



Division of the Vice Provost
for Student Engagement



20

A YEAR IN REVIEW

ANNUAL REPORT

24



“Profound change once again defines our times. Faith in the promise of democratic self-government has eroded. We must contend with climate change and manage powerful technologies like generative artificial intelligence. We stand on the cusp of revolutionary changes in medicine and health. The gap is wide between those who have a lot and those who have too little. Hate and bigotry persist. And we require leaders—broadly and deeply learned, service-minded, and bearing all the other hallmarks of an excellent education. Penn is called upon to join in reaffirming and advancing the values that so shaped our founding, predicated on humanity in all we do. Like the moment our founder declared, Let the experiment be made, this is Penn’s time to stand tall on our principles and put them into practice for the future.”*

**In Principle and Practice: Penn’s Focus on Tomorrow.* University of Pennsylvania, 2024, in-principle-and-practice.upenn.edu.

VPSE Communications Leadership Council

*Salvador Galvez
Dann Truitt
Andrea Walkup
Aubrey Woodward*

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A Message from the Vice Provost

VPSE is the Division of the Vice Provost for Student Engagement at Penn. Our charge, on behalf of the Provost, with the Deans and faculty of the 12 Schools and other senior University partners, is to markedly increase access, participation, engagement, and outcomes of students from under-resourced backgrounds, and other cohort groups of students who have had limited opportunities critical to their success in baccalaureate, graduate, professional, and post-doctoral education, by expanding their skills, knowledge, confidence, motivation, and preparedness to successfully navigate relevant application, enrollment, and graduation processes.

In 2024, although many members of our service populations have continued to move through the profound impact of local, regional, and national challenges including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, VPSE was able to expand our work to:

- Convene pipeline program connections and community, across all of Penn’s 12 Schools and divisions;
- Markedly increase University collaborations amongst programs that promote access, participation, engagement, and outcomes of students from under-resourced cohort groups in K-12, undergraduate, graduate, and professional education;

- Nurture engaged, multimodal, mentorship for University pipeline program participants, from Penn undergraduate, graduate, and professional students; postdoctoral students; faculty; staff; and alumni;
- Provide free, Act 158-compliant: workforce skills development, college prep, and career exploration; capstone project and service-learning experiences; and internship/externship opportunities, both during the summer and year-round; and
- Curate specific “Penn Local” opportunities for learner community introductions to, engagement with, and immersion in, Penn and Philadelphia educational, research, arts, and cultural institutions/initiatives for Penn K-12 pipeline participants and undergraduate, graduate, professional, and post-doctoral students.

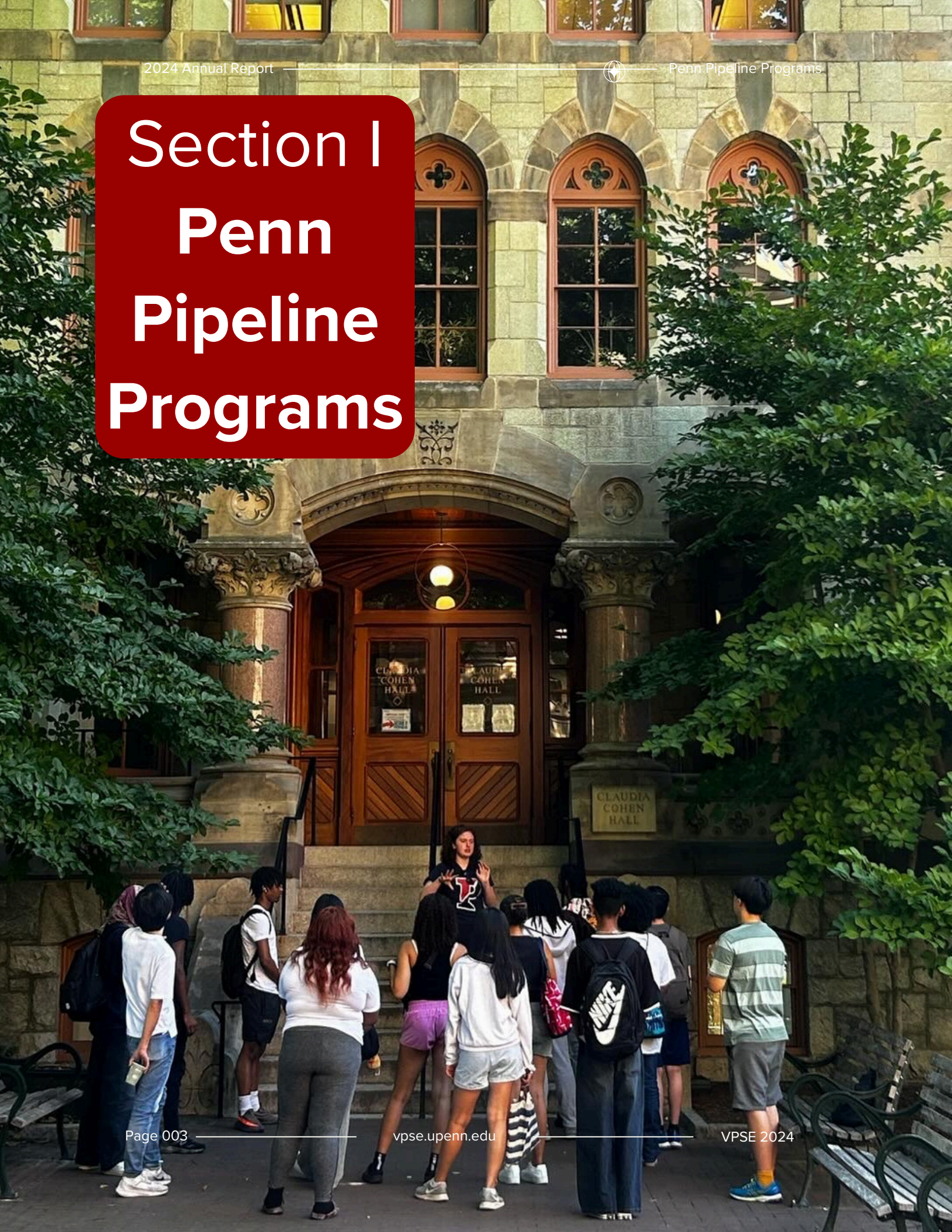
We are so very grateful to all of the Penn family, community, City of Philadelphia, national, and global partners who have worked so tirelessly with us to help secure the futures of those we serve in VPSE.

