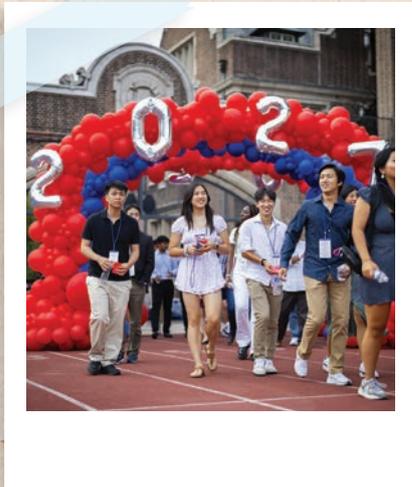
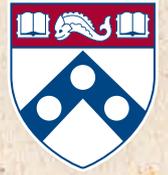


University of Pennsylvania • Spring 2024



Parents



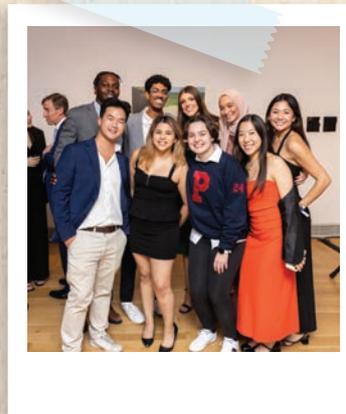
Happy Hey Day! ↓

CLASS OF 2024 RULES

U-NIGHT



FIRST TOAST ↘



QUAKER FEST



Cultivating Community

Cheers to the Class of 2024 • A Sustainable Campus • Young Quakers
Meet Sigal Ben-Porath • Conway Scholars • Achieving Academic Success
Wharton's Coalition for Equity and Opportunity • Engineering Research

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A message from the Interim President

Since stepping into the role of Interim President in December, I have taken every opportunity to spend time with Penn students, faculty, staff, and alumni. My conversations have reaffirmed what I have always known: Penn is an extraordinary place. I am amazed by the personal stories and aspirations of our students, and by the brilliant and devoted faculty and staff who support them. I have also been a Penn parent myself, which deepened my appreciation for the opportunities and resources that allow our students to pursue their passions, serve their communities, and harness their imaginations.

In this issue of *Penn Parents Magazine*, you will find stories about life on campus and the programs and people that empower Penn students to seek out new challenges and expand their horizons. Many of those opportunities are supported by our global community of alumni, parents, and friends. I am deeply grateful for all the ways you make Penn stronger.

I hope you enjoy this glimpse into the Penn undergraduate experience.

Sincerely,



J. Larry Jameson, MD, PhD
Interim President



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RAISE A GLASS TO THE CLASS OF 2024

Penn's traditions bring students—and classes—together in shared experiences that link Quakers across the generations.

Michael Lentskevich, W'24, came to Penn from Belarus via Chicago. Like most members of his class, he arrived on campus in the second semester of his first year, during the height of the pandemic, when everything—from classes to club activities—took place on Zoom.

The first time his class came together as a community was for one of Penn's newest traditions, U-Night, where sophomores celebrate the midway point in their Penn careers at the end of their second year.

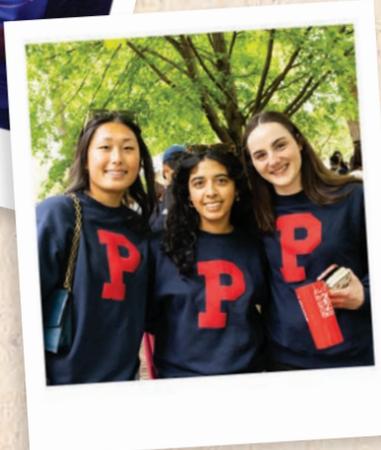
"The Class of 2024 has a different relationship to Penn than the other classes," Michael explains. "The pandemic made us aware of the importance of residential life, clubs, and the full college experience. We learned that earning a degree, important as that is, is only part of the experience. This gave our class a strong sense of community and purpose, and a commitment to giving back."



TO THE CLASS OF 2024

"The Class of 2024 has a different relationship to Penn than the other classes."

—Michael Lentskevich, W'24



U-NIGHT

"Penn has given me a lot. My quality of life has improved substantially since I came here. I hope to give back in return."

—Huseyin Cakir, Nu'24

Happy Hey Day!

"Penn has given me a lot. My quality of life has improved substantially since I came here. I hope to give back in return."

