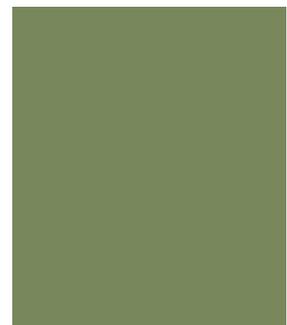


PARTNERS & PROGRESS

Spring/Summer 2015



FOUNDATIONS AND FRONTIERS

A Strategic Plan for Penn Arts and Sciences

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Lisa Godfrey

Our success depends, and has always depended, on partnerships: Alumni, parents, students, faculty, and friends working together to benefit one another and our School.

One of the many great pleasures of my job is meeting and working with our incredible partners. For example, the Franklin Ambassadors—a group of outstanding College students who share their time and talents and offer a window into the people, activities, and relevance of Penn Arts and Sciences today. They are a constant and welcome reminder of what it means to be part of a university community and I want to thank them. I also want to congratulate our graduating Franklin Ambassadors **Christianne Johnson**, president; **Keishawn Johnson**; and **Royce Reeves-Darby**, and welcome them into the Penn Arts and Sciences alumni community.

Then there is our new Penn Arts and Sciences Women in Business group, formed by College alumnae who are leaders in their professional fields. Led by Arts and Sciences Overseer **Jamie Osman Handwerker, C'83, PAR'19**, they will mentor and support our young alumnae and current female students by serving as role models and providing practical interview tips and suggestions for balancing the demands of work and home. The energy, enthusiasm, and commitment I saw at our first meeting in March were inspirational, and I can't wait until they really roll up their sleeves and get down to work this fall.

In order to create "Foundations and Frontiers," our new strategic plan, Dean Steve Fluharty worked closely with the School's Overseers. We'll need the active engagement of *all* our stakeholders to succeed in its implementation. You can read more about the plan and the alumni and friends who are already helping us make it a reality in this issue of *Partners and Progress* or at www.sas.upenn.edu/strategic-plan. I invite you to share your comments and questions with us.

It's an exciting and transformative time and—as always—we're in it together.

Jean-Marie Kneeley
Vice Dean for Advancement



Alison Sweeney, assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Penn Arts and Sciences, studies the light-scattering cells of giant clams as part of her study that benefitted from the NatureNet Fellowship program.

PENN ARTS AND SCIENCES HELPS NATURE CONSERVANCY TURN OVER A NEW LEAF

When The Nature Conservancy, one of the world's most influential conservation organizations, decided to take a more interdisciplinary scientific approach to its efforts, the Penn Arts and Sciences community was more than ready to assist. Over the last three years, scholars and alumni have come together to help the Conservancy take its efforts in a new direction through a multifaceted research program designed to address the world's unprecedented demands for food, water, and energy without exacerbating climate change or degrading natural systems.

The initiative, called NatureNet, is a fellowship program that places some of the country's premier early-career scientists as postdoctoral researchers at Penn and five other leading universities. These emerging scholars, whose work in fields such as economics, chemistry, engineering, and physics relates to global sustainability, complement the Conservancy's traditional strengths in biology and ecology. To date, NatureNet Science Fellows have taken on issues including sustainable food production systems, clean water supplies, energy production, and urban ecology. Penn

Arts and Sciences faculty's expertise in areas like nanotechnology, energy research, conservation biology, and green chemistry makes the School a natural fit for hosting these fellows.

The most recent Penn NatureNet fellow is Sanaz Vahidinia, a space science researcher at NASA. During her fellowship at Penn, Vahidinia is focusing on the engineering of new clean energy materials and devices to improve solar efficiency by understanding and adapting the light-scattering cells of giant clams. Her work is part of a study led by Alison Sweeney, an assistant professor in physics and astronomy at Penn, and Daniel Morse, professor emeritus at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Sweeney explains that the NatureNet fellowship enabled Vahidinia to join the research team, bringing sophisticated optical modeling techniques she had developed at NASA. "We are grateful for the NatureNet Science Fellowship program, which gave us the flexibility to advance this important project," says Sweeney. The results of the study have

implications for alternative energy research, paving the way for new types of solar panels or improved reactors for growing biofuel.

