association and past board member of the Jewish Family and Children's Services of Greater Philadelphia; July 15, 2024.

**Dwain J. Watkins WG'52**, Oxford, PA, retired cofounder of a trucking business; April 27.

## 1953

**Jean M. Byrnes HUP'53**, Gibbstown, NJ, a retired nurse; May 15.

**Louise D. Littman Ed'53 GEd'54**, Philadelphia, March 4. At Penn, she was a member of WXPEN.

**Norman Masri W'53 WG'54**, Greenwich, CT, a retired stockbroker; April 18. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity. His daughters are Dr. Gayle D. Masri-Fridling M'89 and Rose Masri Serels C'89.

**Sally Knouse Richenbacher Nu'53**, Hudson, OH, a retired nursing instructor at the Akron School of Practical Nursing; May 22. Her sister is Sandra J. Knouse Nu'61.

**William A. Wyatt L'53**, Coatesville, PA, retired vice president and general counsel for RCA; July 1, 2024. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

## 1954

**Anthony T. Baionno Ar'54**, Hightstown, NJ, a retired architect; Feb. 25. He served in the US Army during World War II.

**Dr. Matthew J. Cohen C'54 D'57**, West Chester, PA, a retired dentist and professor of science at Delaware County Community College; May 23. One child is Saul C. Janson C'84.

**Col. Blanche B. Friday HUP'54 Nu'61**, Warminster, PA, a retired flight nurse in the US Air Force; April 17. She was also a nurse member of the medical support team for the Apollo 11 astronauts. She served in the Vietnam War.

**Leonard A. Lauder W'54**, New York, chairman emeritus of Estée Lauder Companies, philanthropist, art collector, and University trustee emeritus; June 14. He joined the University's Board of Trustees in 1977 and was also a member of the School of Arts and Sciences Board of Advisors and the Class of 1954 Gift Committee. In 1983, he and his brother Ronald S. Lauder W'65 founded the Joseph H. Lauder Institute of Management & International Studies, housed in the Wharton School, in honor of their father, Joseph Lauder. The Lauder family, particularly Leonard Lauder, have been generous benefactors to Penn through the decades. The family supported the creation of the Lauder College House in 2016 with the largest capital gift to the University at that time ["Gazetteer," Nov|Dec 2019]. In 2022, Leonard Lauder made a \$125 million gift to establish the Leonard A. Lauder Community Care Nurse Practitioner Program at Penn Nursing, a first-of-its-kind, tuition-free program that prepares nurse practitioners to provide primary care to families in underserved communities ["Gazetteer," May|Jun 2022]. He received the Alumni Award of Merit in 1996 and was also awarded the University of Pennsylvania Medal for Distinguished Achievement in 2003. With his brother, he received the Wharton School's Dean's Medal in 2006, in recognition of his commitment to global business. For his steadfast leadership and support, he was honored at the Institute for Contemporary Art's 50th Anniversary Gala in 2013. He was a passionate art collector and philanthropist, believing in the importance of public access to art and museums. To that end, he gifted or loaned hundreds

of pieces of artwork to numerous institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art. His and his brother's role in the art world was documented in a feature story in these pages ["The Scent of Art," Sep|Oct 1998]. He was also well known for his leadership and generosity in the healthcare industry. With his late wife, Evelyn, to whom he was married from 1959 until she died in 2011, he established the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center at New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. With Ronald, he founded the Institute for the Study of Aging to spur Alzheimer's research. As a student at Penn, he was a member of the honorary fraternity Beta Gamma Sigma, WXPB, and the Cinema Club. He served in the US Navy. He is survived by his wife, Judith Glickman; his sons, William W'83 and Gary C'84 W'84 (Laura); his brother, Ronald W'65 (Jo Carole); his grandchildren, Rachel C'13, Danielle, Djuna-Bear, Joshua C'19, and Eliana; two great-grandchildren; his nieces, Aerin C'92 and Jane; and stepchildren and step-grandchildren.

**Dr. Raymond C. Leonardo C'54 D'57**, Philadelphia, June 20, 2020. He served in the US Army during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. One brother is Dr. Eric L. Leonardo C'61.

**Joseph D. Raco C'54**, Paradise, CA, a retired teacher; Feb. 3, 2024. He served in the US Army.

**Allen S. Tobias W'54**, Huntingtown, MD, a computer programmer; May 2, 2023. He served in the US Marines.

## 1955

**John J. Braithwaite W'55**, Rosemont, PA, founder and president of a consultancy for the pharmaceutical industry; May 28. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity.

**Hon. James C. Cacheris W'55**, Alexandria, VA, a retired federal judge for the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia; April 29. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity, the sprint football team, Friars Senior Society, and the ROTC.

**Thomas N. Carros SW'55**, Columbia, SC, retired director of the Allegheny County (PA) Office of Children, Youth, and Families; Sep. 11. He was a veteran of World War II.

**John R. Casani EE'55 Hon'92**, Pasadena, CA, an aerospace engineer who played a pivotal role in many of NASA's deep space missions; June 19. He was project manager for the Voyager missions—two spacecraft launched in 1977 that continue to transmit data from interstellar space. He also led the Galileo mission to Jupiter and the Cassini mission to Saturn, and chaired critical investigation and review boards, including for the Mars Polar Lander and James Webb Space Telescope. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Psi fraternity and the swimming team.

**James S. Goodman W'55**, Holliston, MA, retired owner of a photo processing lab; June 16, 2024. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Delta Phi fraternity and the ROTC.

