STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS
CLASS OF 2022
Congratulations, seniors! It is with tremendous Red and Blue pride that I write to you from my home in Rye, New York, to applaud your success in earning a degree from the University of Pennsylvania. It has been 48 years since my own graduation, and much more recently that I watched two of my children complete their time at Penn. You have already accomplished so much – and many of you are honored here as Student Leadership Award recipients – Hurrah! Hurrah!

As individuals, you have brought something uniquely “you” to Penn. But as a group, you share qualities like compassion, conviction, and confidence. I’m excited for you all over again, thinking about the endless possibilities that lay ahead. Penn launched me on an exciting journey from Economics major to Fortune 500 companies and eventually to adoption advocacy. I have no doubt that your own journey will be equally rewarding!

As you begin your journey as a member of the Penn Alumni community, know there is always a place for you and all members of the Class of 2022 to connect and stay involved. From attending your 1st Reunion, a Fall Kickoff in your new city or interviewing prospective students through the Penn Alumni Interview Program, your lifelong relationship with Penn will continue and evolve!

I am grateful in this moment to be part of a community that is as vibrant and hopeful as each of you. Thank you for all you have already contributed to Penn, by bringing us the best version of yourself.

Let us celebrate your achievements, small and large. Good luck on the next chapter.

Best wishes,
Ann Reese, CW’74
Penn Alumni would like to congratulate all award recipients from the Class of 2022. The Student Leadership Award Book highlights a selection of the Class of 2022’s award recipients. The awardee profiles feature a selection of quotes, personal narratives, or a spotlight on the awardee’s Penn accomplishments.
2022 IVY DAY STONE
DESIGNED BY J. RACHEL PIERCE C’22
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- Iuliia Bryzgalova, Vanessa Dib, Mary Shin, and Lia Thomas
This award is named for Penn’s first Dean of Women, educational pioneer Althea K. Hottel. Represented by the Shield, this award honors intellectual competence, commitment to ideals, and loyalty to the University. When reviewing the accomplishments of this year’s honoree, it becomes immediately clear why Amy was selected as the 2022 Hottel Shield recipient. A leader amongst her engineering peers, Amy served as President of the Theta Tau Professional Engineering Fraternity, Head of Marketing for the Computer Science Society, and student leader in the Advancing Women in Engineering pre-orientation program. On the editorial board for UnEarthed Magazine, Amy also freelanced as a photographer for both Penn Student Agencies and the Daily Pennsylvanian. A leader in the classroom as well, she has been a teaching assistant for courses on artificial intelligence and algorithm coding.
The Asian Alumni Network Student Leadership Award is presented to a student who has demonstrated strong, positive leadership qualities, academic excellence, a commitment to advancing diversity at Penn either via community service or student activities, and exemplifies a commitment to achieving excellence at Penn with and through the Asian community and is presented to Sam Pancoe. Their leadership has made a positive impact on our campus across multiple student groups and cultural centers, and our Penn staff look forward to seeing the great things they accomplish as they pursue graduate studies and a future career in medicine.
Gracyn Banks, winner of this year’s Association of Alumnae Fathers’ Trophy, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience. As a student, she was a member of Penn’s Varsity Field Hockey Team for four years and captain for two years. She earned the honors of Second Team All-Ivy in 2019, two-time defensive player of the week, First Team All-Ivy and First Team All-Region in 2021. Gracyn also obtained the honors of Academic All-Ivy and Philly SIDA Academic All Area Field Hockey Team in 2021.

She was a four-year member of the Penn Athletics Wharton Leadership Academy. Gracyn also represented the USA Field Hockey Under 21 Team at the Junior Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile as well as the Junior World Cup in South Africa.
KIRSTEN CALLOWAY
Association of Alumnae Continuing Education Award

Kirsten’s passion for Positive Psychology awakened during her BAAS journey. As a Black-White biracial adoptee, she felt called to study resilience in response to adversity to develop culturally informed character strengths-based interventions to support mixed-race individuals, interracial families, interracial adoptees, and the community. This important work promotes resiliencies from strengths-based perspectives to improve self-esteem and social connectedness.