Past Penn NatureNet fellows have explored the use of nanotechnology for efficient and sustainable sources of energy and clean water. They worked under the mentorship of Christopher Murray, Richard Perry University Professor in the Department of Chemistry in Penn Arts and Sciences and Penn Engineering's Department of Materials Science and Engineering. Professor Murray serves on the NatureNet Advisory Board.

Penn Arts and Sciences alumni have also taken a leading role in the NatureNet effort. Emeritus Trustee and former Overseer **P. Roy Vagelos, C'50, Hon'99**, is a Nature Conservancy board member and a founding donor to the program. This year, University Trustee and Penn Arts and Sciences Overseer **Sarah Wilder Fuller, CW'71**, and Emeritus Trustee and Emeritus Overseer **Paul Kelly, C'62, WG'64**, generously supported the Penn fellows.

FOUNDATIONS

FRONTIERS

FACULTY

DIVERSITY,
INEQUALITY,
&
HUMAN
well-being

ARTS &
CULTURE

humanities
IN THE
DIGITAL
AGE

GLOBAL
inquiries

ENERGY,
SUSTAINABILITY,
and the
ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC
POLICY &
**SOCIAL
IMPACT**

EDUCATION

**MAPPING
THE MIND**

QUANTITATIVE
EXPLORATIONS
OF
*evolving
systems*

FOUNDATIONS AND FRONTIERS

A Strategic Plan for Penn Arts and Sciences

Penn Arts and Sciences is one of the world's great homes for the study of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Our faculty are at the forefront of their respective fields, creating transformative new understandings about the world around us—from ancient philosophy to astrophysics to political elections.

Fueled by their discoveries, these faculty instill in our outstanding undergraduate and graduate students the insatiable curiosity, boundless creativity, and passion for lifelong learning that are preparation for impactful lives.

The School's Strategic Plan is the result of a comprehensive process—involving students, alumni, overseers, University administrators, and one-third of our faculty—dedicated to maximizing our impact in teaching, discovery, and engagement for years to come. The plan gives equal emphasis to vision and to the solid structures upon which vision must be established.

For Penn Arts and Sciences, our foundation is the excellence of our faculty and educational programs.

By assuring the strength of our foundations, we are well positioned to explore new frontiers.

FOUNDATIONS

FACULTY

The success of Penn Arts and Sciences—in everything that it does—rests unquestionably on its ability to attract and retain faculty of the highest caliber.

Our plan includes strategies to ensure that we take advantage of every opportunity to strengthen our faculty, from maximizing the impact of each new faculty hire to providing appropriate support, incentives, and mentorship at every stage of their careers.

Departments across the School are thinking strategically about their long-range aspirations and finding common priorities across departmental lines—resulting in innovative new approaches to recruitment. Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy Eleni Katifori and her colleagues are uniting approaches from physics, mathematics, and computer science to decipher the organizing principles of biological matter. Katifori was recruited to Penn through an innovative collaboration known as the Evo Cluster—short for Evolution of Dynamical Processes Far from Equilibrium. The initiative is shaping faculty recruitment across natural science departments, with the goal of sharpening the focus on some of the biggest questions in science today.



Shira Yurkoff

EDUCATION

As the home of liberal arts education at Penn—enrolling roughly half of Penn's student body, and with responsibility for providing liberal arts courses across Penn's schools—we give careful attention to strategies that will assure the excellence and relevance of a Penn education for all our talented students, from undergraduate, to doctoral, to professional masters and beyond.



Undergraduate Education

In the College, we seek to offer our undergraduates the best liberal arts education available anywhere. Our curriculum combines depth and breadth of knowledge with a focus on universally valued skills—including clarity of expression, critical and innovative thinking, and deepened empathy. This combination is the best preparation for the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Teaching innovation is an important part of our strategy to maximize the impact of an education in the College. We are currently exploring the possibilities of Structured Active In-Class Learning (SAIL). In these courses, students listen to lectures online, freeing class time for direct interaction, discussion, and problem-solving with the professor and classmates. This approach launched in the natural sciences with classes like Associate Professor Masao Sako's physics class and is now expanding to other areas including the Departments of Economics and Political Science.