Michael is already giving back to his soon-to-be alma mater through his work on the Seniors for The Penn Fund (S4TPF) Committee, which raises funds for the class gift and educates classmates on the importance of staying engaged after graduation.

Michael helped organize First Toast, one of the signature events of S4TPF, where students raise a glass to their class. More than 1,000 seniors turned out for this year's donor-appreciation event, on February 1 at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. First Toast also marked the kick-off of Feb Club, a series of events just for seniors, to bring them together as a class in their final semester.

Another member of S4TPF is Huseyin Cakir, Nu'24, who reaches out to his fellow Nursing students as the Nursing Chair on the committee.

For Huseyin, a first-generation, modest-income student who came to Penn thanks to scholarship support, the work of S4TPF is deeply personal. His family immigrated to the United States from Turkey when he was four. He attended a vocational high school and worked as a personal trainer before coming to Penn Nursing. He was the first student from his high school to be admitted to an Ivy League university in over 150 years.

"Penn has given me a lot. My quality of life has improved substantially since I came here. I hope to give back in return," Huseyin explains.

He takes pride in the fact that his class typically has a great turnout for Penn traditions and other events. "We missed out on things at the beginning, so we are eager to take part in events now."

FIRST TOAST



Other seniors are participating in Penn Traditions, which strengthens the Penn community by building bridges between students and alumni.

Joyce Davis, C'24, a neuroscience major from Philadelphia, serves on the board of the Class Ambassadors program, part of Penn Traditions. Student members work with milestone reunion classes to help them plan their Alumni Weekend celebrations. "The Class Ambassadors program is a great volunteer opportunity for students interested in meeting alumni who share their interests or work in their fields," Joyce explains.

Like Michael and Huseyin, Joyce is eagerly anticipating the many great spring traditions at Penn, including Spring Fling, Final Toast, Alumni Weekend, and, of course, Commencement. All three look forward to staying involved with Penn once they graduate and join the alumni community.

Connections with alumni strengthened his own college experience, Michael notes. "It's only right to give back to the next generation."



watch out world, here we come

SUSTAINABILITY IN SIGHT

Capital projects on campus are a growing—and in some cases, living—classroom for approaches to sustainable design.

In 1896, the Penn Treaty Elm was planted on what is now College Green. Today, it continues to grow—along with a campus that’s also been growing in response to the environment. Shaped by awareness of climate change, shifting student needs, and the evolution of innovative facilities, changes that can appear discrete to the average pedestrian are all part of a plan. A masterplan, to be precise.

Officially known as Penn Connects, the University’s masterplan serves as the blueprint that guides the evolution of Penn’s campus. It takes a village to make a campus sustainable; in 2009, Penn’s leadership committed to achieving a 100 percent carbon-neutral campus by 2042.

Working together, Executive Director of Design and Construction Chris Kern, University Architect Mark Kocent, and University Landscape Architect Robert Lundgren have spent years tending to the growth of the built environment; today, every new construction and major renovation project targets a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver rating or higher, encouraging sustainable design and innovation in all building projects.

From undergraduate college houses to energy laboratories and athletics facilities, here are some of the projects Kern, Kocent, and Lundgren recommend keeping an eye out for, along with at least one familiar façade to see in a new light:

-  Bird-safe glass
-  Permeable pavement
-  Rain gardens
-  Reuse
-  Energy efficiency
-  Green roofs

VAGELOS LABORATORY FOR ENERGY SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (VLEST)



Vagelos Institute for Energy Science and Technology and Vagelos Integrated Program in Energy Research
Coming Winter 2025

“You can’t see it, but tubes of hot water run through the concrete floor slabs. That conduction provides a more efficient heat transfer and keeps the heat where occupants are. Likewise, there is chilled beam technology in the ceilings that efficiently cools the building.” —CK

“VLEST is going to be energy-intensive by nature of its program. But by design, it’s also going to be incredibly energy-efficient.” —MK

“The façade has over 300 sun-shading ‘sails’ made of EFTE, a lightweight and recyclable material. The upper third of each sail reflects daylight into the building, reducing electricity use, while the lower two-thirds block 40 percent of undesirable solar heat gain.” —MK

AMY GUTMANN HALL



Penn Engineering, primarily data science
Coming Fall 2024

“A good portion of this structure is mass timber made from Canadian spruce. Timber sequesters carbon as it grows—unlike steel and concrete, whose production comes with high carbon emissions.” —Mark Kocent