**Mary Golden Jentzen DH'55**, Cheshire, CT, a retired dental hygienist; June 1.

**Jacqueline Moratelli Jerrehian HUP'55**, Haverford, PA, a former nurse and retired real estate broker; July 1. Her husband is Aram K. Jerrehian Jr. W'55, one child is Dean Jerrehian L'86, and one grandchild is Matthew L. Jerrehian L'21.

**Dr. David G. Leshner C'55**, Hudson, OH, a retired podiatrist; May 14.

**Dr. Lea McGovern V'55**, Lexington, VA, a retired food inspector for the US Food and Drug Administration; April 10.

**Hugh C. Miller Ar'55**, Richmond, VA, a historic preservationist for the US National Park Service and adjunct professor of preservation technology at Goucher College; May 12. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Chi fraternity.

**Charles S. Parmenter C'55**, Bloomington, IN, a retired chemistry professor at Indiana University; Jan. 26. He served in the US Air Force. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity. His wife is Patricia Patton Parmenter OT'57.

**George E. Smith C'55**, Barnegat, NJ, a Nobel Prize-winner and retired researcher for AT&T Bell Laboratories; May 28. He and his friend Willard S. Boyle invented an imaging device, called the charge-coupled device (CCD), that is an essential part of nearly every telescope, photocopier, and digital camera used today. The invention won them the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2009. He served in the US Navy during the Korean War. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

## 1956

**Dr. Edward A. Noe C'56 D'62**, Ocala, FL, Sept. 25, 2023. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, and the sprint football and wrestling teams.

**Eva Kanner Rosenzweig G'56**, London, a journalist; April 23. She was a survivor of the Holocaust and spoke about her experience at schools, synagogues, and other venues, and she published a memoir in 1997.

**Dr. Stephen S. Rothman C'56 D'61 Gr'64**, Sherman Oaks, CA, professor emeritus of physiology at the University of California, San Francisco; April 20. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity. His wife is Doreen Zinn Rothman G'61 Gr'63.

**Nancy Jones Strubeck Nu'56**, Lexington, SC, a retired school nurse; May 5.

## 1957

**Annette Bienkowski Horchos CW'57**, Clarks Summit, PA, a college-level biology and botany instructor; April 5, 2023. At Penn, she was a member of Chi Omega sorority and the choral society. Her husband is Dr. Donald D. Horchos GM'66, and one son is Dr. John S. Horchos D'92.

**Rhoda Jackman Isaacs CW'57**, New York, an executive recruiter; May 2. At Penn, she was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* and Penn Players.

**Alice Webbe Johnson CW'57**, Downingtown, PA, retired acting director of special education and student services for the North Penn School District; April 22.

**Dorothy Wentz Kramer FA'57**, Cornelius, NC, a former advertising writer and interior decorator; May 11. At Penn, she was a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority.

**Marvin Lessen EE'57**, Albany, NY, a retired aerospace engineer in the defense industry; April 3. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Alpha fraternity.

**Thomas F. Logan W'57**, Hawthorn Woods, IL, a retired director of employee and industrial relations at a company that manufactures construction and mining equipment; June 15.

**Joanne Aichele Maier HUP'57**, Ambler, PA, a retired nurse; May 30.

**Jay G. Ochroch L'57**, Bala Cynwyd, PA, a retired lawyer; April 17. He served in the US military. Two children are Leslie A. Ochroch C'84 and Dr. Edward A. Ochroch

M'91 GEd'99 GM'05; and one grandchild is Claire E. Ochroch C'22 L'27.

**Lawrence N. Odence WG'57**, Cotuit, MA, a retired mineral exporter; May 29.

**Joseph H. Perkins W'57**, Newton Center, MA, an advertising executive in the radio and broadcasting industries; June 5. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity.

## 1958

**Dr. Gerald A. M. Finerman C'58**, Beverly Hills, CA, an orthopedic surgeon and longtime head team physician for the UCLA athletics department; May 3. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Delta Phi fraternity and the tennis team.

**Alan J. Fletcher WG'58**, Chatham, MA, a retired market researcher in the advertising and pharmaceutical industries; April 20. He served in the US Army.

**Carol Wiest Gates HUP'58 GNu'85**, Media, PA, a former nurse at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; April 2023.

**Dr. Jerry D. Harrell G'58**, Saint Simons Island, GA, a retired ophthalmologist; April 29. He served in the US Army.

**Melpomeni Koukides Jeffries G'58**, Rockville, MD, a retired scientific reviewer at the US Food and Drug Administration; May 24.

**Marshall C. "Bud" Jost SW'58**, North Tonawanda, NY, former executive director at Gateway Longview, which provides social work services for youth and families in Western New York; May 2. His wife was Sally Goldsmith Jost SW'60, who died June 19, 2024 (see Class of 1960).

**Victor J. Kinnunen W'58**, New Castle, PA, an attorney and Episcopal priest; April 24. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity.

**Murray K. McComas W'58**, Russell, PA, retired president and CEO of the mail-order retail company Blair Corporation; May 20. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity and the ROTC. His son is Donald A. McComas C'97 WG'05, and his brother is Jeffrey C. McComas C'69.

**George A. Miller W'58**, San Francisco, an investment banker and philanthropist; Feb. 4. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, and the ROTC.

**Samuel R. Parke III WG'58**, Manhattan Beach, CA, a retired Hollywood talent agent; July 19, 2020. He served in the US Navy.

**William H. Schoendorf GEE'58**, Bedford, MA, May 8, 2022.

**Rhoda Gordon Weinstein CW'58**, Essex Junction, VT, a retired probation officer for child support enforcement; Oct. 6.

**Dr. Theron A. Winter Jr. D'58**, Lewisburg, PA, a retired dentist; May 28.

**Dr. David S. Zimmerman M'58**, Mechanicsburg, PA, a retired physician; June 1. He served in the US Army Air Corps as a flight surgeon during the Korean War.