Graduate Education

Our Ph.D. students represent the next generation of scholars who will further knowledge and apply their advanced training in any number of important pursuits. They add fresh intellectual perspectives to our academic community, are an asset in our efforts to attract top faculty to Penn, and contribute to educating our undergraduates as they train to become teachers themselves.

Philosophy doctoral student Robert Hoffman's work is exploring how texts of the 17th and 18th century provide a philosophical foundation in liberal western countries for an increasing use of military tactics and technology to combat domestic crime. "It's a phenomenon seen broadly in the U.S., ranging from the 'War on Terror,' to responses to the Occupy movement and the Ferguson protests," says Hoffman, who presented on the topic at the 2014 Penn Humanities Forum. Hoffman is also the recipient of the 2015 Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching by a Graduate Student. "I strive to make every class valuable, even (or perhaps especially) to those students who will never take another philosophy course," says Hoffman, whose courses include The Social Contract and Ethics. "My main priority is helping students recognize the contrasts between theories, their practical importance, and the complexity and nuance required to fit theories to the world around us."



Professional and Liberal Education

Many students pursue alternatives to traditional degree programs, from adult students completing their bachelor's degree, to professionals seeking to update knowledge, and alumni who want to stay connected. Penn Arts and Sciences, through its division of Professional and Liberal Education, is well positioned to provide exceptional lifelong learning opportunities to a range of audiences through a diverse portfolio of degree, non-degree, and non-credit programs—delivered in a variety of formats.

Penn's new Master of Chemical Sciences program is positioning its students to take advantage of career opportunities that are emerging with new discoveries in the chemical sciences. The program is distinctive for combining academic rigor with flexibility to accommodate students' professional goals. Students take Ph.D.-level courses to ensure that they gain a strong technical background, and in addition they receive professional development and extensive mentoring. Director Ana-Rita Mayol says that as the program grows, a great deal of attention is being paid to developing relationships with local industry and creating "pipelines for recruitment of talented students and job placement for our graduates."

FRONTIERS

ADVANCING INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

The School has identified four areas that represent our most compelling and far-reaching opportunities to integrate important and rapidly emerging areas of knowledge and inquiry in the next several years. Each one of these new initiatives holds the promise of accelerating the pace of discovery and promoting innovation in teaching and learning.

DIVERSITY, INEQUALITY, AND HUMAN WELL-BEING

Shira Yudkoff



The concept of human diversity, its relationship with inequality, and its complex interactions with economic, political, cultural, and social institutions have profound implications for virtually all dimensions of human well-being. How do the stresses of racism affect the immune system? Or voter participation? How do environmental toxins disproportionately impact disadvantaged children? To improve understanding of the nature of diversity and the causes, character, and consequences of inequality, we will make strategic investments in faculty as well as several programs and initiatives.

A new interdisciplinary initiative at Penn Arts and Sciences is challenging social and life scientists to be more creative in their approaches to integrating race in their research. The Program on Race, Science and Society—established by Dorothy Roberts, George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology and Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights—builds on Roberts' extensive research in the area, which calls into question the assertion that race can be categorized biologically. The program hosts visiting scholars and engages faculty and students from fields in the humanities and social sciences, as well as the life sciences.

HUMANITIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Digital and computational technologies are impacting scholarship across all disciplines, but nowhere is the transformation as dramatic as in the humanities. Researchers are tackling questions about history, the arts, and culture in radically new ways: from using computers to detect patterns in massive amounts of digitized writing, to applying GIS technology to develop interactive maps that describe complex histories, to recreating archaeological sites and artifacts through 3-D modeling.

The investment of substantial resources at Penn Arts and Sciences in the digital humanities will capitalize on significant momentum at the School and extend Penn's presence as a leader in vital new areas of humanistic research.

Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World doctoral candidate Lucas Stephens is using an advanced aerial photography system to map the Gordion archaeological site in central Turkey—the ancient capital city of the fabled King Midas. The Phantom 2 Vision+ Quadcopter system glides at 100 meters, allowing Stephens to capture imagery of landscape features such as quarries, ancient road surfaces, burial mounds, occupation mounds, and rock-cut tombs, which can be turned into geo-referenced 3-D models with photogrammetry software. The goal, according to Stephens, is to produce interactive maps and videos that highlight ancient landscape features and specific routes by which people traveled in the past.