“Exterior fins and ceramic-embedded glass significantly mitigate solar heat gain. The frit glass creates an anthropomorphic pattern on the building, reduces roughly 30 percent of the solar gain, and acts to minimize bird strikes.” —Chris Kern

LAUDER COLLEGE HOUSE



Undergraduate college house
Built in 2016

“Green roofs are one of this building’s most distinctive stormwater design features. Sedum, a type of groundcover, is planted across 10 separate roofs and helps manage runoff.” —Robert Lundgren

“The interior courtyard also has vegetative and permeable paving elements that act more like a sponge, slowly returning rainwater to the ground and the nearby Schuylkill River.” —CK

The motto of Lauder College House is *Semper ad meliora*, “Always toward better things.”

STOUFFER COLLEGE HOUSE



Undergraduate college house
Built in 1972, renovated in 2023

“Renovating is usually the most sustainable construction option, simply because you’re not expending the energy and resources to demolish and rebuild.” —CK

“Systems upgrades can allow older buildings to be more sustainable—here, that included more insulation, high-performance windows, and chilled water distribution system upgrades. The timber infill flooring parallels, on a small scale, the carbon-capture approach at Amy Gutmann Hall.” —MK

PENN PARK



Active and passive recreation
Opened 2021

“There’s a 300,000-gallon stormwater retention basin under the park that’s filled with gravel—sort of like a big gravel bathtub. It allows water to be captured for irrigation within the 24-acre park and to filter slowly into the earth rather than run off the surface.” —RL

“We also use a smaller, 30,000-gallon subterranean retention system in Shoemaker Green for similar purposes.” —CK



On weekday afternoons, students from three local University-Assisted Community Schools join a team of “Big Quakers” for after-school coaching and mentorship. “The program does so much more than teach young kids about sports,” says Ira Harkavy, the Barbara and Edward Netter Director of the Netter Center. “When they are paired with Penn’s student-athletes, Young Quakers also get mentorship, academic advice, and life skills.”

Penn student-athletes are also finding the relationships to be mutually beneficial. “What I love about being a Big Quaker is seeing the kids grow in their love of sports and in their comfort level around me,” says Sahil Dodda, C’26, a member of the men’s track and field team. “I’m getting so much joy and fulfillment out of being a Big Quaker,” adds Eden Wright, C’26, a member of the women’s lacrosse team.

YQCA has been powered by philanthropy since it began in 2012, the result of a partnership between the Netter Center and Penn Athletics. “The challenge in continuing this work is finding people who are prepared to financially support this dream we have of creating opportunities for urban youth through mentorship, tutoring, and coaching with our student-athletes,” says Alanna Shanahan, C’96, T. Gibbs Kane, Jr. W’69 Director of Athletics and Recreation.

“Ensuring we have the resources to continue YQCA will create a legacy that the entire Penn community can be proud of.”

*Alanna Shanahan, C’96, T. Gibbs Kane, Jr. W’69
Director of Athletics and Recreation*

A Game Plan for Success

Young Quakers Community Athletics (YQCA) is a joint effort between Penn Athletics and the Netter Center for Community Partnerships that connects Penn student-athletes with West Philadelphia K-8 students for valuable lessons—on and off the field.



“The kids have taught me how to lead with empathy and patience.”

Eden Wright, C’26



Thousands of Penn students—athletes and non-athletes alike—participate in Netter Center programming. Students can receive academic credit by enrolling in Academically Based Community Service courses or engaging through programs like YQCA, which is helping to fulfill the Netter Center’s core mission of creating mutually beneficial partnerships between Penn and West Philadelphia. “Big Quakers learn how to lead and how to take on more responsibility,” says Harkavy. “They have incredibly busy schedules, but this partnership is often their most enjoyable time of the week.”

Over **250** Penn students and nearly **500** K-8 students participated in YQCA programming between 2020 and 2023



To support the Young Quakers program, email Sara Kelly, Director of Young Quakers Community Athletics, at skelly@sas.upenn.edu or call 215-898-5351.

Sigal Ben-Porath



Meet
the
Leaders

This fall, **SIGAL BEN-PORATH** was named the new faculty director of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Paideia Program. Ben-Porath is a globally renowned scholar of the theory and practice of democracy, with an emphasis on the role of schools and colleges as democratic institutions and hubs for civil discourse. She is the MRMJJ Presidential Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education, and she holds secondary appointments in the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Political Science in Penn Arts & Sciences. As faculty director of the SNF Paideia Program, she will continue the program's work of teaching and encouraging civic dialogue across ideological, cultural, and demographic divides.