As an alumna, Kirsten endeavors to assist APOP and SDEI course instructors in future classes. It will be rewarding and fulfilling for her to help students succeed in learning techniques to increase well-being, cultivate strengths, and discover how to build resilience to overcome adversity. Moreover, Kirsten’s commitment to increasing empathy and awareness of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging issues fuels her mission to equip others with the tools to create meaningful social change.
Looking back at these past four years that have quickly flown by, Lydia immersed herself in the joys of a vibrant campus, meeting brilliant minds, discovering, and growing in interests both academic and personal – as well as challenges, such as the unexpected onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was during this time that Lydia was so grateful to have found Penn Traditions and the Penn Alumni community. It’s rare to find a group of people so uplifting and encouraging, and Lydia felt welcomed from day one. As co-chair of the Student Philanthropy Council, Lydia engaged with so many amazing individuals in different areas of study and stages of life connected through their shared enthusiasm for Penn. She feels fortunate that she was able to make it back to campus in her senior year, and she finally got to meet everyone she had become friends with via Zoom, in-person. Looking forward as an alumna, Lydia hopes to continue learning from those around her in this close-knit community and pay it forward to those who may come after her. She is very thankful for her experience at Penn and is so excited to see where life takes her after graduation (and she’s ready to volunteer as an alumni interviewer wherever that may be!).
Luz Elena Pérez Méndez, was a force on campus and in the various capacities she has served all her communities always leading with love and resolve. In all that she has done for Latinx students, it is clear that her priority is creating a legacy for those who will come after, not having to encounter the same obstacles that she and her classmates have encountered while students here. As a student who has demonstrated strong, positive leadership qualities, academic excellence, a commitment to advancing diversity at Penn either via community service or student activities, and exemplifies a commitment to achieving excellence at Penn in our Latinx communities, The Nursing School’s very own Luz is presented with the Association of Latino Alumni Student Leadership Award.
The Association of Native Alumni Student Leadership Award recipient, Brooke Parmalee, presented to a student who has demonstrated strong, positive leadership qualities, academic excellence, a commitment to advancing diversity at Penn either via community service or student activities, and exemplifies a commitment to achieving excellence at Penn in our Native and indigenous communities. Brooke, of the Schaghticoke Tribe of Connecticut, inspires students with her scholarship and presence. She took the opportunity to share her experience as a law student to expand the possibilities for undergraduate students. Her outreach is an example of the strong effect of Native students lifting each other up through scholarship and achievement across cultures.
In recognition of his outstanding leadership and efforts in addressing and raising awareness about issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion both across campus and in our community, The Black Alumni Society Student Leadership Award is presented to Hakiem Ellison. Known as a detail-oriented thinker and lifelong learner who is interested in topics of educational opportunity and public policy and how they positively impact communities, his work with students and professionals to promote diversity has shaped a path of civic engagement that helps others be the best they can be on Penn’s campus and in the Philadelphia community.
The Bowl Award grew out of a mid and late 19th-century class rivalry at Penn, best known as the “Bowl Fights.” From that skirmish came an honor for a student who most unites the senior class. An active member of the Undergraduate Assembly (UA), Nikhil’s roles included Treasurer, Communications Director, and Wharton Representative. As a member of the Student Activities Council Executive Board, he leveraged their reserve funds during the pandemic to be repurposed and established the Social Life & Inclusion Fund. At the same time, Nikhil was developing initiatives to increase equity and access on campus. A member of Penn Dhamaka Dance Troupe, Nikhil also actively engaged in the Penn Wharton China Summit, Penn Microfinance and as a Robert A. Fox Leadership Fellow.
Cane Award