MAPPING THE MIND

Deciphering the complex relationship between brain activity and the vastness of human consciousness is one of today's most compelling scientific challenges. New technologies have brought about an unprecedented ability to measure and manipulate brain activity. The cutting edge of brain science will now turn to the connection between this activity and complex behavior: in other words, "mapping" the mind. This next wave holds the potential to yield valuable insights into phenomena that span from brain abnormalities, to social behavior and decision-making, to the fundamental nature of human intelligence.

Penn Arts and Sciences' new investment in this area will solidify our commitment of more than a decade to enhancing our facilities, faculty, and programs in the brain and behavioral sciences.

The brain's prefrontal cortex is thought to be the seat of cognitive control, working as a kind of filter that keeps irrelevant thoughts, perceptions, and memories from interfering with a task at hand. A research team led by Sharon Thompson-Schill recently showed that inhibiting this filter can boost performance for tasks in which unfiltered, creative thoughts present an advantage. Thompson-Schill, the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Psychology, is a cognitive neuroscientist and chair of the psychology department. Her lab uses a variety of techniques including functional MRI and transcranial direct current stimulation to study the biological bases of human cognitive systems such as perception, memory, language, and thought.



Sharon Thompson-Schill

ENERGY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

An overwhelming scientific consensus exists that human activity is having a negative impact on the global environment. Finding sustainable approaches to capturing and converting the energy that society needs and integrating scientific advances with changes in social policy are challenges that have critical consequences for future generations. Penn Arts and Sciences will invest in a variety of initiatives designed to advance research and convert understanding into policy.

Self-described "chemistry fanatic" Carol Wang has already made her mark in the field of her choice through VIPER, the Vagelos Integrated Program in Energy Research. The dual-degree program, offered jointly by Arts and Sciences and Engineering, is designed to involve students in energy research early. VIPER co-director and Professor of Chemistry Andrew Rappe helped connect Wang, C'17, with Patrick Walsh, Alan MacDiarmid Term Professor of Chemistry, while she was a freshman. Since then she has been contributing to the lab's research on new ways to create a family of compounds called diaryl sulfoxides in the lab—work that has numerous applications in pharmaceuticals and materials science. Now completing her sophomore year, Wang has already achieved the status of co-author on a scientific paper.



FOCUSING OUR STRENGTHS

The School has identified four broad areas where our resources are already strong, yet we have the potential to realize far greater impact. Our goal is to enhance academic impact and institutional visibility in these areas through a combination of enhanced coordination, improved organization, and more focused investment of resources.

ARTS AND CULTURE



Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Arts and culture enhance students' capacities for critical and creative thinking in a variety of modes and enrich the experiences of the entire community. We will improve the coherence of our utilization of the wealth of cultural resources available on campus and in the city by pursuing initiatives in these categories.

For 10 years, the Daedalus Quartet has been a major musical presence at Penn. As ensemble-in-residence at the music department, the internationally acclaimed quartet has been enhancing cultural life on campus as well as the undergraduate music curriculum. In addition to their regular schedule of top-flight public performances, the Quartet has performed in campus venues ranging from a 60-Second Lecture on Locust Walk to a Wharton graduate marketing class. The Quartet also provides instruction to individual students and student ensembles, and the music curriculum now includes courses designed specifically to include them.

GLOBAL INQUIRIES

Globalization continues to thrust into the spotlight the complexity of the cultural, social, political, and economic forces that shape peoples, nations, and regions, as well as their relations with one another. Penn Arts and Sciences is already home to a wealth of resources that support greater understanding and advances in the study of global issues. These resources will be strengthened through a combination of targeted new initiatives.