Q | What drew you to this role?

A | My work as a scholar has been focused on the role that schools and universities play in preparing people to be engaged participants in democratic and civic life. I was drawn to the SNF Paideia Program because of its mission of promoting civic dialogue across difference, while at the same time facilitating personal and community wellness through dialogue.

Q | Why is the SNF Paideia Program important for students and for the University?

A | The core of the program is our SNF Paideia Fellows—students from all four of Penn's undergraduate schools who join us sophomore year. They spend the next three years as a cohort, taking classes specifically designed for them as fellows, along with SNF Paideia designated courses open to all Penn students. The fellows, in turn, cultivate dialogue and bridge differences in their courses, clubs, and dorms—they take their new skills beyond the program and into their various campus roles and throughout their careers.

Q | What do you hope students take away from their experience?

A | One of the main things our students learn is how to engage in conversations that aren't focused on winning an argument or persuading the other person to abandon their perspective. Instead, they acknowledge differences to find common ground, while continuing to hold their own beliefs and perspectives. Those aren't just skills for the classroom—they can be practiced anywhere.

Q | What is next for the program?

A | In response to the recent months of tension on campus, the program is exploring several new initiatives. One is developing a set of resources for instructors on how to engage in productive dialogue in classes. We also want to create more opportunities for graduate students and instructors to strengthen their skills in managing classroom discourse and inviting student voices into the classroom. 🌱



To learn more about the SNF Paideia Program, visit snfpaideia.upenn.edu



INSPIRED to Serve

An innovative program at Penn Nursing allows students with an undergraduate degree in another field to earn a Nursing degree on an accelerated timeline.

Christian Knox, Nu'24, has always had a passion for science and health care. After earning her bachelor's degree in health sciences from Spelman College in 2022, she decided to turn her passion into action by becoming a nurse.

Christian's interest in patient care dates to high school, when she had the opportunity to shadow a Black female physician. The experience was a revelation for Christian, who had never crossed paths with a Black primary care provider—or imagined that this was something she could be. She was also struck by the doctor's easy, natural connection to her patients, who were mostly people of color. In a word, Christian was inspired to serve.

Soon after her acceptance, Christian learned that she had been named a Conway Scholar. The Conway Scholarships were established through a \$1 million grant from the Bedford Falls Foundation – DAF, a donor-advised fund established by William (Bill) Conway, co-founder and co-chairman of The Carlyle Group, and his late wife Joanne. The Conways' goal was to help address the nation's serious nursing shortage by supporting nursing education and training at Penn and reducing students' financial burden.



“Being a Conway Scholar allows me to focus more on what is most important, which is learning how to provide the best patient care.”

—Christian Knox, Nu'24



When she returned home after her graduation, Christian completed a summer internship at Penn Medicine.

The experience was so positive that she chose to apply to Penn Nursing. Christian was admitted into the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, a fast-paced, 15-month program that allows students with an undergraduate degree in another field to pursue a nursing degree and attain their RN license.

Christian began her studies at Penn Nursing last summer and expects to earn her BSN degree in December 2024. She has also submatriculated into one of Penn Nursing's nurse practitioner programs, where she will pursue a master's degree with a specialization in maternal health.

After completing her studies, Christian looks forward to working in labor/delivery at a hospital that serves marginalized communities. Like the physician she shadowed years ago, she hopes to make an impact as a health care provider serving her community. 🌱



Becoming the Best Learner

At the Weingarten Center, students are learning that asking for—and receiving—help can make a positive difference in their scholarly lives.

The Weingarten Center is Penn's home for academic support, putting all available services in front of students and guiding them through each phase of their Penn experience. Every day—and especially in preparation for finals—the Weingarten team is ready to help with learning consultations, tutoring workshops, assistive technology, and a case manager for integrated care. For students with disabilities, there's also a modern, quiet space for testing accommodations and learning.

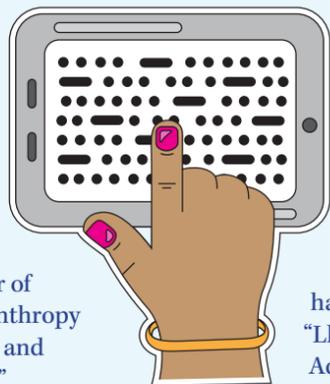
“Our support services contribute to shaping the success of students at all levels,” says Jane Holahan, Executive Director of the Weingarten Center. “What’s more, philanthropy underpins everything we offer, from staffing and technology to our named scholarship funds.”