Sincerely,

Dr. Valarie Swain-Cade McCoullum
*Provost’s Distinguished Senior Fellow
Graduate School of Education
Vice Provost for Student Engagement
University of Pennsylvania*



Section I Penn Pipeline Programs



Section I Penn Pipeline Programs

“New York City: A Black Panther Party Initiative.” *Nina*
College

“The Classroom: The Impact of Local Politics on Black
McNeil, Bryn Mawr College

“Dictionaries as a pedagogical practice.” *Esenia Banuelos,*

“Policy Vacuum in the New Latin@ South.” *Andres Villalba,*

Ph.D. Candidate in Africana Studies and Comparative
, University of Pennsylvania, and MMUF Graduate

Student Panel 4: Raced and Gendered Meaning-Making in Contested Terrain Room 223 – Golkin Room

“From Stewardess to Flight Attendant: Navigating the Evolution of Care Work,
Eroticization, and Commodification in the Airline Industry (1930s-2000s).” *Anika*
Asthana, Princeton University

“Continuities Between Women’s Healthcare Abuse in Puerto Rico and the United
States.” *Erick Iraheta, Haverford College*

“Voices Unheard: The Lived Experiences of Women of Color in Diversity and
Inclusion.” *Peyton Roberson, Bryn Mawr College*

“Reimagining Sexual Responsibility.” *Louisa Howe, Cornell University*

Moderator: Nicole Hoang, Penn MMUF

Student Panel 5: Defining Bodies through Space and Place Room 218 – Ben Franklin Room

“Echoes of Racism in the Built Environment: Kenyan Immigrants in Metro Atlanta,
GA.” *Sabrina Gray, Bryn Mawr College*

“Clearance Needed: Urban Renewal and Undesirability in 1968-1973-era New
York City Public Housing.” *Kalia Dominique Boutier, Haverford College*

“Resilient Communities: The parallel process of Sonoma County Latin-American
Immigrant Infrastructure and Mainstream Planning in Disaster Response.”
Estrella Pacheco, Haverford College

“BodyLand: Socioecological Crisis and the Performativity of Development.” *Angel*
Gutierrez, University of Pennsylvania

“Liberation Schools in New York City: A Black Panther Party Initiative.” *Nina Phillips, Swarthmore College*

“From the Courtroom to the Classroom: The Impact of Local Politics on Black Litigation.” *Michael J. Gil, Bryn Mawr College*

Section I Penn Pipeline Programs

“Cultural Literacy as a pedagogical practice.” *Esenia Banuelos, University of Pennsylvania*

“Vacuum in the New Latin@ South.” *Andres Villalba, University of Pennsylvania*

“A Candidate in Africana Studies and Comparative Literature.” *University of Pennsylvania, and MMUF Graduate*

Gendered Meaning-Making in Contested Terrain

Room 223 – Golkin Room

“From Stewardess to Flight Attendant: Navigating the Evolution of Care Work, Eroticization, and Commodification in the Airline Industry (1930s-2000s).” *Anika Asthana, Princeton University*

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By the Numbers

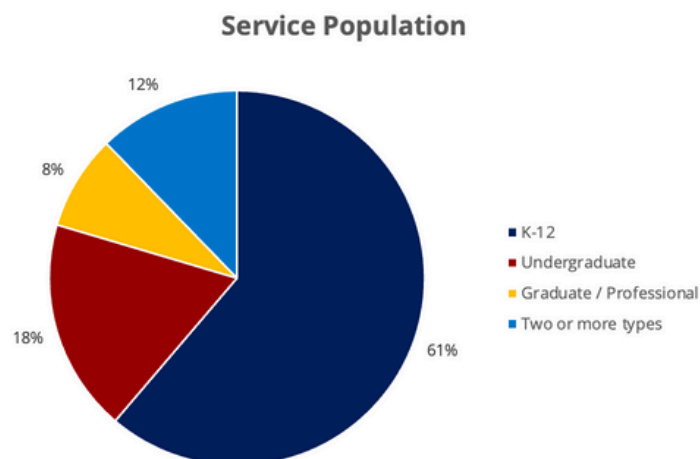
Penn Pipeline Programs

What is a Penn Pipeline Program?