As an underclassman Christina Wu, C'14, was interested in medicine but decided to stretch beyond her comfort zone and explore her passion for health and social justice. She spent her sophomore summer at a grassroots healthcare organization in India, Aravind Eye Care Systems, as part of the Center for the Advanced Study of India's (CASI) summer internship program. Her summer was critical in developing her interests in ophthalmology and aging, leading to her senior honors thesis. Now, as a U.S.-China Fulbright fellow at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China, Wu is continuing her research on elderly health care and exploring existing health and supportive services available to elders with dementia and their families.



PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL IMPACT

With its stellar array of faculty, students, departments, programs, and centers engaged in research on social issues, Penn Arts and Sciences has tremendous potential to contribute expert knowledge and recommendations in matters of public policy. Our strategic plan outlines several initiatives to consolidate our policy-relevant activities and increase influence in policy spheres.

An innovative new program at Penn Arts and Sciences is working to enhance understanding of political outcomes in the U.S., while also offering Penn undergraduates an unparalleled opportunity for hands-on learning about opinion theory and research. The Penn Program for Opinion Research and Election Studies—or PORES—offers courses and undergraduate research fellowships that involve students in projects ranging from analyses of exit polls to changes in voting rules over time. Students have even worked at NBC News on election day, thanks to PORES founding director and Associate Professor of Political Science John Lapinski's role as director of their elections unit.



QUANTITATIVE EXPLORATIONS OF EVOLVING SYSTEMS

The world we live in consists of evolving structures and patterns, and with the advent of big data, our ability to identify and understand such patterns is shifting the intellectual landscape across disciplines. This initiative addresses the need for expertise and infrastructure that will aid scholars throughout the University as they tackle disparate problems that rely on quantitative methods and computational tools to study complex, evolving systems.

Joshua Plotkin is expanding horizons in evolutionary biology and ecology through the power of mathematics, computation, and statistical methods. His research group examines a range of questions that go to the heart of adaptation in populations, including the evolution of robustness and adaptability, the evolutionary ecology of viral populations, the nature of genetic drift, the dynamics of protein translation, and the evolution of social norms. A professor in the Department of Biology as well as in the Department of Computer and Information Sciences in the School of Engineering and Applied Science, Plotkin has consistently been recognized with some of the most prestigious honors for innovative early-career scientists.



Candace Di Carlo

REVIVING UP ENERGY RESEARCH

In a quest that is crucial to our global future, scientists around the world are racing to find new ways to harness energy. Penn's founder Benjamin Franklin may have done it in 1752 with nothing more than a kite, a key, and some stormy weather, but the answers to today's energy challenges require vastly more complex investigation across a large number of fields, including biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, and earth and environmental science.

Penn Arts and Sciences has long worked to remove the traditional divisions between fields like these so its scholars can easily cross academic boundaries to push the scientific envelope. The School's new faculty recruitment effort aimed at accelerating its energy research and teaching, as called for in its new strategic plan, is a perfect example of this. In a novel move called "cluster hiring," the School's science departments are working in concert to recruit three energy scholars whose work integrates biology, chemistry, and physics.

While the discoveries of these new faculty members may hold promise for the entire world, their work also will make a tremendous impact closer to home. Energy-related issues such as climate change and alternative fuels are of enormous interest to Penn students. The appointment of these additional scholars will help expand the School's teaching and increase opportunities for energy research by undergraduates and graduate students.

The new faculty positions are being funded through a generous gift from former Penn Arts and Sciences Overseer **David D. Elliman, C'73, WG'77**, and his wife, **Dr. Andrea Branch**, through the Bawd Foundation. Elliman, who has been an advisor to many of the School's other innovative science initiatives, including the Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management, is greatly interested in energy and other areas of scientific research. The former biology major is the founding principal of the Elmrock Group of investment companies and is a board member of the Jackson Laboratory and Urban Electric Power, an early-stage energy storage company.

