

University of Pennsylvania • Fall 2022

Parents



A Warm Welcome

**Greetings from President Magill • Living and Learning
A Word from Our Deans • Food Ventures
New Parents Council Co-Chairs • Wellness at Penn**

A Message from the President

Hello Penn parents,

It is a pleasure to address you not only as Penn's president, but as a fellow parent.

Growing up with five siblings, raising two children of my own, and working in higher education for over two decades, I have seen countless young people grow into adulthood. I am inspired every day by the chance to help students explore new opportunities, respond to character-defining challenges, and passionately pursue their goals and interests.

This, in part, is why I am thrilled to be at Penn.

Everywhere you look, there is an unflagging commitment to provide our students with an invigorating undergraduate experience. There are spaces where friendships are born and communities created; programs that encourage students to follow their ambitions and stretch their creativity in new directions; activities that foster the growth of their intellects and talents; initiatives aimed at supporting their emotional well-being; and so many more ways that demonstrate student life is central to everything we do.

I have quickly learned that Penn offers something unique and formative for everyone. I am eager to help your students discover futures filled with enormous possibilities. This is an exciting time to be a part of the Penn family, and we want you to feel connected to every part of it.

I look forward to meeting many of you and your students over the years to come. Come to visit whenever you can—Family Weekend is right around the corner on November 11–13—and I am sure that you will find countless reasons to love Penn, just like your students do.

M. Elizabeth Magill
President, University of Pennsylvania



02



06



10



05



09

More Than a Dorm

Living and learning go hand in hand at Penn's College Houses

02

Where Tradition Meets Innovation

Our four undergraduate deans share their visions for your student's education and edification

05

What's Cooking

The Food Innovation Lab is part of the recipe for success for culinary entrepreneurs

06

Interview with Shari and Joel Ronkin

Meet the new Co-Chairs of the Penn Parents Council

09

Seeing the Journey

Learn how wellness is embedded in the student experience at Penn

10

Contents

Parents is a publication of the Office of Parent Outreach and Development

More Than a



Living—and learning—in Penn’s College Houses

Think that “College House” is just a fancy name for a dorm? Think again.

While offering the traditional amenities such as furnishings, food, and security, Penn’s College Houses also offer something more: They bring the University’s intellectual life into its living spaces. Each House has a distinct character, with its own programs, traditions, and even a coat of arms. Just as important, the College Houses give students the support and community they need to thrive in and out of the classroom.

“College Houses provide room for students to experiment, grow, and learn,” explains Karu Kozuma, Executive Director, College Houses and Academic Services (CHAS).

Each of the 13 Houses is different. Architecturally, they range from 4-story brick residences to 24-story high-rises. The smallest has fewer than 200 residents, while the largest has more than 800. Five are home solely to first-year students, four house only upperclassmen, and four are open to all class years.

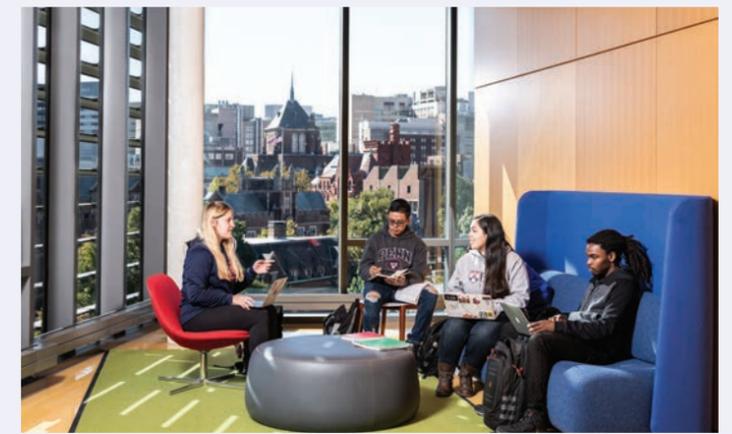
But despite their differences, all 13 College Houses share much in common.