PIPELINE PROGRAMS encompass those that are designed at all levels of education for groups under-represented in U.S. higher education professional programs, disciplines, and industries. These programs aim to recruit, enroll, retain, and support students to THRIVE - academically, socially, and emotionally - in their chosen ambitions, fields, and careers.

Penn’s 12 Schools, University divisions, and centers provide high-quality learning experiences that promote introductions to, and immersion in, Penn, Philadelphia, and global scholarship, research, arts, and cultural initiatives. Following are data that illustrate just a subset of the many programs and initiatives supported by the University in 2024.

Service Population



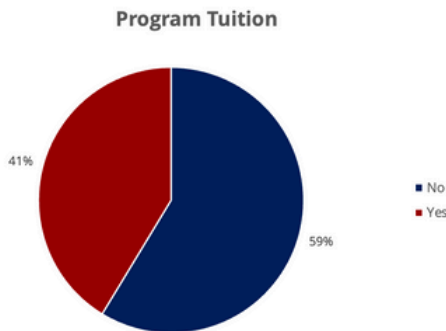
By the Numbers

Penn Pipeline Programs

Program Duration

Program Duration	%
Summer Only (May-August)	59
Academic Year (AY) Only (August-May)	22
Both (year-round)	18

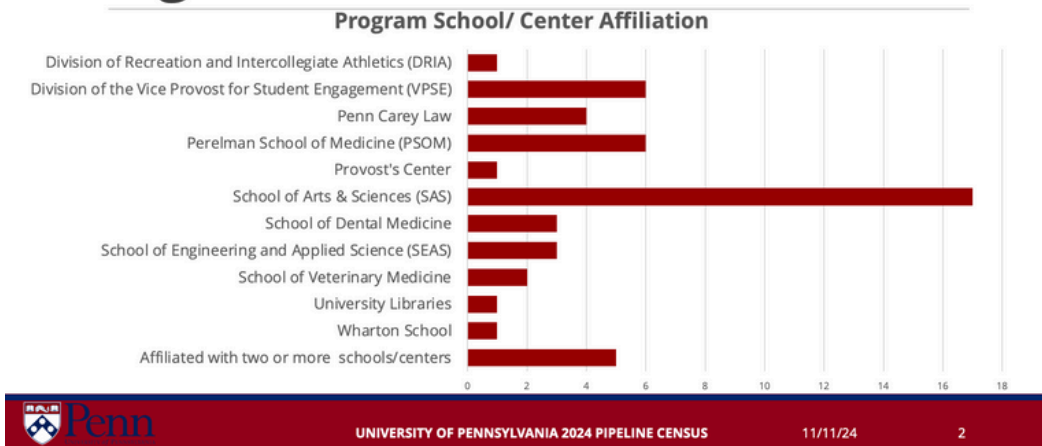
Tuition Fee Pie Chart



By the Numbers

Penn Pipeline Programs

Program School/ Center affiliation



Program Funding Sources

Program Funding Source(s)	%
National Science Foundation	9
Private foundations	2
University departmental / divisional operating budget funds	17
University grant and/or gift funds	2
US Department of Education	4
Two or More Funding Sources	37
Other sources (e.g., private, federal)	28



Pennsylvania Graduation Requirements

Act 158

In 2022, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania put into place a graduation mandate called Act 158. This means that in order to graduate, high school students must meet graduation requirements that include the opportunity to have an experience (during grades 6-12) that qualifies as either a service-learning capstone project or an internship. In Summer 2024, the Division of VPSE provided 15 Act-158 capstone project/service-learning electives for School District of Philadelphia middle and high school students, led by Penn undergraduate and graduate students.





Section II

VPSE

Programs



VPSE: By the Numbers

➤ **3,896**

K-12, Undergraduate, and Graduate
Professional Student Enrolled Participants

➤ **299**

City of Philadelphia Schools
Served

➤ **293**

University of Pennsylvania Pipeline
Programs (all Schools, Divisions,
and Centers)

➤ **191**

Penn, Philadelphia, Regional,
and National Partners

➤ **6** 

Emmy Award Nominations

➤ **2**

Fulbright Fellows

Section III Our Outcomes

“What an incredible experience this was for my daughter. She will be forever transformed because of this opportunity.”

*Parent of a Provost’s Summer Mentorship Program participant
University of Pennsylvania*

VPSE STEM
Junior CEO Program
Summer, 2024 Pitch Competition

FIRST PLACE WINNER

JULY 17, 2024



VPSE JEVS
2CL-PHL



Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF)

Est. 1989

7 Applicants

39 Total Ph.D.'s Earned

Program Summary Description

The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) program, since 1989, has worked to increase access, participation, and outcomes for first-generation students, students who come from under-resourced backgrounds, and other students who have had limited opportunities critical to success in entering and completing Ph.D. degrees and joining the professoriate. The MMUF program also promotes the value of multivocality in the humanities and related disciplines, elevating accounts, interpretations, and narratives that expand present understandings. Penn MMUF has a 100% graduation rate with a 91% Ph.D. matriculation rate.