Audrey Ajakaye, C’26, is a student entrepreneur who found valuable support at the Weingarten Center. “Initially, I was apprehensive about whether the Center staff

could understand my unique challenges,” she says. “But they helped me identify tools and strategies that were instrumental in helping me thrive at Penn.”

Students from all four undergraduate schools can sign up for tutoring sessions for specific classes. Workshops are also offered on topics like preparing for exams, study strategies, reading effectively, and succeeding with STEM.

The Weingarten Center, which opened in 2005, has a history of supporting Penn students—whether they want extra help around exams or consistent support throughout the academic year. “Going into the Weingarten Center was like having another champion on campus,” says Allen “Lloyd” Thomas, C’06, W’06, a Weingarten Center Advisory Board Member who has remained involved at the Center beyond graduation. “I was greeted by name, received personalized support, and was given the confidence to succeed.”




“The Center staff helped me identify time management strategies and tools that were instrumental in helping me thrive at Penn.”
—Audrey Ajakaye, C’26

To learn more, visit: pennpri.de/weingarten



UNLOCKING UNTAPPED POTENTIAL



Ron and Ayana Machen, pictured with their son, Kadari Machen, W’26

Ayana Machen, WG’99, says it’s important to her that there’s a Wharton initiative examining barriers related to race, gender, and socioeconomic factors in education and business.

She says it’s vital in ensuring that companies “have diverse viewpoints and produce better outcomes.”

That’s why she and her husband, Ron Machen, made a gift to Wharton’s Coalition for Equity and Opportunity (CEO), which provides companies with data-driven guidance on redefining leadership standards in a way that prioritizes inclusion and access.

Ron agrees, noting the unused talent and untapped potential resulting from a lack of diversity in spaces where decision-making happens.

“There’s a tremendous downside to that, not only from a social justice standpoint, but from an economic standpoint as well,” Ron says. “Diverse organizations perform better financially.”

The Machens decided to support CEO because the initiative addresses the “business case for diversity” in a research-driven way.

CEO leverages Wharton’s corporate relationships and business insights by offering evidence-based solutions to disproportionate opportunities and wealth gaps. Led by Kenneth Shropshire, senior advisor to Dean Erika James and David W. Hauck Professor Emeritus, the coalition equips current and future leaders with critical skills and encourages them to drive change in their industries.

In addition to its research database and downloadable toolkits, CEO hosts events like roundtable discussions about health care disparities and conversations about the implications of the recent Supreme Court ruling on higher education admissions.

Besides believing in the mission of CEO, giving back to Wharton is personal to the Machen family for a few reasons.

For Ayana, Wharton connected her with inspiring classmates from around the globe and opened the doors to career opportunities she “didn’t even know existed.” In addition, the School offered financial aid that made her graduate education possible.

“THE HOWARD MITCHELL FELLOWSHIP AND OTHER FINANCIAL AID I RECEIVED FROM WHARTON ALLOWED ME TO FOCUS ON LEARNING, INSTEAD OF HOW I WAS GOING TO PAY MY BILLS.”

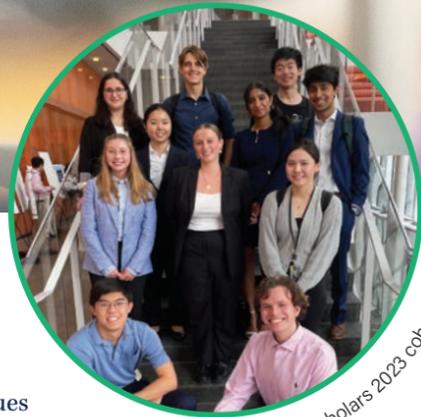
—AYANA MACHEN, WG’99

Ayana said she feels fortunate to be in a position where she can give her “time, talent, and treasure” to the school that was so foundational in her life.

For Ron, Wharton has had an incredible impact on two of the people he cares about the most: Ayana and their son, Kadari Machen, W’26.

A version of this story, written by Jayna Magras, previously appeared in the Wharton Impact newsletter.

BEYOND THE RESEARCH AT PENN ENGINEERING



▲ Rachleff Scholars 2023 cohort

Students connect to research and community through the Rachleff Scholars Program.