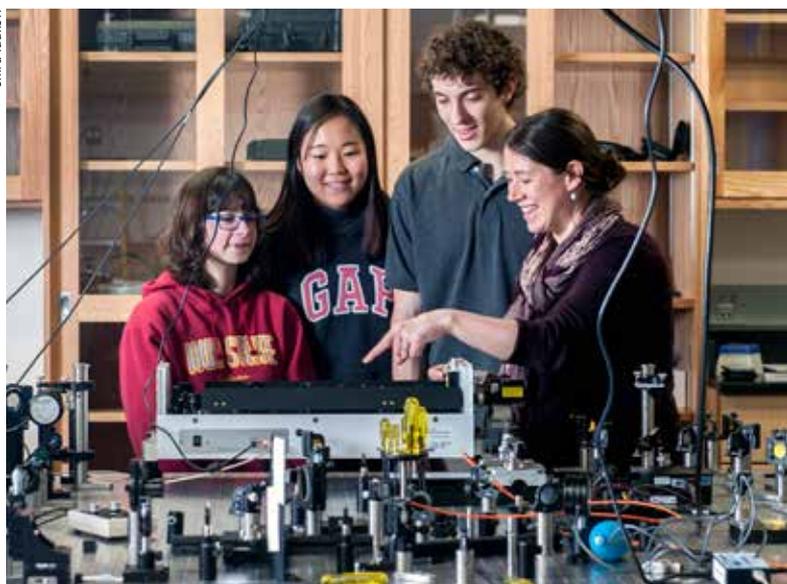
"Energy enables quality of life. The development of clean, accessible, inexpensive, and distributed sources of energy is a linchpin in the quest to improve living standards, especially

in the less-developed world," says Elliman. "The complex challenge of integrating new forms of generation, storage, and delivery is necessarily interdisciplinary and requires the collaborative approach embodied by this program."

Assistant Professor of Chemistry Jessica Anna arrived in July as the first Elliman Faculty Fellow. Anna's work focuses on new approaches to the conversion of solar energy and spans the fields of biology, chemistry, and physics. Her research explores the interplay among vibrational motion, electronic energy transfer, and electron transfer reactions, as well as the role the environment plays in these processes.

"My research focuses on understanding the underlying mechanisms that govern the very first steps of photosynthesis—the absorption of a photon, transfer of this excitation energy, and the subsequent creation of a stable charge separated state," says Anna. "Being at Penn has allowed for multiple collaborative opportunities with researchers in the School's Departments of Chemistry and Biology and the Perelman School of Medicine's Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics."

Shira Nudkoff



Jessica M. Anna, Assistant Professor of Chemistry and Elliman Faculty Fellow, at right, shows graduate students (from left) Kristen McKibben, biochemistry and molecular biophysics; Yumin Lee, chemistry; and Martin Iwanicki, biochemistry and molecular biophysics, the optical layout and tracing beam path of the optical parametric amplifier she uses in her research on photosynthesis.

CONNECTING ACROSS GENERATIONS

PIONEERING ALUMNA REACHES OUT TO CURRENT GRADUATE STUDENTS

"I see myself in the graduate students," says **Marie Francia Zuckerman, GR'70**, who has given to Penn Arts and Sciences' Graduate Fellowship Fund since 1977. "There's no age barrier."

Pushed by her father's concern that she be self-sufficient, Zuckerman was the first woman in her family to go to college, and the first person to get a graduate degree. She studied chemistry at Cornell but found it "an unhelpful environment." When she decided to go on to get her master's degree, Penn offered her a teaching position in the labs, which let her earn her tuition and a stipend. "That's how I ended up at Penn," she says. "And I enjoyed every minute of it."

When she arrived at the University in 1965, Zuckerman was one of only two women in Penn's physical chemistry program, but everyone made her feel welcome. "Penn was ahead of its time in terms of accepting women in science. The professors gave us the same tasks that the men got, and told us to run with it," she says. "It was very exciting, very research-oriented at a very high level."

She stayed to get her doctorate, then went into industry research, but found she'd returned to a man's world: "There

really was a ceiling on my head." She began studying patent law on her own, and passed the U.S. Patent Office's bar exam to become a registered patent agent, drafting and prosecuting worldwide applications in chemical technologies. Since her retirement from Dow Chemical a few years ago, she's working part-time for Precision Combustion, a small clean energy research company in Connecticut. "It's more fun than retirement."

Zuckerman says she's lived "a remarkable life," but worries about what will happen when the chemists in her generation retire. "The problems we're working on are very real and need real people to solve them," she says. "If we want to have an educated work force, people who are able to solve problems of the country or the world, we need to help the younger generation get there. Whether it's financial or whether it's a kind word, we need to help."