Group activities also help to bond the fellows as a cohort develop as scholars. This year, in addition to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference at Cornell, the students attended the play, *Zooman and the Sign*, which was recommended by Dr. Herman Beavers, followed by a group discussion with dessert! The fellows also attended a book talk by our former Penn MMUF Graduate Coordinator Dr. Julius Fleming on his book: *Black Patience, Theatre, Civil Rights and the Long Wait for Freedom*. One program meeting was convened in the Van Pelt Library to support Logan Saenz who worked on an exhibit on Latin American/Latinx Revolutionary Art. The Penn program convenes mandatory weekly Fellowship meetings throughout the academic year. These meetings consist of a range of activities including directed readings, critiques of writing samples and personal statements, research presentations, panel discussions and other activities as needed to promote academic success. This year, in addition to preparing for the graduate school. The application process, there was also a focus on publishing in academia and grappling with race, identity and self-care in academia. In addition to the weekly meetings, fellows are required to meet individually each week with the graduate coordinator and periodically with Dr. McCoullum and/or Dr. Beavers.



In September, the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program 2024 Fall Retreat in Washington, D.C. invited scholars to the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement.



Penn

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF)

Since 1989, the Penn MMUF program has a 100% Penn graduation rate and a 91% graduate matriculation rate. 39 Penn MMUF fellows have earned their Ph.D.s and joined university faculties across the globe.

Two MMUF Fellows received Fulbright Fellowships for 24-25! Vernon Wells (CAS'24), an anthropology and sociology major, received the Fulbright U.S. Student Award to conduct cultural anthropology research in the Philippines. Carlos Montes (CAS'23) received a Fulbright Research Fellowship to study decolonization in Brazil! Montes will begin PhD study in Anthropology at Columbia University in Fall 2025.



Adeoluwa Fatukasi submitted articles to the MMUF Journal and the Penn Africana Studies Undergraduate Journal. She also co-authored an article published in the Howard Journal of Communication in July 2024.



More information on Wells' Fulbright U.S. Student Award in the Philippines can be read in Penn Today!



Penn MMUF Alumna, Dr. Erica Armstrong Dunbar, is an acclaimed scholar of enslavement with a specific interest in the experience of women. She recently joined Emory University's Department of African American Studies. Her award-winning book, *Never Caught: The Washington's Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*, has resulted in the unveiling of a permanent historical marker in honor of Judge at Philadelphia's Independence Square.

Dr. Armstrong Dunbar is also in her third year as the historical consultant and co-executive producer for HBO's "The Gilded Age." In September 2024, the show was nominated for six Emmys at the 76th Primetime Emmy Awards. Dunbar is also a distinguished Charles and Mary Beard Professor of History at Rutgers University.



Knowledge is
Power Program

Est. 2013

**# Students
Completed Research
46 Students Served**

Program Summary Description

PennKIPP is an innovative partnership to recruit, support and train academically talented graduates of Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) charter schools nationwide. The diverse community of scholars may also identify as first-generation and/or low-income. Since the partnership began in 2013, 82 students have participated in PennKIPP. More than 46 students have graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, and 12 PennKIPP alumni are enrolled in Penn graduate or professional School programs.




In February 2024, PennKIPP students learned the secret to networking during a speed networking event focusing on inclusive hiring.

In AY 2024-2025, 31 KIPP students were actively enrolled as undergraduates at the University of Pennsylvania. They represent the following academic levels:

- 1st Year: 8 students
- 2nd Year: 9 students
- 3rd Year: 6 students
- 4th Year: 8 students

Daniel Trebejo-Ariza, a senior marketing student at Wharton, received support to travel to Los Angeles, CA, where he attended the All Access Fest conference. This included coverage of conference fees and software tools to assist in

preparing a proposal for submission to A&R representatives. Jayla Rhodes, a senior majoring in architecture, received support to travel to Oakland, CA to advance her research on Walter Hood. Her study explored the cultural inflection points reflected in Black architecture and design within urban landscapes. As part of her research, she visited significant historic sites such as Splash Pad Park, the Bayview Opera House, and San Pablo Avenue, all renowned for their rich contributions to the intersection of culture, history, and urban design.



Penn

Knowledge is
Power Program

“—
PennKIPP [turned] my doubts and
discomfort into confidence and
reassurance [during my] time at the
University of Pennsylvania.
—”

Zaynab Sylla

The PennKIPP community has been an invaluable guide, helping me navigate UPenn and discover resources I wouldn't have found on my own. It has provided me with a supportive network of individuals who offer guidance and encouragement. I am deeply grateful for this program, which is instrumental in helping me become my best self and reach my full potential during my college years at Penn.

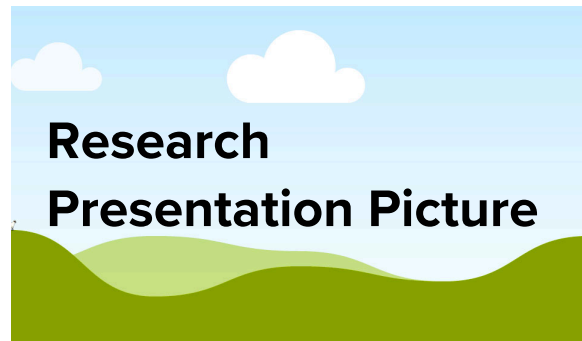
Arleene Marte, The College, Class of 2027



Collaborating to get out of an Escape Room, January 2024

PennKIPP has been a really transformative aspect of my time at Penn. Having an office that understands the educational background, philosophies, and systems I have come from is a privilege that cannot be understated. I am especially grateful for Dr. Thomas-EL, whose fervent efforts in introducing us to opportunities and bestowing upon us bits of wisdom and knowledge has straightened my otherwise crooked Penn path much earlier than anticipated.