The Cane Award recognizes a senior who has made an impactful contribution to the lives of their fellow classmates. Many know Miles from his involvement in CityStep Penn. Involved since his freshman year, he has served as Events Coordinator, Head Teacher, and Executive Director and contributes the experience to nurturing his holistic edification. Deeply involved with the Bioethics Journal, most recently as Managing Editor, Miles believes in the power of interdisciplinary knowledge and touts the experience as his reason for pursuing a career as a bioethicist physician. This RealArts@ Penn prize recipient is a triple senior society inductee as a member of Gryphon Senior Honor Society, Carriage Senior Honor Society, and culminating his undergraduate career as Chief of the Sphinx Senior Honor Society.
Presented annually since 1931, the Class of 1915 Award is given to the male student-athlete who best exemplifies the spirit and tradition of University of Pennsylvania Athletics, this year’s recipient is Sam Handley, a lacrosse midfielder. Handley was voted the Ivy League Player of the Year and, for the second time in his career, unanimous first-team All-Ivy by the Ancient Eight coaches. Handley becomes just the fourth Penn player named Ivy League Player of the Year in men’s lacrosse.

One of this year’s captains, Handley leads Penn overall with 54 points, scoring 27 goals and dishing out a team-high 27 assists. He was tops among Ivy League players in assists per game (3.00) and points per game (5.83) in conference play and had at least three points in all but one regular-season game this season. Handley also is Penn’s Academic All-Ivy recipient in men’s lacrosse this season.
The Goddard Loving Cup Award is presented to a senior for their exemplary service and scholastic achievement. Sukhmani, a leader amongst the Asian-American Pacific Islander community, she was an engaged member of the interfaith community, serving as president of the Penn Sikh Organization. Passionate about health and science, she has been a health policy intern for Penn Medicine’s Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics and editor of the Penn Science Undergraduate Research Journal. **As the 136th photo editor of The Daily Pennsylvanian, Suhkmani prioritized sharing the stories of those who were often misrepresented or voiceless.** Her love of photography spanned to other roles, as director of photography for Penn Lens and as a member of the National Press Photography Association.
Established in honor of President Gaylord P. Harnwell, this award recognizes a graduating senior for their selfless service to the University. Selfless service are truly words to describe this year’s honoree of the Harnwell Flag Award. Janice’s involvement within student government has included many activities. She served as Vice President and Speaker of the Undergraduate Assembly, as well as serving on the Executive Board of the Student Activities Council(SAC). Her involvement with SAC focused on improving club recruitment and creating a more equitable and inclusive process for students. However, she notes co-founding Black Huntsman as the pinnacle moment in her Penn experience which allowed her to overcome emotional challenges while paving a path forward for her community.
The James Brister Society Graduate Student Leadership Award recipient Chenelle Boatswain is a scholar who has demonstrated strong, positive leadership qualities, academic excellence, a commitment to advancing diversity at Penn either via community service or student activities, and exemplifies a commitment to achieving excellence at Penn through their graduate studies. Chenelle’s deep commitment to educational equity and impactful student support is reflected in her scholarship and her work. Her impact at Penn has been edifying and empowering as she assists multiple undergraduate and graduate student communities progressing toward their academic and professional goals. She is a student advocate and a Penn community treasure.
The James Brister Society Student Leadership Award is presented to a student who has demonstrated strong, positive leadership qualities, academic excellence, a commitment to advancing diversity at Penn either via community service or student activities, and exemplifies a commitment to achieving excellence at Penn. The 2022 recipient is urban studies major and journalism minor, Hadriana Lowenkron, the first Black woman editor of The Daily Pennsylvanian. Her tenure, one of the most challenging times in recent history, included covering Black Lives Matter follow-up and the post-election cycle, all in the midst of COVID. She challenged The DP to make more significant strides for equity, and create platforms for deeper cultural exchange, to the benefit of the paper’s content.
I believe that Simona is a promising young engineer and innovator and will rank her among the top students I have met at the University of Pennsylvania. She is well-trained, hardworking, and a promising technology leader…… During her time at Penn, her primary commitment and leadership endeavor was MUSE, one of the most important clubs on campus. Simona joined MUSE in the Fall of 2018. From that point, she never took a break and worked as a consultant, Project Leader and then became co-President of the Generalist branch. After watching three different cohorts of Presidents, she came into the role with a vision and a passion……. One of the most important ways Simona contributed to the Penn community is the community and relationships she helped build.