## 1959

**James A. Edgren W'59**, Brinnon, WA, cofounder and executive director of a retreat and conference center for Christian clergy and missionaries; June 4. He served in the US Army for nearly four decades, including during the Vietnam War.

**David O. Erickson W'59**, Raleigh, NC, April 24. He engaged in mergers and acquisitions, commercial real estate brokerage, tax preparation services, and management of mineral properties. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Chi Rho fraternity, Mask & Wig, Penn Players, the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, and the ROTC.

**Dr. James J. Farrell D'59**, Binghamton, NY, a retired dentist; May 2. He served in the US Army as a dentist during the Korean War.

**Barrett H. Jones WG'59**, Smyrna, TN, a retired city manager of several cities in Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, and Arkansas; April 8. He served in the US Army.

**Anne K. Kaler G'59**, Lansdale, PA, professor emerita of English at Gwynedd Mercy University; April 13. An author and editor, she was also a founder of the Pearl S. Buck International Writing Center.

**Alice Maris Kubista FA'59**, Boca Grande, FL, a former librarian at the Pennsylvania Hospital Library; May 29. At Penn, she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority and the choral society. Her husband is Dr. Theodore P. Kubista M'63 GM'70.

**Paul D. Rossiter WEV'59**, Greenville, DE, an accountant; April 4, 2024. He served in the US Air Force during the Korean War.

**Laura H. Weaver G'59**, Evansville, IN, professor emerita of English at the University of Evansville; April 18.

**Richard H. Yanow W'59**, Williamstown, MA, a retired business professor at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts; May 15. He served in the US Army Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity.

## 1960

**William A. Alesker GA'60**, Philadelphia, an architect; April 5.

**Bernard E. "Barney" Berlinger Jr. ME'60**, Carversville, PA, founder of Gear Innovations, an advanced technology firm pioneering the Convoloid gear tooth form; June 25. He served in the US Marine Corps. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity, Sphinx Senior Society, the football and track and field teams, and he was a recipient of the Spoon Award and the Class of 1915 Award. He set what was then a school record in the pole vault and captained the football team to its first Ivy League championship in 1959, catching the winning touchdown in the Quakers' title-clinching win over Cornell ["Sports," Nov/Dec 2019]. He was inducted into the inaugural class of the Penn Athletics Hall of Fame in 1996, along with his father, Bernard E. Berlinger W'31. His wife is Valerie Vollmer Berlinger CW'72.

**Dr. Stephen F. Goodman D'60**, New York, a dentist and associate clinical professor of dental and oral surgery at Columbia University; May 21. He served in the US Air Force. His children include Andrew Scott Goodman C'89 G'95 WG'95 and Jennifer Goodman Feldman C'92 (Mark C. Feldman W'91), and one grandchild is Sydney M. Feldman C'26.

**Gerald D. Green W'60**, Delray Beach, FL, retired president of a furniture company; Feb. 9. At Penn, he was a member of Beta Sigma Rho fraternity and the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

**John S. Halsted L'60**, Kennett Square, PA, a retired attorney and director of a bank; June 10. Earlier in his career, he was an assistant district attorney and solicitor for Chester County (PA). He served in the US Army as a medic during the Korean War.

**Stephen J. Harmelin C'60**, Philadelphia, a retired corporate attorney; May 3. He served as the White House director of speechwriting under President Lyndon Johnson. He served in the US Coast Guard.

At Penn, he was a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity. Two children are Melina Alexis Harmelin CGS'02 and Alison Harmelin CGS'06.

**Sally Goldsmith Jost SW'60**, North Tonawanda, NY, a retired special education teacher; June 19, 2024. Her husband was Marshall C. "Bud" Jost SW'58, who died May 2 (see Class of 1958).

**Dr. Joseph I. Krall C'60**, Solon, OH, a retired cardiologist; June 20, 2023. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity. One child is Roy A. Krall C'85.

**Hon. Samuel W. "Skip" Salus II L'60**, Savannah, GA, retired trial judge for the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas; May 31. He served in the US Navy.

**Robert Subin W'60**, Naples, FL, a retired senior executive at Campbell's Soup Company; June 20. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity. His nephew, Bruce L. Newberg W'79 WG'80, established a fund at Wharton in his honor to provide scholarships to students majoring in finance. His wife is Arlene Freedman Subin CW'62, and his grandnephews are Matt J. Newberg W'11, Brandon H. Newberg W'13, and Nicholas S. Newberg EAS'18.

**Dr. Arthur E. Zack D'60**, Boca Raton, FL, a retired dentist; May 2. He served in the US Army as a dentist. His daughter is Judith Zack Bendit DH'81.

**Herbert J. Zarkin W'60**, Mashpee, MA, retired president and CEO of Waban Incorporated, which owned BJ's Wholesale Club and HomeBase, a home improvement warehouse chain; April 25.

## 1961

**Dr. H. Douglas Barnshaw M'61 GM'65**, Longmeadow, MA, a retired psychiatrist; Jan. 25.

**Edward E. Kirkbride GA'61**, Exton, PA, a retired architect and educational facilities planner; June 3. He received a Fulbright Scholarship in 1964. He served in the US Army. His son is Robert E. Kirkbride C'88 GA'90.

**Hugh A. "Mac" MacMullan III C'61**, Swarthmore, PA, retired president of an intangible asset valuation appraisals company; June 14. He served in the US Marine Corps. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, the sprint football

team, and ROTC. One daughter is Ursula L. MacMullan C'02.