Chidinma Esiem, The College, Class of 2027



On Friday, October 18, returning students (sophomores to seniors) welcomed the incoming Class of '28 at Lucky Strike bowling lanes.



Rising Scholar
Success Academy

Est. 2020

1,736 Applicants
967 Students Served

Program Summary Description

The Penn Rising Scholar Success Academy (PennRSSA) is a completely free, online program open to all 14,000+ rising seniors attending School District of Philadelphia public, parochial, and public charter high schools.

This year's summer program was designed over the span of six months, beginning in January 2024. This extended planning period, combined with the advantages of running the program for a fifth year, allowed the program to revamp courses, extend the content of the capstone project, provide detailed guidance to partners, engage more directly with alumni volunteers, and spend more time thoughtfully preparing for in-person session planning and booking.

For the in-person components on Mondays and Fridays, additional preparation was needed for planning. The program initiated a planning session with Penn Undergraduate Admissions on March 11th. After three months of work, the program set up the Canvas version of the "Applying to College 101" course. For the in-person "Applying to College 101" sessions, by June 17th, Penn Undergraduate Admissions shared the presentation deck, case studies, and all additional materials with us via Penn Box.



PennRSSA student leaders took time to celebrate the program's success at Puttshack, Philadelphia.



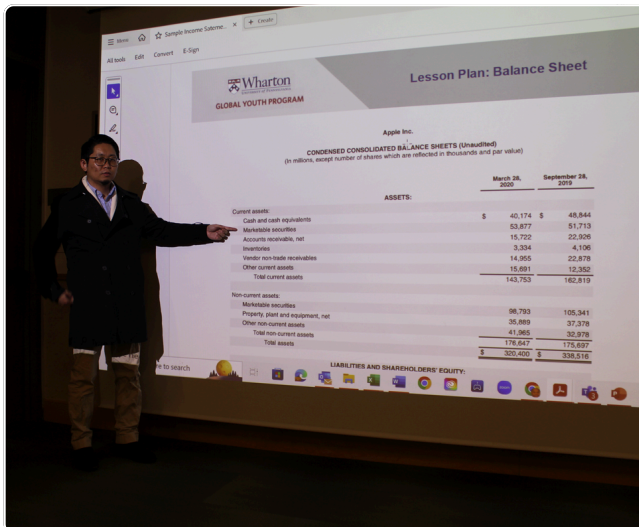
Penn

Rising Scholar
Success Academy



Applying to College 101 : In-Person Sessions

The 2024 Summer Academy introduced the program’s first hybrid learning courses for participants. This summer our high schools students were the first to experience a new Applying to College course developed by the University of Pennsylvania’s Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Along with the new Applying to College course, 30 our of Summer Academy students participated in the first PennRSSA college tour to visit Rowan University.



Wharton Global Investment Competition

PennRSSA expanded its program offerings for the academic year, inviting 98 high school students to participate in the 9-week Wharton Global Investment Competition.





Provost's Summer Mentorship Program

Est. #

857 Applicants
114 Enrolled

Program Summary Description

The Provost's Summer Mentorship Program is a summer college preparatory experience offered to Philadelphia rising 10th and 11th grade students. Admitted students are paired with one of five affiliate University of Pennsylvania graduate and professional School partners. Annually, 80 participants experience hands-on, experiential learning through creatively designed curricula developed to highlight and offer exploration into various career choices.

Program Highlights

- SMP organized a major college fair that included over 75 colleges/universities and CBOs from around the region. An estimated 300 students from VPSE programs attended. Community members were also welcome to attend.
- Eighty-one percent (81%) of SMP participants received stipends in the amount of \$1340 as a result of successfully participating in the program.
- Each cohort sponsored engaging field trips around the city and region to provide context for career learning and experiences.
- SMP created a memorial award, in honor of the former director who unexpectedly passed away a few months prior to the start of the program. The student was recognized at the Closing Ceremony and presented with a certificate and monetary award.

There were 857 applications received as follows:

School	# Applicants	Accepted	Acceptance Rate
School of Dentistry	63	16	25%
Engineering and Applied Science	232	40	17%
Carey Law	129	20	16%
School of Medicine	249	20	8%
School of Nursing	184	20	11%
Average Admit Rate			14%



The Provost's Summer Mentorship cohort from the Perelman School of Medicine practiced the art of suture.



Penn

Provost's Summer
Mentorship Program

“
Thank you for believing in me and for providing such a supportive and enriching environment.
 2024 SMP participant
 ”

The 2024 Provost's Summer Mentorship Program (SMP) supported the career and educational interests of 112 Philadelphia-area high school students. Students participated in hands-on, experiential learning, through creatively designed curricula developed to highlight and offer exploration into various careers through Penn's Perelman School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, the Carey School of Law, and the School of Dental Medicine. The SMP culminated with its 5th annual college fair, attracting over 75 colleges/universities, community organizations, and high school students from across the Philadelphia region.