Gad Allon
Jeffrey A. Keswin Professor
Professor of Operations, Information and Decisions, Director of the Jerome Fisher Program in Management & Technology
The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Alumni Association Student Leadership Award is awarded to Blake Rubenstein, whose service, dedication, and impact in Penn’s LGBTQ+ community are truly remarkable. His respectful, quiet demeanor belied his tenacity and political savvy and allowed him galvanize audiences many others could not. Instead of basking in his achievements, he ensured other underserved coalitions could benefit from his work. A scholar, advocate, and volunteer, Rubenstein gave of himself in multiple communities, expanding the reach, influence, and presence of the LGBTQ+ community at Penn.
Sarthak Jain
Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit

Two oceans separated Sarthak’s childhood in Jaipur, India from his college experience in Philadelphia. However, the distance was no match for his affection for people in both places—his family and friends in India and his chosen Penn family.

Sarthak’s commitments extended far beyond academics. He joined Penn Traditions, helping to plan, organize, and recruit volunteers for Homecoming and Alumni Weekend. He served as the Class Ambassador Co-Chair for two years, where he put his scholarly skills to practical use during the pandemic, developing virtual programming that fostered student-alumni connections.

As a first-generation, lower-income (FGLI) international student, he transformed from listener to leader in no time. Sarthak advocated for better resources for international FGLI students when he helped found iFGLI to translate the unique challenges of a global student population to Penn First Plus.

Academic. Advocate. Ambassador. These words are only part of who he is. With admiration for not only taking advantage of every opportunity, but improving the lives of his peers, we are proud Sarthak has been awarded the Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit for 2022.
MIA KRIEGEL
Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit

Mia came to Penn in search of community. Little did she know what would await her upon her arrival as a transfer student in the summer of 2020: a global pandemic, lockdowns, and socially distanced everything. The challenge did not daunt her. Mia carefully perused the 1,000+ organizations listed in Penn’s Club directory and chose two organizations—the Assembly of International Students (AIS) and Penn Traditions—that welcomed her with open arms. In her work with both groups, she did much more than find community. She worked diligently to build community, not just among Penn students, but between students and alumni.

Mia spent just two years as part of the Quaker community, but her impact—like her Penn pride—far exceeded her brief time on campus. Her commitment to giving back to Penn, already strong during her student days, promises only to grow now that she has joined our alumni community.

With gratitude for Mia’s enthusiastic Penn pride, her leadership in the Assembly of International Students and Penn Traditions, and her commitment to building community with both students and alumni, we are delighted Mia has been awarded the Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit for 2022.
Marina Dauer spent time at the University doing a great deal, particularly on the issue that matters most to her: climate change. She turned every opportunity into impact—whether in her studies, her volunteering, or her employment. Marina dedicated her time and talent to understanding the scientific, technological, and political aspects of the climate crisis and taking action in response to this global emergency.

On campus, Marina was a leader in the fields of environmentalism and sustainability. Furthermore, she earned the respect of students, faculty, and administrators alike for her knowledge and commitment to the cause.

In honor of her outstanding leadership and activism on one of the most important issues of our time, her deep commitment to sustainability and environmental justice, and her dedication to doing well by turning her scholarship and research into real-world impact, we are proud that Marina has been awarded the Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit for 2022.
MERRICK ENG

Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit

“Be a compassionate leader.” Sage advice at any time, these words from former LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner resonated strongly with Merrick, and they would prove prescient. Merrick accepted the challenge as a personal mantra and a call to action.

Merrick’s leadership skills were formidable, forged through a variety of roles, many of which exhibited care for his classmates: Executive Director of Compass Marketing, a Director for the Wharton Undergraduate Cohort System, Teaching Assistant and Head of the Rubrics Committee for the CIS 120 course, and membership on the Wharton Junior Senior Advisory Board.