**P. Charles Martucci Jr. SW'61**, Chesapeake City, MD, a social worker and former director of training in a Philadelphia outpatient mental health clinic; April 27. He served in the US Army during the Korean War.

**Walter O. Stadlin GEE'61**, Lansdale, PA, a power system electrical engineer for the utility and railroad industries; June 7. He served in the US Army Signal Corps.

**David F. Weiner C'61**, Pittsburgh, an employment attorney; June 7. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity and the soccer team.

## 1962

**Hugh F. Breslin WG'62**, Amsterdam, Netherlands, July 1, 2022. He served in the US Navy. One daughter is Tara Breslin Vitone C'95.

**Marian Adams Brooks CW'62**, King of Prussia, PA, a marriage counselor; June 7.

**Aurelio J. Emanuelli-Belaval W'62**, San Juan, Puerto Rico, an attorney; Feb. 23, 2023.

**Maj. William C. Groves W'62**, Augusta, GA, a real estate agent; May 23. Prior to that, he served in the US Army for more than 20 years, including during the Vietnam War.

**Robert B. Heaton WG'62**, Cockeysville, MD, a manufacturer's agent; June 12.

**J. Diane Thompson Heckler Nu'62**, Kalamazoo, MI, a retired nurse; May 27. At Penn, she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority and the lacrosse team.

**Rev. Thomas W. Langford Jr. W'62 WG'64 Gr'76**, Springfield, IL, a forensic economics consultant and ordained priest in the Episcopal church; May 27. He served as dean of the Springfield School of Ministry. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Xi fraternity.

**John F. Pearce G'62**, Gainesville, GA, a retired economics professor at the old North Georgia College & State University; May 4. He served in the US Army and the US Army Reserve.

**Daniel D. Pearlman W'62**, Berkeley, CA, a former public interest lawyer and mediator; March 16. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

**Barbara Ritter Rutenberg CW'62**, Boynton Beach, FL, April 15. At Penn, she was a member of Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority.

**Brenda C. Shafer MT'62**, Mt. Morris, PA, a former medical research assistant at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; May 11. She later worked at the National Institutes of Health and the US Food and Drug Administration.

**Dr. Nicholas Toth M'62**, San Anselmo, CA, retired tuberculosis controller for Alameda County (CA); April 12. He served in the US Army for 40 years.

## 1963

**Bransby W. Bushey Jr. GCE'63**, Audubon, PA, a retired senior executive engineer at Picatinny Arsenal, a military research and manufacturing facility; Feb. 11. He served in the US Army.

**Jack L. Capps Gr'63**, Lenexa, KS, retired head of the English department for the US Military Academy; July 11.

**Patricia Richards Cosgrave CW'63**, Haverford, PA, a volunteer for civic and charitable organizations; April 22. At Penn, she was a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority.

**Howard M. Jaffe C'63**, Portland, OR, a freelance copywriter whose clients included PepsiCo, MetLife, and HBO; June 19. He served in the US Army Reserve National Guard. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity, Mask & Wig, and Friars Senior Society. His brother is Robert M. Jaffe C'57.

**Michael Kaltman G'63 GCP'65**, Rockville, MD, a retired senior financial analyst for the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission; May 25. His wife is Gail S. Kaltman GEd'66 and one daughter is Stacey I. Kaltman C'94

**George Childs Kohn C'63**, Madison, CT, retired writer and editor of reference books; May 6. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Psi fraternity.

**Dr. Kenneth M. Lakoff C'63 M'68**, Malvern, PA, a retired obstetrician-gynecologist; May 30. He served in the US Air Force.

**Thomas J. Maher W'63**, Wayne, PA, a mortgage banker; June 9.

**Michael J. Meehan C'63**, New York, a financial services provider; April 15. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Psi fraternity, Friars Senior Society, and the ice hockey and rowing teams.

**Arnold H. Miller W'63**, Pittsburgh, a former assistant professor of political sci-

ence at the University of Pittsburgh and a retired jeweler; June 3. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity

**Jerold A. Seitchik Gr'63**, Plano, TX, a retired research and development officer for Texas Instruments; Feb. 4.

**Michael D. Varbalow L'63**, Moorestown, NJ, a retired attorney; Sept. 20. His wife is Barbara Shaffer Varbalow CW'63.

## 1964

**Dr. Merrill M. Abeshaus M'64 GM'72**, Flagstaff, AZ, a retired orthopedist and founder of a synagogue; March 14.

**William R. Burdsall WG'64**, South Russell, OH, May 27. He retired from his family's business, the Russell, Burdsall and Ward Bolt & Nut Company, which makes fasteners for the automotive industry. He served in the US Navy.

**Kenneth Thompson "Tom" Finke WG'64**, Phoenix, AZ, an attorney; May 3.

**Wendell F. "Sandy" Jacques Jr. C'64**, Rockport, MA, founder of a pharmaceutical company specializing in T-cell research; May 4. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Phi fraternity, the Glee Club, and the rowing team.

**George M. Jenkins Jr. W'64**, Los Angeles, a retired insurance executive; May 4. At Penn, he was a member of the Kappa Alpha Society fraternity.

**Dr. E. Marston Jones III D'64 GD'65**, Cambridge, MD, a retired orthodontist and professor at the University of Maryland; May 27.

**Todd G. Lee GAR'64**, Springfield, MA, an architect; May 13.

**Lester G. Phares Gr'64**, Bowling Green, OH, a retired industrial psychologist and associate professor at Mary Washington University; April 17. He served in the US Army.

