Paul and Warren Miller dedicate themselves to Penn and its future

A LIFELONG DEVOTION
“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.”  —BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

In my life, I consistently strive for both personal and professional growth. While each day shows varying results of my efforts, it is my path toward this growth that provides me with energy and inspiration. And it occurs to me that the future of a University of Pennsylvania education, now more than ever, possesses tremendous promise for fostering human growth.

Through Penn Compact 2020, President Gutmann outlines her vision of the University of Pennsylvania as the nation’s most inclusive, most innovative, and most impactful university. As you read through this year’s Penn Priority, you will find examples of individuals who embody this vision.

Their stories demonstrate the power of inclusion: how providing access to a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff enhances learning by all. Penn students represent the University’s innovative, entrepreneurial, and collaborative educational approach. Their work truly represents Penn’s mission to make a difference in our communities, our nation, and our world. I dare say that many of our students have started this good work while they are here on campus.

This commitment to inclusion, innovation, and impact—like your dedication to helping those who will follow in their footsteps—is substantial and makes the University the vibrant, strong engine of progress we all care so deeply about.

University of Pennsylvania founder Benjamin Franklin’s words at the top of this article reflect our shared commitment to grow as a community of learners. I thank you for your investment in current and future students and in the knowledge they will help create in the years ahead.

In 1960, Ambrose Davis left his home in Jamaica for the University of Pennsylvania. Determined to grow intellectually and personally, Davis quickly became familiar with the challenges that international students face when studying abroad.

Pairing his personal experience with his scholarly study of international relations and education, Ambrose Davis, C’66, G’68, GRD’82, took on several administrative roles at Penn before being appointed Director of the Office of International Services. Davis was committed to helping students find a home away from home; he and his wife, Dr. Najma Alam Davis, GRS’78, were well-known for hosting dozens of students at their West Philadelphia home.

After his death in 2007, friends and family inspired by his leadership and passion created the Ambrose C. Davis Memorial Endowed Scholarship to support financial aid for international undergraduate students. Since its creation, the fund has nearly quadrupled in size, dramatically increasing the amount of money available to support its annual recipient.

Today, Penn is home to more than 1,000 international undergraduates representing more than 100 countries. The University meets 100 percent of all admitted students’ family need with grants-based aid and spends more unrestricted dollars on international aid than any other Ivy League school. Thanks to the generosity of scholarship donors and Penn’s commitment to increase support for international students, the global landscape at Penn is one that honors Dr. Davis’ legacy of diversity, inclusion, and excellence.

“For an international student from Vietnam with little family funding, making it to Penn to pursue my dream—architecture—seemed so tough. The scholarship I received has helped make Penn more affordable for my family. I have been deeply moved and inspired by this generous tradition at Penn and by your great act in particular.”

—THUY LEE, C’16, RECIPIENT OF THE DR. AMBROSE C. DAVIS MEMORIAL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

14% of Penn undergraduates are international students
Scholarship donors know that financial support can greatly enhance the futures of undergraduate students. However, Paul and Ella Warren Shafer Miller also view the opportunity to get to know students through the Named Scholarship Program as a sort of fountain of youth.

“We both believe that associations with interesting young people help keep us young,” Warren Miller says. “Understanding the world through young minds helps fend off the inevitable stale and reactionary thinking that sometimes affects older people.”

The Millers’ relationship with Penn goes back almost a century, when Paul F. Miller, Sr., W’22, was an economics student. Paul F. Miller, Jr., W’50, HON’81, followed in his father’s footsteps, attending Penn and meeting his lifelong love, Warren, CW’51, while they were students. Paul and Warren recently celebrated Paul’s 65th reunion at Alumni Weekend; Warren Miller will celebrate the same milestone next year.

The Paul F. Miller, Jr. Scholarship has been supporting Penn students for nearly 30 years. Created by family members and colleagues to honor Paul’s time as chairman of the University’s Board of Trustees from 1978 to 1985, the scholarship goes to students who demonstrate leadership ability, academic excellence, and extracurricular involvement. The fund has made it possible for dozens of students to attend Penn with significantly less financial burden than they would have faced without it.

For the Millers, the best part of participating in the Named Scholarship Program is the chance to have private dinners each year with their recipients. “We have tried to have dinner with all of our scholarship recipients once a year,” says Paul Miller. “The conversations are pithy and memorable. In several cases, we have continued contact with them for many years after graduation.”

For Benjamin Brockman, C’12, the feeling is mutual. He enjoyed getting to know the Millers while he was studying international relations at Penn, and recently met them for lunch during Alumni Weekend. He was back in Philadelphia after working for a philanthropic consulting firm in Cambodia, Zambia, and India. This fall, he started graduate school at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government.

“They took a genuine interest in what I was doing, which is trying to improve how the philanthropy sector operates,” he says. “Aside from Penn, they have been a part of a wide variety of philanthropic pursuits, so they have been able to relate to many of my experiences.”

Learning from the Millers has also given Brockman a unique perspective on his alma mater. “I have really gotten a sense of Penn’s history and how much Penn has changed over the last 50 or 60 years. It’s not that often you get to interact that closely with distinguished Penn alumni,” he says. “It’s also nice to make a personal connection with someone who has been so generous and given you a wonderful educational opportunity.”

The Millers know just how much of a game changer financial aid can be. “We both had our Penn educations paid for,” says Paul. “I had the G.I. Bill and Warren had a full scholarship from the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post in Roxborough. So we both have a sense of obligation to help others enjoy Penn.”
CLASS of 2019
BY THE NUMBERS

37,267
applicants

9.9%
of applicants
were admitted

84
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

93%
were in the top 10 percent
of their graduating classes

Average financial aid package
$48,605
Maximizing Your Impact

Whether you are creating a new scholarship or adding to your existing endowment, matching funds available from our generous challenge donors help boost the power of your scholarship supporting Penn students.