As a Residential Advisor in Harnwell College House, Merrick placed the wellbeing of his floormates paramount amid the shocking impact of COVID-19. Many Harnwell residents laud him as “the best RA” they ever had, and Harnwell Director Viraj Patel hails his ability to build community and to welcome and connect peers, even in the most difficult of circumstances.

For demonstrating all the traits of compassionate leadership in the face of abnormal adversity, and for sharing his deep reserve of resolve to build community spirit and perseverance, we are delighted Merrick received the Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit for 2022.
For the last four years, Hugo has truly been a global ambassador for Penn. He dedicated himself to ensuring that international students could get the full experience of a University of Pennsylvania education. He understood that the University's borders aren’t on the edge of its campus or at the city limits of Philadelphia.

Hugo assumed leadership positions in the Assembly of International Students as the coronavirus pandemic struck in 2020, and he immediately partnered with Student Registration and Financial Services to coordinate an alumni emergency fund for first-generation, lower-income international students who were stuck on campus, making sure they had the resources and support they needed.

He continued to advocate for international students through the pandemic, working with the University Council to ensure that professors were mindful of logistical concerns such as students in different time zones.

In honor of Hugo’s advocacy for international students, his dedication to improving the Penn experience and expanding its horizons, and his exemplary service as a global citizen of the University, we are proud Hugo has received the Penn Alumni Student Award of Merit for 2022.
We salute Sarthak Jain, The Penn First Plus Alumni Student Leadership Award recipient, as a brilliant scholar, role model and leader whose advocacy and support of first generation, low income students extends into an ethic of care for the larger Penn community. We welcome into the Penn alumni community a truly good, honest, earnest, and humble human who touched the engineering, FGLI, and international student community with his support and example of promoting wellness and sharing resources for student success.
MARY SADALLAH

R. Jean Brownlee Skimmer Hat Award

Named for Dean R. Jean Brownlee’s enduring legacy of unifying the Penn community. Mary personifies the many faces of equity, access, and advocacy at Penn. As Vice President and Director of the Equity & Inclusion Committee within the Undergraduate Assembly (UA), Mary utilized her position to thoughtfully liaison with Penn administrators on behalf of her peers’ most pressing needs. During her time within the UA, she successfully lobbied to extend the pass/fail policy during the pandemic as well as expand CAPS’ embedded clinician model. Mary’s commitment to the representation of diverse voices and advocacy went beyond the UA. She was involved with Penn First, Justice Democrats, Arab Student Society, Penn Political Review as well as a founding board member of the Penn Egyptian Society.
Academically, Tori is a superior student; co-curricularly, she has become engaged in deep and meaningful ways; and as a person, she has grown significantly over her four years at Penn. No matter where her path may lead, I expect that Tori will always possess that same spirit of engagement and commitment to service that she exhibited here as an undergraduate. 

Sometimes we show our love most by pushing an institution to make the changes that position it to meet better promises students perceive it has made. Tori has and will continue to keep Penn faithful to its promises, and from that, we will all benefit.

Katie Bonner  
Executive Director  
Office of Student Affairs
Vysh has left a considerable mark on Penn. She is widely recognized as the Penn student who embodies climate action. She’s been an absolutely wonderful and dependable ally, who has set an example not only for other students, but also for faculty and staff. I remember a conversation I had with her when Penn made its Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) announcement. We reflected on her efforts and the sense of having contributed to something as substantive as that. I knew I was speaking to someone who, after graduation from Penn, would find a way to make a huge difference.

Simon Richter
Class of 1942 Endowed Term Professor and Department Chair
Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures
Max has thoroughly impressed me with her grit and sincere dedication to both her academic studies and extracurricular activities. During my time with Max, she has demonstrated outstanding academic performance, a willingness to sacrifice her time to help others, a passionate nature, and relentless perseverance. I am certain you will find her to be a highly motivated, competent, and committed student who will function as a true asset to this institution. I believe her personal experiences, and positive nature will serve her well as a university awardee.