**Martin Cruz Smith C'64**, San Rafael, CA, a bestselling mystery novelist of a series featuring Moscow police detective Arkady Renko; July 11. He was featured many times in these pages, most recently for his 10th book, *Independence Square* ["Arts," Jul/Aug 2023]. His wife is Emily Arnold Smith CW'65.

## 1965

**Allan E. Carlsen EE'65**, Newark, DE, a Broadway actor and director, and a professor of theater at the University of Delaware; May 17. At Penn, he was a member

of Delta Tau Delta fraternity, Penn Singers, the Glee Club, and the football team.

**Dr. Joseph Damone II D'65 GD'72**, Naples, FL, a retired orthodontist and associate clinical professor of orthodontics at Penn; May 10. He served in the US Army Dental Corps and the US Army Reserve.

## 1966

**Rev. Thomas E. Adams Jr. C'66**, Boston, an assistant priest at an Episcopal church; April 17. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Phi fraternity.

**Richard J. Boynton W'66**, Charleston, SC, an attorney and retired small business owner; May 14. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and Mask & Wig.

**Samuel F. McNulty WEv'66**, West Chester, PA, a retired executive at IBM; May 13. He served in the US Navy Reserve.

**Carol Friedman Morgenstein GEd'66**, Hollywood, FL, a retired audiologist; May 22.

**David M. Nugent W'66**, Rancho Santa Fe, CA, a retired attorney; April 12. He served in the US Army during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, Friars Senior Society, and the sprint football team. One brother is Thomas P. Nugent W'59 L'62.

**Richardson "Dick" Roberts Jr. GEE'66**, Vineland, NJ, a retired electrical engineer; April 24. He served in the US Coast Guard during the Korean War.

**Thomas E. Searer GEd'66**, Hummelstown, PA, a mathematician and computer specialist for the US Navy; May 7.

## 1967

**Howard S. Denburg W'67**, New York, an employee benefits attorney; May 8. At Penn, he was a member of the fencing team. Two daughters are Elizabeth U. Denburg C'03 and Abigail Denburg C'12.

**Michael I. Flitter C'67**, New Hope, PA, a builder; April 27. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Phi fraternity and the crew team. One brother is Jonathan E. Flitter L'73.

**Rev. John W. Gilbert Jr. C'67**, Atlanta, former director of fundraising for the Trust for Public Land; Feb. 11, 2024.

**Dr. J. Allen Leslie GV'67**, Christiana, PA, an equine veterinarian; April 3.

**Clara K. Miao G'67**, West Palm Beach, FL, a retired principal scientist for the pharma-

ceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim; March 5. Her sons are J. Ronald Miao EAS'86 and C. Roger Miao MTE'89, GEng'97.

**Joseph M. Morabito Jr. Gr'67**, Brightwaters, NY, retired department head for the Environmental Health and Safety division of AT&T-Bell Laboratories; April 20.

## 1968

**Peter H. Blackwell Jr. WG'68**, Sandy Springs, GA, founder of a financial planning business; April 4. He served in the US Marine Corps.

**Elizabeth "Betsy" Turner Pochoda Gr'68**, Brooklyn, NY, a writer and editor at a variety of magazines, including *The Nation*, *New York Post*, *House & Garden*, and *The Magazine Antiques*; May 8.

**Hilary Adams Pridgen W'68 WG'70**, Hanover, NH, an owner of a bed and breakfast; June 9. At Penn, she was a member of the Wharton choir.

**Richard M. Singer C'68 L'71**, Washington, DC, a communications attorney; March 10. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity.

## 1970

**Cynthia Congleton Byrne SW'70**, Belmont, NC, retired director of clinical services for a home healthcare agency; Jan. 9.

**David A. Gansner G'70**, Eagleville, PA, a retired researcher for the US Forest Service; April 10.

**Dr. Paul S. Greenfield C'70**, Boston, a physician; March 15. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Rho fraternity.

**Terry E. Hardy PT'70**, North Grafton, MA, a physical therapist; May 16. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

**Terence D. Jung W'70**, Calabash, NC, a former accounting executive; Dec. 8, 2021. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity.

**Robert W. Urban ME'70**, Richmond, VA, president of a global environmental engineering firm that provided emergency cleanup response after oil spills and natural disasters; March 16. He served in the US Coast Guard. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity and the rowing team.

## 1971

**Dr. Zalman S. Agus GM'71**, Dedham, MA, a former professor of medicine and

physiology, and associate dean of Penn's Perelman School of Medicine; May 7. He was a world-renowned nephrologist and former chief of the Renal-Electrolyte Section at Penn. He served in the US Air Force. His children include Dr. Michael S. Agus C'90 M'95 and Dr. David B. Agus M'91, and one grandchild is Eytan J. Deener-Agus C'20.

**Dr. Jay M. Auerbach D'71**, Atlanta, a prosthodontist; May 19.

**John C. Chintall Jr. Gr'71**, Port Republic, NJ, director of a pharmaceutical lab; April 27.

**Thomas J. Downing Jr. GEE'71**, New Oxford, PA, a civilian communications engineer for the US Army; April 30. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity.

**Charles R. McCollough Gr'71**, Lookout Mountain, TN, a professor of archaeology at the University of the South; May 10.

**Marcia K. McDonald FA'71**, Winchendon, MA, a retired professor of costume design at Illinois Wesleyan University; April 26.

**Charles A. Prentiss WG'71**, Kailua, HI, a retired urban planner for the City and County of Honolulu and executive secretary of the Honolulu City Planning Commission; April 13. He served in the US Air Force during the Vietnam War, and he was a member of the Hawaii Air National Guard and the Hawaii Army National Guard.

## 1972

**John Archibald "Arch" Getty III C'72**, Santa Monica, CA, a retired history professor at UCLA; May 19. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity.