Zuckerman knows that her annual gifts to the Graduate Fellowship Fund provide a reliable resource for Penn Arts and Sciences graduate students. And last year when she received a letter from Chris Jiminez, a doctoral candidate in English, thanking her for her donation,

she wrote back, telling him, "I can sense that you are highly engaged in your studies and future plans... You are going to do well in life!"

"I felt his letter shouldn't go without a reply because he's young and getting started," she says. "He should have a few words of encouragement. Launching a career is hard work, and helping these students is something we all should do."



Courtesy of Marie Zuckerman

Marie Francia Zuckerman

GIFT HONORS A LIFE TOGETHER



Courtesy of Rick Solit

The Solit family

When **Rick Solit, C'89**, met **Cheryl Tessler, C'93, GM'98, WG'98**, on a blind date in the spring of 1993, something just clicked right away.

They had medicine in common. He was beginning his surgical residency at Thomas Jefferson University, and she was about to graduate from the College and begin medical school at Penn. There were family connections, too. Both had grown up in the Philadelphia area. Cheryl's cousin was a good friend of Rick's mother, and she had long wanted to make a romantic match between the two families. Rick finally relented and called Cheryl.

They agreed to meet at the Palladium, a cozy, wood-paneled student hangout in a building on Locust Walk—now the ARCH (Arts, Research, and Culture House) Building. “We were together ever since,” says Rick. The couple married in 1995 and had two children, Juliet and Spencer.

As an undergraduate, Rick had majored in economics, and he says a medical economics class changed the direction of his thinking. “I became interested in seeing how the medical field would unfold,” he says. “It was very impactful—and I still use what I learned today.”

Cheryl also became interested in combining business and medicine and entered the five-year dual degree M.D./M.B.A. program. She did a summer internship with McKinsey & Company's pharmaceutical practice. Although Rick had planned to go to business school after residency, both Drs. Solit were recruited to McKinsey in 1998 after Cheryl graduated. After a stint in consulting, Rick began a career on Wall Street, focusing on pharmaceuticals and biotech investing. He currently works at Adage Capital Management, based in Boston, where he integrates his medical and business experience when making investment decisions.

After McKinsey, Cheryl spent a few years raising the couple's two children before starting a career as an executive recruiter. She placed candidates with science or medical backgrounds into jobs in the finance world, later starting her own executive search firm, Solit Tessler & Company.

But the life the Solits built together was upended in 2006 when Cheryl was diagnosed with stage IIIA breast cancer. The treatments worked, for a time. But the cancer returned a few years ago, and she died on March 3, 2014 at the age of 43.

In considering how to honor her memory, Rick knew that making a tribute gift to Penn would be meaningful, as it was such a big part of both of their lives. The Roy and Diana Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management—an undergraduate dual-degree program combining bioscience and business jointly administered by the College of Arts and Sciences and Wharton—seemed like a perfect fit.

“When I learned about the LSM program, I identified with it immediately,” Rick says. “This type of program wasn't available when Cheryl and I were undergraduates. I know it would have interested her. It is very unique.”

He decided to create the Cheryl Tessler Solit Endowed Internship Fund. The Fund supports stipends for internships for LSM students, who are required to complete two internships during the course of their study—one in the life sciences and one in business.

“Internships are an essential part of the LSM experience, because the program is so practically oriented, as well as academically rigorous,” says Peter Stokes, the director of administration and advising for the program. “The goal is for students to understand how the ideas they learn in the classroom are actually implemented, and to begin to see first-hand how innovations in the life sciences are developed, managed, and made accessible to the people who can benefit from them. We are deeply grateful to Dr. Solit for establishing this fund in his wife's memory and helping to make sure that these internship experiences remain available to LSM students.”

In addition to funding the internships, Rick also volunteers with the LSM program. He has participated in panel discussions and enjoys visiting classrooms to talk with the students and listen to their senior project proposals. “They are facing all the same issues and decisions I faced when thinking about my career path,” he says.