SMP Law students participating on a mock trial at the Penn Carey Law School



Students engaging with college representatives at the 5th Annual SMP College Fair in Houston Hall, University of Pennsylvania



SMP Nursing cohort students practicing how to use a stethoscope



Talent Search Program

Est. #

160 Applicants
799 Students Served

Program Summary

The Talent Search Program is designed to help 583 eligible students complete high school and enroll in postsecondary school. Talent Search provides students in grades 6-12 with support services that instill a college-going culture and promote the academic and personal development necessary for their entry into and success in postsecondary school.



In partnership with Penn's Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Penn Talent Search hosted its Second Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Exhibition, where scholars read original pieces of writing connected to the theme "Radiant Stars, Infinite Hope." Their writing took inspiration from Afrofuturism and the work of Martin Luther King, Jr. and explored topics such as identity and belonging.

Penn Talent Search hosted scholars on campus for a three-week summer program exploring different subject areas: Environmental Science, Digital Communication, and Health & Wellness. Led by staff at Fairmount Water Works, scholars participating in the Environmental Science session tested water from the Schuylkill River and learned about how pollution and environmental factors impact water quality.





“
 The program taught me to advocate for myself and reach out when I need help.
 ”

Highlights and Achievements:

- The program received 13.5/15 PE points for APR submission on 2022-2023 programming year.
- Six Talent Search seniors enrolled in Ivy League schools this fall, including four at Penn.

Total number of participants enrolled.

- 583 officially enrolled and reported (2022-2023 School Year)
- 799 served (2024 Calendar Year)

Breakdown by K-12 Grade Levels

- 153 Middle School (6th-8th Grade)
- 71 Freshman in High School (9th Grade)
- 124 Sophomore in High School (10th Grade)
- 108 Junior in High School (11th Grade)
- 127 Senior in High School (12th Grade)



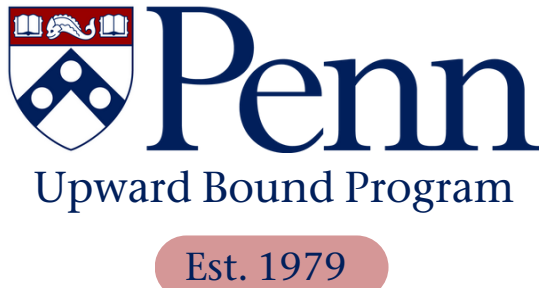
Talent Search students visited the Comcast Center on May 20 and experienced an immersive show inside the Universal Sphere.



Penn Talent Search was such a blessing in my college journey ... As a first-generation college student, I didn't know where to begin when it came to applying to schools, and Penn Talent Search stepped in and provided me with the guidance I really needed. I was able to get support with study skills, time management, and even my college essays and personal statement. The program taught me to advocate for myself and reach out when I need help, which has been a game-changer. It deepened my connection to the University of Pennsylvania—I got to explore the campus, research colleges, and truly fall in love with the school.

Ayesha Mallick

Talent Search Class of 2024, University of Pennsylvania C'28



45 Applicants
109 Students Served

Program Summary Description

The University of Pennsylvania High School Upward Bound Program is a college preparatory program designed to motivate and prepare students for the successful pursuit of a four-year college education. The program provides 106 high school students with academic, career, and cultural enrichment resources. Access to these resources helps students to graduate from high school and increase the rate at which low-income, first-generation college students matriculate and graduate from postsecondary institutions.

Select Highlights and Achievements

- The program successfully nominated three students for the 2024 Council for Opportunity in Education's (COE) National Student Leadership Congress.
- The program developed a new partnership with Penn MindCore, coordinating a College Prep Saturday workshop and a visit to Pennovation Works. During the visit to Pennovation Works, UB students visited the Penn Smart Aviary, General Robotics, Automation, Sensing & Perception (GRASP) Lab, and the Penn Vet Working Dog Center. The visit allowed students to learn about cognitive science, study behavior, explore STEM careers, and speak with STEM professionals.
- The program surpassed college enrollment rate from previous year.



A Penn Upward Bound high school student observed the behaviors of male brown-headed cowbirds at the Penn Smart Aviary as part of a visit to Pennovation Works.

College Tours & Trips

- College Visits/Fairs: North Carolina week-long summer college tour (University North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, Wake Forest University, Duke University, and University of North Carolina at Charlotte), Stevens Institute of Technology, Lock Haven University, Columbia University, West Chester University, Temple University, Penn Sununer Mentorship Program College Fair, and Philadelphia National College Fair, Community Service: Cradle to Crayons and Mighty Writers
- Trips: Rutgers University Camden basketball game, Pennovation Works visit, Mural Arts Tour, Carrowinds Amusement Park, and rock-climbing trip.

Penn Upward Bound Program

“
Upward Bound has given me the knowledge and resources to open the door to college opportunities.
”
Miraqlle Banks, UB Participant



Upward Bound Annual Basketball Tournament

Spring Break Basketball Tournament

Penn Upward Bound hosts an annual basketball tournament in collaboration with local Upward Bound Programs (Harcum College and Community College of Philadelphia). In 2024, The annual tournament brought together 42 students from four different Trio Programs (Penn Upward Bound, Penn Talent Search, Harcum College Upward Bound and Temple University Upward Bound) for a fun-filled basketball tournament.