**Dr. David M. Silberhartz C'72**, Stony Brook, NY, a psychiatrist; May 26. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity.

## 1973

**Hal S. Chase Gr'73**, Des Moines, IA, a retired professor of African American studies and American history at Des Moines Area Community College; May 22.

**Marshall B. S. Chawla WG'73**, Reston, VA, a financial planning executive; March 6. One brother is Parmindar S. Chawla WG'77.

**Robert H. Slaterbeck WG'73**, Reisterstown, MD, a bank executive; Nov. 5, 2022.

**John E. Teshima Jr. G'73**, Trail Creek, IN, May 13.

## 1974

**David E. Burley CE'74**, East Montpelier, VT, a retired civil engineer in the Buildings and General Services Department of the State of Vermont; May 15. His brother is Don O. Burley C'71.

**Peter W. Clement GAR'74**, Madison, CT, an architect; June 23.

**Dr. Henry D. "Hank" Ferris V'74**, Naples, FL, a retired veterinarian, volunteer firefighter, and former mayor of Holmdel Twp, NJ; April 18.

**Clifton P. Quinn Gr'74**, Columbia, MD, a former psychology professor at Howard University and retired computer programmer and systems analyst; Dec. 25, 2024. He served in the US Army Reserve as a chaplain. One child is Trevor M. Quinn C'96.

## 1975

**Dr. Janis E. Fegley DH'75**, Lacey, WA, a retired physician; July 4, 2023. At Penn, she was a member of the Penn Band.

**Reed S. Goodman C'75**, Sudbury, MA, a former communications executive at Fidelity; May 19.

**W. Ward Kingkade C'75**, Alexandria, VA, a retired statistician for the US Census Bureau; May 13.

**Claude J. Morrison C'75**, Toronto, a founding member and singer in the a cappella group The Nylons, which performed between 1978 and 2017; April 22. At Penn he was a member of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity, Glee Club, Penn Singers, and Penn Players. One brother is Paul Morrison C'72.

**John S. O'Brien W'75**, Jamaica Plain, MA, a business and technology executive; March 19. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Chi Rho fraternity.

**Carol A. Patney GNu'75**, Palm Springs, CA, March 16.

**Dr. Robert L. Stevenson Jr. GM'75**, Reisterstown, MD, an anesthesiologist; April 30.

## 1976

**Logan Parry Hottle WEv'76 WG'76**, Edgewater, MD, a marketer for Johnson & Johnson and a ski instructor; April 13.

**Steven P. Hutchins EE'76**, Lansdale, PA, a retired electrical engineer; May 11. One child is Phillip J. Hutchins EAS'00.

## 1977

**Adams “Toby” Dodson Jr. WG’77**, Arlington, MA, a retired redevelopment technician for the Redevelopment Authority of Philadelphia and a photographer; Dec. 15. His wife is Diane Derby Dodson HUP’57 Nu’60 GNu’73, whose brother is William L. Derby C’61 WG’65. His children are Anne L. Chen C’97 GED’98 and Dr. John A. Dodson C’99.

**James W. “Jamie” Hodge C’77**, Grand Bracebridge, ON, Canada, a former minor league baseball player in Canada; June 22. In 2015, he was inducted into the London (Canada) Sports Hall of Fame. At Penn, he was a standout player on the ice hockey team shortly before the program was disbanded.

**Dr. Kevin T. Kilcoyne D’77**, Philadelphia, a dentist; April 25.

## 1978

**Stephen R. Goldenberg WG’78**, Basalt, CO, a retired partner at Goldman Sachs; May 6.

**James E. Hogan WEv’78**, Sicklerville, NJ, April 11. He retired from the telecommunications department at Virtua Hospital. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

**Francis X. Jacqueline WEv’78**, Lewes, DE, May 16, 2023.

## 1980

**Gloria M. Gay SW’80 WMP’99**, Van Nuys, CA, retired associate director of the Penn Women’s Center and a lecturer at Penn’s School of Social Policy and Practice; April 1. She came to Penn in 1985, and the next year was appointed associate director of the Penn Women’s Center. From 1989 to 2008, she also served as an adjunct instructor in human sexuality education in the School of Social Policy & Practice, teaching courses in human sexuality, domestic violence, and racism, among other topics. She also served on Penn’s Sexual Harassment Committee for many years and implemented numerous sexual harassment training programs. She retired in 2010.

## 1981

**Dr. Edward J. Salevsky Jr. V’81**, Middlebury Center, PA, a retired veterinary surgeon and owner of an animal hospital

with his wife; April 25. His wife is Dr. Adrian Carlin-Salevsky V’81.

## 1982

**Kathleen M. Plummer C’82**, Portage, PA, May 9. At Penn, she was a member of Bloomers.

**Christine E. Smith GNu’82**, Highlands Ranch, CO, a perioperative clinical nurse specialist at various cancer centers and children’s hospitals; April 17. She was also a nursing instructor at Delaware Community College.

## 1983

**Brooks A. Bitterman G’83**, Scarborough, ME, a researcher for the international labor union UNITE HERE; April 26, 2024.

## 1984

**Patrick W. Kelley GL’84**, Montclair, VA, a retired assistant director of the FBI; April 21. He served in the US Navy.

## 1985

**Edgar B. “Chip” Cale III C’85**, Wayne, PA, general counsel of the biotech start-up Passage Bio; June 16. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Nu fraternity and the rowing team. His parents are E. Barclay Cale Jr. L’62 and Margot M. Rowley GNu’82.