Because the Cheryl Tessler Solit Internship fund is endowed, it will continue to assist LSM students in perpetuity, and for Rick it creates a lasting tribute to his late wife. “I feel all the nostalgia of when we were just starting out together,” he says, “all the excitement and unknowns of how life will turn out. Penn has that feel for me when I remember Cheryl. The internship in her name creates a permanent memory of that time together.”

ENCOURAGING THE CURIOUS MIND

Young Alumna Creates Scholarship to Help International Students Broaden Their Horizons

Elisabeth Dong C'08, W'08, knows what she says when it comes to having a curious mind. The graduate of the Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business completed four majors at Penn: international studies, French, and political science in the College, as well as business at the Wharton School. She also found time for a minor in comparative literature just because she was interested. Now, as a vice president at the global investment firm Bain Capital, she's created a scholarship for international students who are driven by that same curiosity.

She recently established the Elli Endowed Scholarship Fund for the Curious Mind through a matching fund designed

specifically to augment gifts from alumni who have graduated in the last 10 years. Elisabeth, who grew up in Germany and now lives in London, says she was able to attend Penn only because she received a scholarship. "The cost doesn't allow all international students to contemplate a Penn education," she says. "Particularly for students of my background, who have attended public high schools around the world with little knowledge about what a Penn education may offer, Penn is truly transformative and empowering."

The most important things Penn taught her were to be curious about how the world works and to authentically connect with people—things she believes are essential to a career in global business. And she definitely should know. She has made investments in Europe, the United States, and Latin America. "Every time we invest we need to learn about the company. I'm constantly learning about new industries and new business models, and meeting new people—management teams, owner-entrepreneurs, corporate sellers—and I'm trying to figure out, 'Why does this company have an edge? What can be done differently? What drives these people? What makes us good owners?' As an investor, I'm always in the learning process. You learn from each investment opportunity and develop judgment about what could go better and what could go worse in an investment, which is more of an art than a science. To develop that judgment you have to be curious about how the world works and how people tick. It's something I believe is a valuable quality whether you are an investor, an entrepreneur, or a researcher," she says. "The scholarship is really about supporting international students who have a curious mind to broaden their horizons with a Penn education."

Elisabeth Dong, C'08, W'08



Courtesy of Elisabeth Dong

ENGAGING ALUMNI

College alumni regularly come back to campus to offer their career perspectives to current students. For more information about these and other engagement opportunities, contact Erinn Carey, Associate Director of Alumni Outreach, at erinnc@sas.upenn.edu or 215-898-8017.

Fox Leadership Program's Lessons in Leadership Series



Shira Yudkoff



Lisa Bodfrey

When she graduated with a degree in English, **Sofia Chang, C'91**, (left, center) didn't know she'd be leading a global division at a renowned media company, but as she told students at the Robert A. Fox Leadership Program's Lessons in Leadership, each career experience helped her further define who she was and what she wanted. Now Executive Vice President and General Manager at HBO, Sofia advised students on the importance of self-awareness and curiosity, transferable skills, and the ability to build strong relationships with both mentors and peers.

Claudia Meer, C'83, (right, standing center) Managing Director of Energy and Structured Finance at Clark Construction, encouraged students to take full advantage of the wide variety of courses that the liberal arts curriculum provides because the interdisciplinary knowledge and critical thinking skills will set them apart in any career path they choose to pursue. She also shared advice on how to understand an organization's corporate culture and how to effectively identify and market transferrable skills.

College Alumni Mentoring Series (CAMS)



Lisa Bodfrey



Lisa Bodfrey

Vince Szwajkowski, C'07, (left, center) Senior Director of Global Brand Strategy at Hilton Worldwide, began his career at The Boston Consulting Group, where he developed his passion for travel and work in strategy. Vince shared insight on how to maximize undergraduate years through coursework, internships, and extracurricular involvement. He also emphasized the importance of developing strong relationships with mentors who can advocate for you and provide access to career-altering opportunities.

Ben Lerer, C'03, (right) Founder of Thrillist Media Group and Managing Director of Lerer Hippeau Ventures, advised students on taking an entrepreneurial career path and gave the inside scoop on what qualities he looks for in new hires. Ben underscored the importance of being genuinely passionate about the company you work for, or aspire to work for, in order to fully excel.

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