Questbridge Scholarship

Upward Bound student Malaou Sy was named a 2024 QuestBridge National College Match Finalist! Malaou, a West Philadelphia High School student, was one of 7,288 students selected of over 25,500 applicants. She plans to major in Political Science and African American Studies in college.



Upward Bound Pennovation Works Visit

Pennovation Works Trip

During a trip to the Smart Aviary at Pennovation Works, Upward Bound students studied the behaviors of cowbirds under Biology professor Dr. Marc Schmidt's guidance.

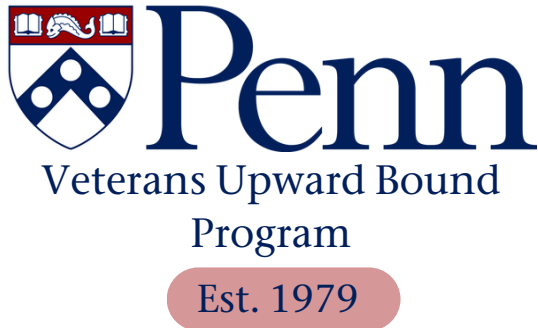


Upward Bound student Miraqlle Banks is a senior at Overbrook High School. This year, she was admitted to the highly selective Senior Year Only Program (SYOP), a partnership between the School District of Philadelphia and the

Community College of Philadelphia that allows high school seniors to matriculate in full-time dual-enrollment college courses and graduate from high school with up to 27 college credits. The program only admits about 10% of applicants. Miraqlle plans to study Computer Science and then pursue a career in software engineering. Outside of school, she enjoys photography, reading, and participating in Upward Bound events.

The visit was featured in *Penn Today* (scan to read the full article).





22 Applicants
151 Students Served

Program Summary Description

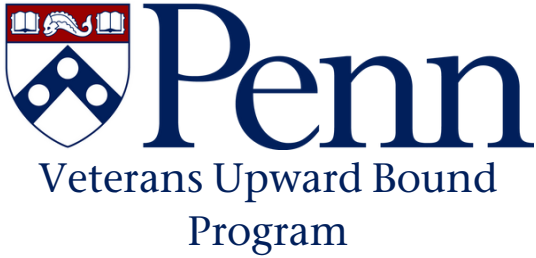
The Veterans Upward Bound program is a free, college preparatory program for 160 eligible veterans federally funded with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The program offers college preparatory services to include academic assessment, advising, and counseling; non-credited academic classes and tutoring; college access; and educational support services. The program seeks to encourage, empower, and acclimatize college-bound veterans to the rigors of postsecondary education and training. The primary goal is to prepare eligible veterans to enter or re-enter the college of their choice and graduate from their selected postsecondary program.

New Initiatives:

- “VUB Mini-Lessons” led by the graduate students twice a month to offer college entry skills in a short, no pressure format. The times changed for each session to test offering programming at various times of the day and gauge interest. Mini-Lessons were promoted on social media that attracted new interest. On the off weeks when Mini Lessons are not offered, the graduate students availed themselves to, by appointment, one-on-one tutorial sessions based on requests by the scholars.
- The VUB program hosted its first ever VUB College Fair in the Spring attended by over 25 schools. The VUB program looks to hope to do this program every two years as interest is generated.
- The VUB program continued to try new advertising which included newspaper/magazine print ads, SEPTA bus signs, and direct mail... all of which brought in one or two new leads. The VUB program will continue to look at new and innovative ways to promote the program (e.g., social media trends, event sponsorship etc.)



VUB Scholars attended the 2024 Vet Fest, held on October 18, where VUB continued to recruit new scholars and build relationships with non-profits working with veterans.



Penn
Veterans Upward Bound
Program

“With support from the VUB program and staff, my experience transitioning into college has been less challenging.”

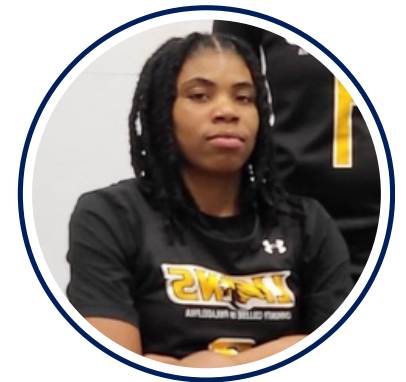


Veteran Education Fair

VUB Scholars attended the program’s inaugural Veteran Education Fair, held on Friday, April 26, at Houston Hall's Hall of Flags. Veterans connected with top universities and training programs tailored to veterans.

L’Salle Harvey Veteran Scholarship

In Spring 2024, VUB announced its *L’Salle Harvey Veteran Scholarship* competition. The award is given in honor of L’Salle Harvey, a former Veterans Upward Bound Program participant, and made possible through a generous donation from his family.



Jazzmere Weathers, 2024 La’Salle Harvey VUB Scholarship recipient, attending the Community College of Philadelphia



VUB Scholar Lennie Carter on a walking tour of major memorials: WWII, Memorial, among others.