**Peter N. Clare C’85**, Washington, DC, an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University and Howard University; May 16. He was also a consultant to community redevelopment projects and founder of a mentoring program for Black boys with a focus on STREAM education (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). At Penn, he was a member of Onyx Senior Society.

**Sterling W. Hall WG’85**, Springfield, MA, a former treasurer at Gandara Health and a housing counselor for Springfield Neighborhood Housing; April 5.

## 1986

**Janet Russell Doner Gr’86**, Wyndmoor, PA, a senior lecturer in the French department at Bryn Mawr College; March 30.

**Elsa J. Greene-Cha GNu’86**, Medford, NJ, a clinical specialist in child psychotherapy and sand play; April 24, 2024.

**Jeffrey M. Wymard WG’86**, Berwyn, PA, a retired healthcare finance investment banker; April 24.

## 1988

**Mary Alice O’Donnell Gr’88**, North Prince George, VA, a retired director of graduate medical education at Virginia Commonwealth University; July 18.

**Phyllis F. Verma WG’88**, Washington, DC, a former account manager for General Electric; April 29.

## 1991

**Stephen E. Kirk C’91 W’91 GEng’93**, Wichita, KS, a former lecturer in Wharton’s department of operations, information and decisions; May 2.

## 1993

**Maureen T. Rosser SW’93**, Puyallup, WA, a dialysis social worker; April 26, 2024.

## 1994

**April Mae Ripple Chmielinski GNu’94**, Medford, NJ, a nurse at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and a clinical instructor of nursing at Penn; July 27. She served in the US Air Force. She joined the staff at Penn in 1991 and worked until her passing.

## 1995

**Mary Beth Shay Adams GNu’95**, Bryn Mawr, PA, an obstetrics-gynecology nurse practitioner; March 2.

**Lance B. Allred C’95**, Stillwater, OK, a professor of ancient languages at Cornell University, UCLA, Johns Hopkins University, and Tulsa Community College, and curator of the Museum of the Bible (DC); April 15. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* and the track team.

## 1996

**Andrew L. Feldschreiber C’96**, Great Neck, NY, an investment banker; Dec. 9. His wife is Sara P. Honig C’01 G’01.

## 1998

**Devon S. Browne WG’98**, Naples, FL, former group manager at Coca-Cola; April 11.

## 2001

**Michael P. Hartwyk C’01**, Brooklyn, NY, director of human resources at New York City Center; May 16. At Penn, he was a member of the Queer Student Alliance.

**Sean M. Reilly G’01**, Philadelphia, president and CEO of Roscommon Interna-

tional, a government relations consulting and marketing firm; April 21. Earlier in his career, he was political director for US Senator Rick Santorum.

**Donna M. Valente WEv'01**, Glassboro, NJ, a sales executive at Strategic Planning Online; Oct. 5, 2022.

## 2014

**Laura A. Grafe Gr'14**, Wallingford, PA, a psychology professor at Bryn Mawr College; May 5.

## Faculty & Staff

**Dr. Zalman S. Agus.** *See Class of 1971.*

**Norman I. Badler**, Haverford, PA, a professor emeritus in the department of computer and information science (CIS) in Penn's School of Engineering & Applied Science; May 15. He joined Penn's faculty in 1974 as an assistant professor of CIS. Over a career that lasted nearly 50 years, he went on to serve in multiple leadership roles at Penn, including associate dean for academic affairs at SEAS from 2001 to 2005. From 1990 to 1994, he was the Cecilia Fidler Moore Professor of Computer and Information Science, and from 2013 until his retirement in 2021, he held the Andrew S. and Debra Rachleff Professorship. In 1998, he launched Penn Engineering's digital media design undergraduate major ["The Cult of DMD," Sep/Oct 2003], and he was also the founding director of the Center for Human Modeling and Simulation. His research helped define how computers could simulate realistic human motion and behavior, making him a seminal figure in the evolution of computer animation and interactive virtual environments. Two children are Jeremy B. Badler EAS'95 and David J. Badler EAS'02 W'02.

**April Mae Ripple Chmielinski.** *See Class of 1994.*

**Carol Wiest Gates.** *See Class of 1958.*

**Gloria M. Gay.** *See Class of 1980.*

**Jeffrey Miki Ishibashi**, Philadelphia, a senior research investigator in the genetics department at Penn's Perelman School of Medicine; May 8. He came to Penn in 2009 as a research investigator at Penn's Institute for Diabetes, Obesity, and Metabolism. In 2020, he became the associate director of research at the Penn Gene Therapy Program. In February 2025, he returned to the Perel-

School Abbreviations		
Ar	Architecture	GEE master's, Electrical Engineering
ASC	Annenberg	GEng master's, Engineering and Applied Science
C	College (bachelor's)	GEx master's, Engineering Executive
CCC	College Collateral Courses	GFA master's, Fine Arts
CE	Civil Engineering	GGs master's, College of General Studies
CGS	College of General Studies (till 2008)	GL master's, Law
Ch	Chemistry	GLA master's, Landscape Architecture
ChE	Chemical Engineering	GME master's, Mechanical Engineering
CW	College for Women (till 1975)	GM Medicine, post-degree
D	Dental Medicine	GMt master's, Metallurgical Engineering
DH	Dental Hygiene	GNu master's, Nursing
EAS	Engineering and Applied Science (bachelor's)	GPU master's, Governmental Administration
Ed	Education	Gr doctorate
EE	Electrical Engineering	GrC doctorate, Civil Engineering
FA	Fine Arts	GrE doctorate, Electrical Engineering
G	master's, Arts and Sciences	GrEd doctorate, Education
GAr	master's, Architecture	GrL doctorate, Law
GCE	master's, Civil Engineering	GrN doctorate, Nursing
GCh	master's, Chemical Engineering	GRP master's, Regional Planning
GCP	master's, City Planning	GrS doctorate, Social Work
GD	Dental, post-degree	GrW doctorate, Wharton
GEEd	master's, Education	GV Veterinary, post-degree
		Hon Honorary
		HUP Nurse training (till 1978)
		L Law
		LAr Landscape Architecture
		LPS Liberal and Professional Studies
		M Medicine
		ME Mechanical Engineering
		MT Medical Technology
		MtE Metallurgical Engineering
		Mu Music
		NEd Certificate in Nursing
		Nu Nursing (bachelor's)
		OT Occupational Therapy
		PSW Pennsylvania School of Social Work
		PT Physical Therapy
		SAMP School of Allied Medical Professions
		SPP Social Policy and Practice (master's)
		SW Social Work (master's) (till 2005)
		V Veterinary Medicine
		W Wharton (bachelor's)
		WAM Wharton Advanced Management
		WEF Wharton Extension Finance
		WEv Wharton Evening School
		WG master's, Wharton
		WMP Wharton Management Program