Each House has a live-in team that includes a Faculty Director, College House Fellows, a House Director, and undergraduate and graduate Resident Advisors who work together to create vibrant living-and-learning experiences. Since faculty and staff live in the College Houses with their partners, children, and pets, they are part of the day-to-day life of the community and available to support students 24/7.



“During my first year at Penn, I lived in W.E.B. Du Bois College House, where I participated in the dorm activities that were initiated by my RAs and the Bible Study that was led by Audrey Mbeje, our College House Fellow. It was an outlet for me to de-stress, connect, and meet other students of color at Penn. Through these experiences, I was able to build a community of students who looked like me in a safe place on campus.”

—GRACE EDWARDS, C’25
Resident, W.E.B. Du Bois College House



Building a House Culture

House faculty and student leaders serve key roles, beginning with the Faculty Director, a prominent Penn professor appointed by the University Provost. Cam Grey, Associate Professor of Classical Studies at Penn Arts & Sciences, serves as Faculty Director at Lauder College House. Grey teaches students about Roman history in the classroom, but what he teaches in Lauder is just as important to their Penn experience.

“The Faculty Director fosters the intellectual and community culture of the House,” Grey says. “My most important role is to help students become the best versions of themselves.”

At Lauder, House activities are organized around the theme of “Rise at Lauder.” “We invite our students to rise up and find their place in the world, recognize their responsibility to others, and identify ways they can be good citizens and agents of change,” Grey continues.

To that end, Lauder House has offered programs such as a Global Citizenship Forum, featuring a roundtable conversation on civic issues and civil rights; an evening with a visiting storyteller for Banned Books Week; walks in Philadelphia neighborhoods; and informal gatherings with Grey and his family.



(Top row) At Lauder College House, students take part in a wide range of programs focused on citizenship and civic engagement.

(Above) Residents of Riepe College House enjoy espresso during a visit to the apartment of a House Fellow.



Students gather outside Lauder College House, one of the newest additions to Penn’s College House system.

Something for Everybody



Programs in the College Houses run the gamut, according to Deven Patel, Faculty Director for College Houses, Faculty Director at Harrison College House, and Professor of South Asia Studies at Penn Arts & Sciences.

Students can choose programs with an intellectual focus, such as dinners with visiting speakers, or social gatherings with their fellow residents. Other offerings focus on topics such as social justice, career services, and health and well-being, including a meditation course Patel offers at Harrison. In-house tutoring and academic advising are also available at some Houses.

As the House Director at Gregory College House, Gwendolyn Stevens organizes events that bring students together and foster community. “There is something every night,” she says. “Our events are fun, but with an educational spin.” Gregory residents have bonded through outings such as fall apple picking, visits to the Liberty Bell, and a 76ers game. Film screenings in the House’s Cinema Lounge are always popular.

Stevens has also helped develop programs in response to residents’ interests and the composition of the House. For example, in support of the Second-Year Experience, Gregory House offered “Sophomore Soirées” to prepare them to declare a major and navigate other issues unique to their class.



Allyn Miller, Senior Lecturer Emerita of South Asia Studies, introduces residents to a new instrument as part of the Blutt College House Music Program, where residents can sign up for music lessons.

Certain House traditions have strong historical roots. For example, Harrison has long hosted the Front Row Theatre Company, a student club that stages two productions each year, and a film series that includes a course students can take for credit.

Gregory is known for its Modern Languages Program, which gives students the opportunity to improve their language proficiency while immersing themselves in new cultural experiences. Residents can belong to one or more of the four language houses—Spanish, French, German, and Mandarin—each of which holds weekly gatherings. Alina Stolten, GEd’22, a Graduate Resident Advisor, teaches German House, a half-credit course that gives students the opportunity to learn about German culture while practicing their conversation skills.

On top of teaching this course, Alina serves as a resource for Gregory’s students. Like all Resident Advisors, she was trained for this role and knows when and how to refer students who need help to specific University services. “Students are never really alone,” she says. “Someone is always right there.”

With so many programs and activities, College Houses at Penn offer something for everybody. “These are so much more than dorms or apartments,” Patel notes. “Students can have a very active social and intellectual life right in their own College House.”