Michael J. Kane Ph.D.
Senior Lecturer, Undergraduate Neuroscience Program
The Spade Award recognizes a graduating senior who has demonstrated leadership both academically and co-curricular opportunities. Throughout his undergraduate career, Regan was an active member of the Undergraduate Assembly (UA). He served as New Student Representative, College of Arts & Sciences Representative, Budget Committee Representative, RSAB Chair, and as an Associate member. Beyond his involvement in the UA, Regan spent many hours welcoming incoming students as a Kite & Key Tour Guide and a student leader in the PENNacle pre-orientation program. Regan is truly someone who prides himself in leading with kindness and going the extra mile to help those around him. His diverse experiences also include Penn Wind Ensemble, Wharton MUSE project leader, Penn Hillel Jewish Learning Fellowship, Carriage Senior Honor Society, and co-president of the Wharton Alliance.
The Spoon Award recognizes a graduating student's achievements and contributions to the class. **As a three-time class board president, Sam actively worked to create a sense of belonging and familial community amongst his class.** Through his role as a student leader in the PennQuest pre-orientation program, he did the same for incoming first-year students. Co-founder and executive director of InLight Magazine, a nationally recognized culture and identity student publication. Sam also served as Co-Chair of the Shira Chadasha community at Hillel which strives to provide the Jewish student body with spiritual and meaningful prayer opportunities. A member of both Friars and Shamash Senior Honor Societies, Sam was also an inductee to the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society for his distinguished academic achievement as an undergraduate.
CARISA SHAH

The Trustees’ Council of Penn Women Michele Huber and Bryan D. Giles Award

This award honors an outstanding Penn senior student in the Jerome Fisher Program in Management and Technology who demonstrates academic excellence, leadership, service, and love of mankind. The faculty of the Management and Technology Program work closely with TCPW to select the award recipient.

Carisa Shah graduates with a BSE Bioengineering, BS in Economics, Minor in Math. She was Research Assistant at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Co-Chair of the Wharton Dean’s Undergraduate Advisory Board, received the Wharton School’s Herbert S. Stuart Memorial Prize, and was co-Chair for Seniors For The Penn Fund. Carisa also interned for the US Navy working on ballistic missile submarines.
Ryan Afreen

The Trustees’ Council of Penn Women Student Leadership Award

TCPW presents the Student Leadership Award to honor an outstanding Penn Junior or Senior woman who has combined high academic achievements with a demonstrated commitment to the University through her involvement and leadership.

As a woman of color and a first-generation college student, Ryan is honored to receive this award. A passion for building relationships and serving others guides Ryan’s life after Penn. Ryan is a prominent voice for fellow students—both at Penn and beyond. She serves as Advocacy Chair of Penn FIRST, the Chair of the Penn First Plus (P1P) Student Advisory Board, and the Social Chair of FGLI Dean’s Advisory Board, helping to identify students’ most pressing concerns and share them with University administrators. Ryan also established a mental wellness group at Penn’s Asian-American Community House to give students a venue for sharing their challenges and finding support, an accomplishment she cites as one of her most meaningful experiences at Penn. Ryan co-founded The Virtual Vine, a nonprofit that provides guidance to first-generation high school students interested in attending highly ranked colleges. Ryan emphasizes that it’s the interests she’s cultivated along with the connections she’s forged that have made her time as an undergraduate so rewarding.
The Trustees’ Council of Penn Women Student Leadership Award, honoring outstanding Penn Junior or Senior women who have combined high academic achievements with a demonstrated commitment to the University through her involvement and leadership.
The Trustees’ Council of Penn Women Athletic Achievement Award Honorees

The Trustees’ Council of Penn Women Athletic Achievement Award was created in 2011 to honor a woman athlete or athletes who have transcended the customary excellence we have come to expect at Penn and to recognize the success of the exceptional athlete. The focus is on awarding senior athletes who have had outstanding athletic careers at Penn.
CONGRATULATIONS

Class of 2022

Penn Alumni
University of Pennsylvania