VUB’s Impact

Lennie Carter recently completed an HVAC course at Camden County College in New Jersey. He is excited to continue his education at the Community College of Philadelphia in the spring. He extends his heartfelt thanks to the entire VUB staff for their unwavering support and dedication to veterans.



VPSE STEM Program

Est. 2023

197 Applicants

114 Students Served

Program Summary Description

Philadelphia middle school and high school students enhance their knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) with the help of Penn graduate students. Each week students learn the basics of different STEM disciplines with exciting hands-on activities from building rockets to learning code.

Junior CEO Program


Six different teams of students participated in creating business plans for their startups.



Home-it: Junior CEO start-up presentations July 2024

Team List

- **AeroDash:** A drone delivery service that focuses on the fast and efficient delivery of packages.
- **Hyacinths:** Scented jewelry designed to help reduce anxiety and stress. Users can receive help from the therapeutic scents released by the jewelry.
- **Smartie:** A smart wheelchair designed with advanced features to improve mobility for individuals with disabilities.
- **Peekaboo:** Stuffed animals that include nanny cams, allowing parents to monitor their children while they play with the toys.
- **Home-It:** An app that allows users to design and decorate their homes. This interior design app offers a user-friendly platform to plan home layouts and decor.
- **Dreamwise Realty:** A real estate company that specializes in selling homes to recent college graduates and new home buyers, and provides services to decorate those homes, in partnership with Home-it.



Penn

VPSE STEM Program



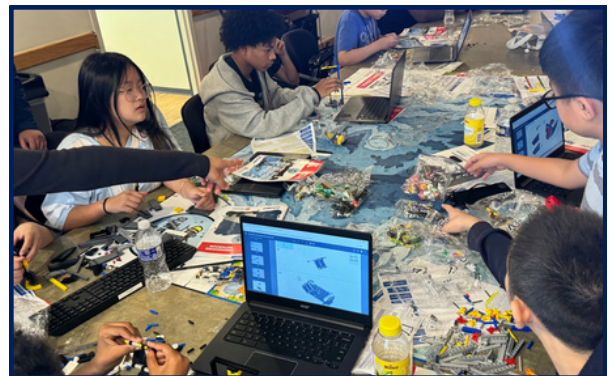
Junior CEO visit to the Franklin Institute, June 2024

Spring 2024: 3M Young Scientist Challenge

During Spring 2024, the VPSE STEM program worked with students in grades 6–8 to develop individual entries for the 3M Young Scientist Challenge. This premier science competition gave students the chance to change their world with a single innovative idea. Students selected a project from one of six key areas of impact—Robotics, Home Improvement, Automotive, Safety, AR/VR, and Climate Tech—and developed their own projects for submission.

Fall 2024: First LEGO League

The Fall 2024 season of the VPSE STEM Academy focuses on the First LEGO League, engaging Philadelphia students in grades 6–8 in a robotics and coding competition. Participants work in teams to build and program LEGO robots that complete specific missions while also creating innovative projects to address real-world challenges. At the end of the season, students compete in one final competition, showcasing their robot game and innovation projects against other teams from the Mid-Atlantic area.



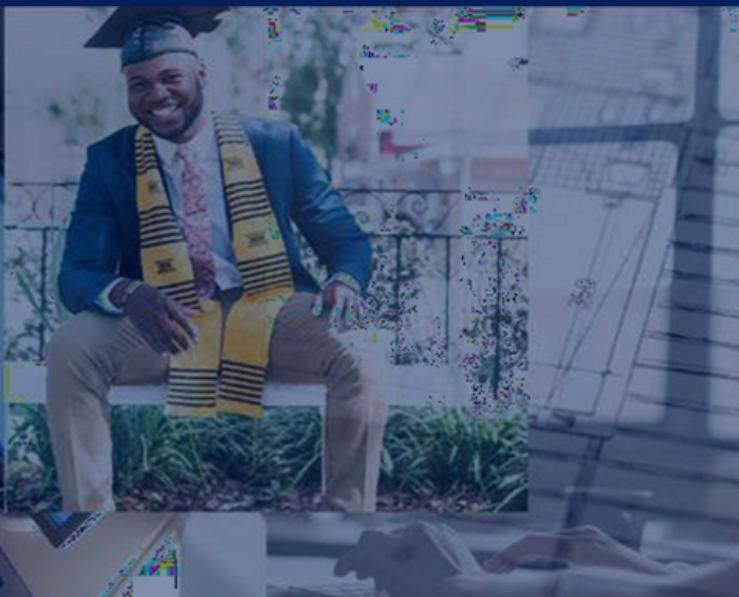
Battleship Program

A two-week summer course for grades 6-12 focused on virtual battleship design, held from July 29th - August 2nd, 2024.




In 2024, the VPSE was awarded a grant by JEVs Human Services, the fiscal and contracting intermediary working with Philadelphia Works, the City of Philadelphia, through its Office of Children and Families and Department of Human Services, and the School District of Philadelphia, to offer Career Connected Learning PHL (C2L-PHL) activities to youth across the City.

Students enrolled in VPSE programs were able to earn up to a maximum stipend of \$1,320 through completing VPSE STEM, PennRSSA, or SMP.



 vpse.upenn.edu

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