MAKING A HOME OFF CAMPUS

Does your student want to live off campus next year? Penn’s Off-Campus Services is here to help. Here’s what you (and your student) need to know:

When should I start my search?

For the best selection, Off-Campus Services recommends beginning your search in January, after the return from Winter Break, and signing a lease by the end of the spring semester in May.

Where can I find rental listings?

Off-Campus Services maintains a convenient database with local rental options. Students can set up an account to search listings by price, neighborhood, amenities, and other factors. Parents can set up a guest account to join their students in the search.

From January through August, Off-Campus Services offers virtual information sessions for students and parents with search tips and assistance in using the database. To sign up, visit: pennpri.de/off-campus.

Students and parents are also encouraged to take part in the Virtual Housing Fair, offered each spring, which provides more information about off-campus living options and the opportunity to live chat with Penn staff and landlords.

Can I use financial aid to pay rent?

Penn factors the cost of off-campus housing into financial aid packages. An important point to remember is that Penn does not pay landlords directly. Students are responsible for making rental payments and covering deposits or other fees associated with their rental.

Student Registration & Financial Services can help with any questions about financial aid grants or loans.

What else do I need to know?

On-campus housing covers nine months and includes utilities and other services. Off-campus housing covers 12 months and typically does not include such costs.



Where Tradition Meets Innovation

Meet the Leaders

Penn students are driven to change the world. All four undergraduate schools offer a vast array of immersive learning opportunities designed to inspire students to develop skills as they acquire and create knowledge that can advance our understanding of the world’s most pressing challenges. Our undergraduate deans are excited to share what makes their schools unique and what is on the horizon for this academic year—and beyond.



College of Arts and Sciences

The College offers a forward-looking liberal arts education where humanities majors develop skills in data analytics, future scientists learn about research in cutting-edge labs across campus, students passionate about issues ranging from social justice to climate change join faculty in interdisciplinary projects locally and globally, and we strive to create an inclusive learning community within our classrooms.

Paul Sniegowski

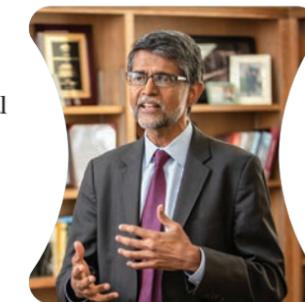
Stephen A. Levin Family Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Professor of Biology

School of Engineering and Applied Science

When we consider society’s most urgent and complex challenges, engineers bring essential expertise to the table. To prepare our students for a changing world, we’ve introduced several new initiatives, including a customized structure for academic advising, an innovative community engagement model, and a mentorship program designed to introduce first-year undergraduates to research. With these on top of a rigorous, rewarding curriculum, Penn engineers will be at the forefront of making positive change in the world.

Vijay Kumar

Professor and Nemirovsky Family Dean of Penn Engineering



Penn Nursing

We have incorporated many lessons and opportunities resulting from adaptations and innovations that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. Opportunities to engage in public health strategies to address COVID vaccination, testing, and misinformation; telehealth and remote monitoring skills; and engaging with our global partners in virtual settings are just a few examples.

Antonia M. Villarruel

Professor and Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing

The Wharton School

Wharton undergraduates have unparalleled access to the best faculty and to a global network of alumni and business leaders. In so many ways, the educational opportunities at Wharton are truly unique. Whatever career they pursue or direction they go, Wharton students are leaders—changing organizations, communities, and their world for the better.

Erika James

Dean, The Wharton School





What's Cooking

Big ideas—and bold flavors—emerge from Penn's Food Innovation Lab

Growing up working in his family's restaurant, Mark Wasuwanich, C'23, dreamed of opening his own. Like many students, Mark's days at Penn have inspired new possibilities both personally and professionally.

"While participating in the PennGreen orientation program, I became a vegan," he says. "When I discovered the Food Innovation Lab, I began testing recipes for a late-night Thai vegan restaurant. The biggest hit was the ice cream I developed, so I ran with that."