Well into its second decade and counting 200 veteran members, the program continues to offer students summer research experience, structured honors coursework, and a community of scholarly peers.

That community of peers includes Hana Matsuda, ENG'25, who credits the program with her budding interest in science communication. For Hana, the ability to dive deeply into research, then present it through symposiums and seminars, has shifted her desire from doing benchwork to communicating science's results and potential impacts. "It's challenging, and I've realized it's one of my favorite parts of the process," she notes.

Beyond their research pursuits, the relationships that both Chad and Hana have formed with their peers have made a lasting impression. While their interests have grown and changed, as Chad puts it, "The Rachleff Program was the first time I met 20 people who were all in engineering and wanted to do research. Some of my closest friends have come from that cohort, so I'm really grateful." 🙌



Connect with
Penn Engineering
on LinkedIn

To those outside academic research, the investigative process can seem opaque. So, for undergraduate students deciding the direction of their studies, understanding what goes on behind the closed doors of a research lab can be an eye-opening—and life-changing—experience.

When Chaitanya (Chad) Karimanasseri, ENG'24, applied to Penn, he had no idea that he would be pursuing bioengineering. "Actually, I applied and was accepted into the School of Arts and Sciences," he admits with a smile. Not that he had any doubts about his future plans. "I've always wanted to be a physician-scientist," he clarifies, "but I realized that I really enjoy applied sciences."

With characteristic decisiveness, Chad redirected his studies to bioengineering and transferred to Penn Engineering. Simultaneously, he sought out the Rachleff Scholars Program, established in 2007 through a gift from Andy Rachleff, W'80, PAR'14, and Debbie Rachleff, PAR'14.

Parent FAQ



Q: My student is interested in studying abroad. How can they learn about available opportunities?

Penn Abroad is here to guide your student through the study abroad process, help them define their goals, and assist them in navigating the many options that are available. Students should get started by signing up for a PA101 session and attending drop-in advising. Learn more at global.upenn.edu/pennabroad.



Q: My student still does not have a summer internship. Is it too late to find one?

Employers continue to post internships on Penn Career Services' Handshake platform, so students should check there regularly for opportunities, in addition to sites such as LinkedIn and Indeed. Students might also consider other ways to make productive use of their summer such as learning a new skill through platforms like Coursera or LinkedIn Learning (free for Penn students) or volunteering with an organization of interest to them.



Q: Is the Weingarten Center open over the summer? Does the Center offer virtual resources for students?

The Weingarten Center is open during the summer and welcomes inquiries from students and parents. Incoming students with disabilities are strongly encouraged to begin the process of registering with Disability Services as soon as possible. It takes time to review medical documentation and engage in the interactive process with a disability advisor. Staff members offer both virtual and in-person meetings throughout the summer.



Q: My student lives off campus. How can they sublet their apartment for the summer?

Your student's own network is a good place to start! They may have friends or classmates staying in Philadelphia for the summer. More subleasing tips can be found at cms.business-services.upenn.edu/offcampusservices.

JOIN THE CHALLENGE ENGAGE, EMPOWER, ENRICH

In a time defined by profound change, your support helps Penn Parents, through The Penn Fund, draw on its distinctive strengths and boundless creativity to advance knowledge, improve lives, and tackle the toughest issues of our time. This fiscal year end, a new giving challenge will amplify the impact of your donation of any size.

Here's how it works: If **2,200 donors** make an annual gift of any size **before June 30, 2024**, an additional **\$300,000** will be provided to enhance our ability to support teaching, learning, and pathbreaking research.

Please join us in building a stronger future—together.



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pennparents.upenn.edu/giving



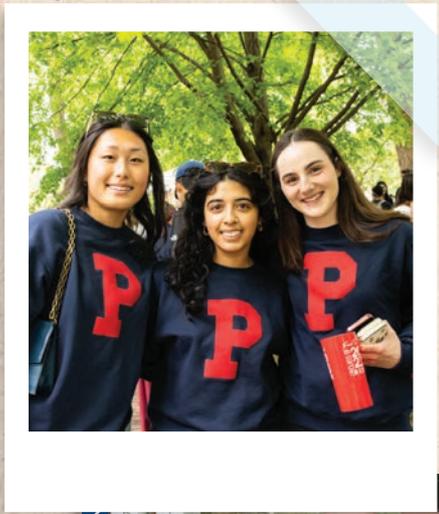
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*watch out world,
here we come*

CLASS TREE



*until
next
year...*