man School's genetics department as a senior research investigator in the lab of Klaus Kaestner. He was also a visiting scholar with the Purdue Institute for Cancer Research.

**Stephen E. Kirk.** *See Class of 1991.*

**Leonard A. Lauder.** *See Class of 1954.*

**Russell E. Palmer Jr.**, Philadelphia, University trustee emeritus and former Wharton dean; June 14. He became dean of Wharton in 1983 and served a seven-year tenure. Under his leadership, Wharton attracted more than 100 new faculty members, tripled the number of endowed chairs, raised more than \$100 million, increased Wharton's endowment fivefold, and raised Wharton's *Business Week* rank to the number one business school in the US. With his "Plan for Preeminence," the school established the Aresty Institute of Executive Education, the Steinberg Conference Center, and three major research centers. He left Wharton in 1990 to start his own private equity firm, the Palmer Group. He served on Penn's Board of Trustees from 1991 to 2001; and from 1999 to 2002, he also chaired the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania Health System. His honors at Penn include professorships established in his name, the Wharton Dean's Medal, and a lifetime achievement award from Wharton's Zell/Lurie Real Estate Center. His name is bestowed on a Wharton Crew Club shell (rowing boat) and an endowed scholarship for Wharton under-

graduate students. He also was a passionate advocate for the Netter Center for Community Partnerships and established the Russell Palmer Fund there to support its career mentoring program. His children include Bradley C. Palmer WG'88 and Karen Palmer Korfmann C'90, and his grandchildren include Katherine A. Palmer W'20, Elizabeth P. Palmer C'24, and Teddy E. Palmer W'29.

**Brenda C. Shafer.** *See Class of 1962.*

**Richard J. Weller**, Perth, Australia, a professor emeritus of landscape architecture in Penn's Weitzman School of Architecture; May 15. He joined Penn's faculty in 2013 as chair of the department of landscape architecture in the Weitzman School, a position he held through 2022. While at Penn, in 2019 he cofounded, with Weitzman School Dean Fritz Steiner, the McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology. He was also the founding creative director of the interdisciplinary journal of landscape architecture *LA+* ["Gazetteer," May/June 2019]. Over 30 years of practice, he worked simultaneously as an academic and a consultant specializing in the formative stages of projects ranging across all scales. His work was frequently awarded in international design competitions and exhibited in galleries such as the Guggenheim in New York, the Venice Biennale, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney.

## Classifieds

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The future home of the Greenfield Intercultural Center—and oldest building owned by Penn—is shown here in a photo from 1976.

# A Villa in the City



**T**hanks to Ke-An Chiang GFA'25, the Greenfield Intercultural Center now outranks College Hall as the oldest building owned by Penn. The three-story, white stucco building with green trim at 3708–12 Chestnut Street is a recent addition to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, after being nominated by Chi-

ang while she was a student in the Weitzman School of Design. Her nomination was sponsored by Amy Lambert GFA'16, board president of the University City Historical Society.

Built circa 1845 by Samuel R. Reed, the Reed-Hubley Residence is one of the last survivors of a small suburban development on Chestnut Street in what was

then Blockley Township. As Chiang wrote in her nomination, “It represents an early residence in the Greek Revival style with Italianate features,” set back from the street, with a front garden, iron fencing, and a pathway leading up to the entrance. Constructed at a time when suburban development was taking off—thanks to bridges and streetcars that could take people away from crowded cities—the villa provided a “relaxed and comfortable living arrangement” for high-status families.

From 1861 until 1911, the building was owned by the family of Francis S. Hubley, who was involved in coal mining in Schuylkill County, then by a lawyer who lived there until just prior to the Great Depression, when the neighborhood was shifting from single-family homes to multi-family dwellings.

The 1960s brought more changes to the block, implemented by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia. Surrounding buildings were demolished, and the property “inadvertently reasserted its role as one of the few remaining sites from the later Blockley Township era and the suburban expansion into West Philadelphia,” Chiang wrote in the nomination.

In 1982, the University acquired the building and renovated it to serve as the headquarters for the Greenfield Intercultural Center. Rear and side porches were removed, the garage (built between 1918 and 1927) was transformed into a one-bedroom residence, and the main building was converted into meeting rooms and offices for the members of the United Minorities Council. Last year GIC celebrated its 40th anniversary in the space [“Gazetteer,” May/June 2024].

“I live on Chestnut Street, so I saw that building a lot,” Chiang said in a story on the Weitzman School’s website. “But I never thought I could dig into the history so much and find an argument for the building. I did have fun putting all these together.” —NP



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