Today, Mark is perfecting his concept at the Food Innovation Lab. The Lab is located in Tangen Hall—home to Venture Lab, a hub for entrepreneurship and innovation led by the Wharton School.

"The Food Innovation Lab exists to support student entrepreneurs in the food and beverage space," explains Lauren Hooks, kitchen manager for the Food Innovation Lab. "Students can work on creating restaurant concepts or food products and host tasting events to gain consumer insight and outline the path to market."

The Lab is available to all students, undergraduate and graduate, but spots in each cohort are limited to those whose applications are accepted. Once approved, they receive a subsidized budget for ingredients and can book kitchen time. While some come with only an inkling of an idea, others may be further along in their culinary experience.

"I started baking sourdough bread from scratch in 2014," says Melissa Tovin, G'22, WG'22, founder of 470 Baking Company. "I would throw parties where I served my own crackers. I always wanted to start my own business, and through the Lab, I developed a scalable recipe."

Besides kitchen space, the Lab provides safety training and certification, equipment that can test shelf stability, and advising time with Penn alumni and industry experts. Students are also encouraged to utilize additional Venture Lab resources such as the Venture Lab Incubator Program and Digital Design Lab.

As with all Venture Lab programs, students across the University are welcome to apply.

"Most of our users don't have a restaurant background, so we introduce them to working in a professional kitchen while they pursue their other studies," says Hooks. "Mark is a math major, and we also have students from Penn



▲ Melissa Tovin testing an early batch of her Sumac Sourdough Crisps.

Engineering, Wharton, and Penn Law." Food and cooking create community, and whether students are working alongside fellow foodies or hosting tasting parties for friends and faculty, the Lab is a place where breaking bread and building bonds go hand in hand. "One of the best things is working alongside other people who are also launching enterprises," says Mark. "Everyone is really constructive and knowledgeable about food and entrepreneurship in their own ways."

Community building is not confined to campus. Over the summer, Mark handed out free samples of his ice cream at Rittenhouse Square in Center City. "I used to be in the 'Penn



My family's restaurant kitchen is nowhere near as big as this one. Working here makes me feel like I'm a professional chef.

—Mark Wasuwanich, C'23

Food Innovation Lab Highlights

The Food Innovation Lab provides a professional kitchen experience for budding entrepreneurs, including:

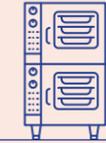
883 square feet



Two 24" flat tops



Two four-burner ranges, with cameras set up for cooking demonstrations



- Double-deck convection oven
- Combi oven



Food processor and blender



20-quart mixer



Two food warmers



Water activity meter, pH meter, and autoclave



Refrigerator and freezer space for storage



▲ Jahanzeb Shahid, WG'22, prepares his special Backyard Smash Burgers for a tasting event.

► Sanjay Kalaga, C'22, W'22, Zihan Kabir, C'22, W'22, and Selina Zou, C'21, W'21, work on their Indian-inspired sauce line, Svaad.



bubble,” he says. “Once I got involved with the Lab, I started venturing out into the Philadelphia food community and found so many great places.”

Guests at the Lab’s Speaker Series share lessons beyond the food and hospitality realm. “Last year, Josh Phelps, the former Director of Disaster Relief for World Central Kitchen, talked about mobilizing your network for good and how to connect with communities to consciously benefit the people that you’re serving without being overbearing,” says Hooks.

With the food and beverage industry worth \$281 billion in 2021—and projected to reach more than \$500 billion over the coming decade—the Food Innovation Lab provides a launchpad for students inclined to creative culinary arts. “The Food Innovation Lab, and Venture Lab as a whole, are very impressive,” says Melissa. “They are unique to Penn and give people an opportunity to think outside the box in terms of what their careers can be.”

“I love having a community where we can explore these interests,” adds Mark. “Everyone needs food, and the Food Innovation Lab gives us the spark to innovate in this space.”



