

Connections

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DEAN'S COLUMN

Yes, a capital campaign is about raising money, but money is never the only goal of fundraising. For the School of Arts and Sciences, a campaign is a wonderful opportunity to connect with all our friends. It's a chance to go out and tell them about the vision our deans, our faculty and our students have for the future. It's a way to spread the good news about the great things — the innovative teaching, the pioneering scholarship and the vigorous service projects — underway now at Penn.

We have more than 113,000 living alumni. Add to that Penn parents and other lovers of the liberal arts, and we can enlist an army of supporters involved in spreading the word and making the vision real. A campaign is the moment to connect with them all.

Unlike the high grade that marks academic achievement with an A, the success of our campaign will be measured by advancing what we call the three F's: faculty, facilities and financial aid.

Endowed chairs carry great prestige in the academy and are given to recognize and reward faculty excellence. They allow us to recruit and retain the world's top teachers and scholars, and to nurture rising academicians. Endowment for financial aid keeps the door to a world-class education open for the very best students, and funding for academic programs

helps us to offer an experience that matches their abilities and ambitions. New buildings and renovated campus structures are far more than bricks and mortar: they make the School's chief enterprise of research and teaching possible.

Each of these priorities is a critical part of what it means to be a great school of arts and sciences. Strengthening faculty, guaranteeing access to the finest students and bringing state-of-the-art facilities online are connected initiatives that will raise the School to new levels of eminence. There are, of course, many programs and needs, and we are eager to engage with anyone who wishes to follow their passion for the liberal arts.

Forthcoming issues of *Penn Arts & Sciences Magazine* will feature stories that highlight School priorities and the exciting work our faculty and students are doing, all of which our campaign supports. The profile of Jonathan Moreno (p.12) in this issue looks at his scholarship in the fields of bio- and neuroethics, and the valuable insights it offers to government officials, health professionals and ordinary citizens. The inclusion of an essay by political science professor Rogers Smith (p.18) calls attention to the School's commitment to investigating critical issues in constitutionalism and democracy, an important initiative outlined in our strategic plan.

Enhancing the foundations of excellence in the School will have effects far beyond our doors. In every great research university, the arts and sciences are at the very heart of the institution's mission and intellectual vitality. Thus, an investment in the School of Arts and Sciences is an investment in the University of Pennsylvania. Indeed, it is an investment in the development and dissemination of revolutionary ideas, resourceful leadership and new knowledge across our global society.

Our friends from all around the world are the fourth F, and they are as important to our success as the other three. As our campaign picks up, I'll need to pack my suitcase a lot, but that's OK: I have a great story to tell. When I'm on the road, I talk with lots of alumni who are proud of their Penn education. Many have not been back to campus for 20 or 30 years. When I tell them of all we have achieved since they were students, they are even more proud of what it means to be a Penn Arts and Sciences graduate. It was exciting to be connected then, I tell them, and it's exciting to be connected now. ■

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