WANICH ICE CREAM comes in a variety of vegan flavors, from tried-and-true favorites like chocolate and vanilla to East Asia-inspired offerings such as lychee, ube, durian, and tamarind. Mark passed out samples to parkgoers in Philadelphia’s Rittenhouse Square.



KOKADA, which touts itself as the first coconut dessert spread, earned the 2022 Good Housekeeping Healthy Snack Award. Its founders used the Lab to test new products and produce samples to grow their business.



470 BAKING COMPANY’s Melissa Tovin used her time at the Food Innovation Lab learning to scale up her homemade recipe for sourdough crisps into a viable packaged food business.

Interview with Shari and Joel Ronkin



With two daughters following distinct educational paths—one studying networked and social systems engineering and the other pursuing the philosophy, political science, and economics major— Shari and Joel Ronkin, PAR’23, PAR’25, are thrilled that Penn offers “endless academic, extracurricular, and social opportunities.” As the new Co-Chairs of the Penn Parents Council, the Ronkins reflected on their experiences and shared some advice for fellow Penn parents.

Q | What motivated you to get more involved with the University, and what have you enjoyed the most?

A | Our son attended a different university where we were members of its parent committee. We found that experience to be very rewarding and were looking to become similarly involved at Penn. Being non-alumni and from out of state, we have most enjoyed connecting with other parents, as well as with members of the Penn administration and staff.

Q | What have you learned about Penn through your students’ experience and/or your own experiences on the Parents Council?

A | We are incredibly impressed with the exciting and groundbreaking research and advancements happening in the Penn community, as well as the caliber of the faculty and speakers who are regularly on campus. Almost every day there is something meaningful and noteworthy happening at Penn. We joke that it would be so much fun to go back to college as students at Penn.

Q | What advice would you give to fellow Penn parents about helping their student(s) navigate their undergraduate experience?

A | One piece of advice that we received years ago is that your child is like a boat embarking on a long journey. The parents should not try to steer the ship, but rather be there as an anchor, allowing the boat to rock and sway through the ups and downs and be there during any storms.

Q | What advice do you have for other families who are interested in becoming more involved?

A | There are so many ways to become involved at Penn. At a minimum, we encourage everyone to view the monthly Penn Parents e-newsletters, read the *Parents* magazine, connect to Penn’s social media channels, and sign up for daily updates from the University’s Penn Today website. You can also attend webinars and other virtual events hosted by Penn, go to events during Family Weekend, or volunteer to assist with Peer Outreach.



Contact Tara Davies, Executive Director of Parent Outreach and Development, at daviest@upenn.edu or 215-746-4646 to learn more about how you can engage with the global Penn family.



Seeing the Journey

The Wellness at Penn initiative helps students navigate an experience that can be both awe-inspiring and daunting

College presents many rewarding opportunities: engaging coursework, a seemingly endless array of extracurricular opportunities, and the chance to live away from home for the first time. But those parts of college life can be challenging as well, and Penn students have access to more ways than ever before to help them stay physically and mentally healthy.

At Penn, wellness includes all parts of a student's life—including their health, finances, and academic support needs. And because of those complex interactions, the University has a vast array of resources to support students in need.



“

When we think of wellness holistically, we think of students developing the ability to manage competing demands and not feel overwhelmed.

—Dr. Benoit Dubé
Penn's Chief Wellness Officer

Appointed in 2018, Dr. Benoit Dubé was the first Chief Wellness Officer at an Ivy League university. He leads the Wellness at Penn initiative—which engages with issues of health and ensures students are ready to achieve in all aspects of university life—and holds a faculty appointment in the Department of Psychiatry at the Perelman School of Medicine.

“Managing the competing demands of college is a life skill,” he says. “It takes practice, and we always try to meet students where they are with a wide variety of supportive resources.”

There are two main pillars to the University's wellness efforts, Dubé explains. The first is caring for students throughout their academic journey with the help of expert clinicians in Student Health and Counseling, which brings together resources to support students' physical and mental health. On the topic of emotional health, counseling services have been available to students since the late 1950s, and today Penn also offers self-care assessments, mindfulness resources, and even virtual yoga.

In an effort to increase services in non-traditional settings, Penn now offers access to mental health professionals through the “Let's Talk” program. Students can work through stress, anxiety, and complex emotions through free and confidential drop-in counseling at various locations across campus. Dubé notes that many students who access “Let's Talk” don't make an appointment for additional counseling services because the assistance provided makes a substantial difference.

As students stay emotionally well, other resources across campus support students in navigating other forms of stress. For example, the Weingarten Learning Resources Center provides academic support and resources on time management and study skills, and Student Registration & Financial Services offers a range of services to enhance financial well-being, including dedicated programming and a financial wellness officer.

The second pillar of the University's efforts is building a community of care at Penn through Public Health and Wellbeing. This includes everything from immunization and health insurance to health education and meditation. The goal is for students to have the resources they need to feel safe and part of a community, so they can focus their energy on comfortably engaging in academic and social life.

With what might seem like an overwhelming number of opportunities and responsibilities, along with students' own expectations of high performance, Dubé encourages them to be thoughtful about what they do have control over—things like the number of classes they take and how many extracurricular activities they participate in. "It's important to recognize imposter syndrome," Dubé says. "But all students should know that if we offered them admission, we know they have what it takes, and we know they can contribute to our community."

Dubé encourages parents to view their student's Penn experience as a journey, not just a race to a diploma. "When students experience campus on their own terms, they have the chance to foster the independence and resilience that will serve them throughout their lives. And it's all thanks to Penn's community of care." 🌱

215-898-HELP

Students dealing with the emotional challenges of university life can reach professionals trained in mental health referrals 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 215-898-HELP. They can also call on behalf of a friend or acquaintance.

Resources for Parents



Visit the Penn Parents website for information on how to support your student:

<https://pennpri.de/resources>



Visit the Wellness at Penn website for information on recognizing stress, distress, and crisis, and strategies on how to offer support:

wellness.upenn.edu



Important Numbers:

STUDENT HEALTH & COUNSELING:

Counseling Services (24/7):
215-898-7021

Medical Services (24/7):
215-746-3535

RAP-LINE (REACH-A-PEER):

Student-led peer counseling (9 PM - 1 AM):
215-573-2727

24/7 Text Line:
215-515-7332

Parent FAQ



Q: What resources are available for my student who wants to participate in a research project?

Students can connect with the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF) to learn about different types of research projects, find a faculty advisor, and discover funding opportunities. For more information, visit curf.upenn.edu.



Q: Are there any family-specific events or programs to look forward to during the academic year?

Yes! We offer informative events and programs throughout the year to give families opportunities to learn more about resources on campus. Keep an eye out for email and social media announcements.



Q: How can I send my student a birthday cake or care package throughout the year?

Penn Student Agencies offers birthday cakes and care packages that are hand-delivered to students' doors. For care package delivery dates and more information, visit psa.vpul.upenn.edu.



Q: My student needs help with schoolwork and/or preparing for midterms and finals. What resources are available to help?

For help with study strategies, academic reading and writing, and time management skills, students can visit the Weingarten Center. Students can access the Weingarten Center Portal to schedule an appointment and register for workshops: wlrc.vpul.upenn.edu.

In Your Hands

Year after year, Penn opens doors to transformative experiences for all students. From grant-based student aid and residential living enhancements to advancements in academic programs and campus technology, your gift to The Penn Fund can have a profound and immediate impact on the entire Quaker community—including your student. And with easy online giving options, the opportunity to support undergraduate life and learning is literally in your hands.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!
<https://pennpri.de/parent-gift>



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Philadelphia, PA
Permit No. 2563



Office of Parent Outreach
and Development
2929 Walnut Street
Suite 300
Philadelphia, PA 19104-5099
pennparents.upenn.edu



We are thrilled to invite Penn families back to campus for Family Weekend!

We have an array of events and activities to celebrate everything that makes Penn and our community special. Register today and join us—and your students—on campus from November 11 to 13, 2022.

Sign up at
[**pennpri.de/family-weekend**](http://pennpri.de/family-weekend)