Men and Women of Pennsylvania

$2 million
Creates a Men and Women of Pennsylvania Scholarship or challenge fund.
Your gift of $1.5 million may be matched with $500,000 in challenge funds.

$1 million
Creates a scholarship supporting one high-need student each year in perpetuity.
Your gift of $850,000 may be matched with $150,000 in challenge funds.

$500,000
Creates a scholarship meeting the average grant need of one student each year in perpetuity.
Your gift of $400,000 may be matched with $100,000 in challenge funds.

$300,000
Creates a scholarship providing more than half of the average grant need of one student each year in perpetuity.
Your gift of $250,000 may be matched with $50,000 in challenge funds.

$150,000
Creates a scholarship supporting one student each year in perpetuity.
Your gift of $125,000 may be matched with $25,000 in challenge funds.

Young Alumni Scholarship

The Young Alumni Scholarship is available up to 10 years after graduation.
Your gift of $75,000 may be matched with $75,000 in challenge funds to create a scholarship supporting one student each year in perpetuity.

Create Your Own Challenge Fund

Consider the impact of challenge funds on undergraduate financial aid.
Starting with a gift of $500,000, a challenge fund can inspire up to 20 other donors to establish scholarships of their own, increasing the support for Penn’s talented scholars.
Penn’s impressive track record of ensuring that admitted students’ full demonstrated need is met with grants-based financial aid is matched by its commitment to ensure that students thrive once they are on campus. The University provides a supportive network of academic, extracurricular, and social resources to help students coming from a wide variety of backgrounds make the best of their Penn experience.

The competition among peer schools to attract the top talent is fierce. But it is a challenge that the Office of Undergraduate Admissions welcomes and meets. “We offer a top-notch education with a vibrant extracurricular life in an exciting city,” says Nicole Maloy, W’95, Associate Dean for Equity and Access at Penn. “We work hard through on-campus programming, school and regional outreach, and community-based organizations around the country that focus on supporting college-bound youth to ensure that students from historically underrepresented groups will find their way to Penn and apply.” Some of Penn’s partners in identifying excellent students from diverse backgrounds are QuestBridge, KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program), Say Yes to Education, and College Track.

The Office of the Vice Provost for University Life (VPUL) has staff whose goal is to unify the various resources—both programs and people—available to help students succeed once they are on campus. “The key is making sure those resources are connected with each other to support students holistically,” says Karu Kozuma, VPUL’s Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs. “When we see students struggling academically or if they are challenged with finding an internship or summer opportunity, we are able to connect the dots and address students’ needs.”

“We are committed to welcoming students and providing them with tailored, sustained support and mentoring from the moment they arrive on campus.”
Coming to Penn as a freshman can be daunting. One of several pivotal programs for incoming students designed to ease their transition from high school to Penn is the University of Pennsylvania College Achievement Program (PennCAP). If Marcus Mundy’s experience is any indication, PennCAP not only helps students transition into college—it also builds leaders.

“Coming out of the program as a participant, I would say that I had a lot more confidence than when I began,” says Mundy, C’14, a Philadelphia native and recipient of the city’s Mayor’s Scholarship. “As a counselor in PennCAP, I was able to take a huge role in reaching out to students and create inclusive spaces, letting them know that all of their issues are important.”

Mundy, who now works as a coordinator in the graduate studies program at the Annenberg School for Communication, completed PennCAP’s Pre-Freshman Program (PFP) and went on to travel the world with the Glee Club, serve as a Penn Abroad ambassador, and hold leadership roles in several student organizations. Upon graduation, he was elected by his class to receive the prestigious Spoon Award, Penn’s oldest senior leadership recognition.

Mundy credits his success in part to the experiences he had during PFP, a program designed to equip students requiring extra support with the skills and resources they need to succeed. Each student in the PFP is assigned an upper-classman mentor; program graduates, like Mundy, then have an opportunity to serve as mentors to new students.

“The students in the PFP typically have a more difficult time adjusting to the type of environment at Penn,” Mundy says. “If you are coming from a small town or are the only person from your high school at Penn, you can feel like a small fish in a huge pond. The program gives you specific connections to people who can give you advice.”

The Pre-Freshman Program’s strength, according to Mundy, lies in the carefully designed activities meant to encourage participation and facilitate social interaction between students who, at first, seem to have little in common.

“PennCAP did a really good job at equalizing the playing field,” Mundy says. “Every activity was for the entire group and encouraged everyone to have a voice. They helped students understand how to participate in a recitation, how to interact with professors, and get along with students who have opinions completely different from their own.”

As a counselor, Mundy enjoyed teaching students how to advocate for themselves academically—telling them it is OK to change majors or ask for special permission numbers for courses—and introducing students to the Weingarten Learning Resource Center or the Penn Libraries’ equipment lending program.

Most of all, “I strived for a space of total inclusion,” he says. “Bring all of your issues to the table because they are important here. You aren’t just a student—you’re an athlete, you’re a daughter, you have other responsibilities and while you’re at Penn, you can get the help you need.”
For Kayvon Asemani, W’18, a career in music is only the beginning.

The talented and charismatic rapper has already etched out a name for himself on campus and is looking to apply his Wharton education to expand his brand in this ever-changing field.

“I love to make music, but I know that I need to understand the business aspect of the industry,” Kayvon says. “Coming to Penn has always been a dream and has given me the opportunity to receive an amazing education while being surrounded by ambitious people who will push me to achieve my goals.”

“These scholarships have been hugely responsible for my success at Penn.” Kayvon says. “Just knowing that there is someone who believes in me is an amazing feeling and gives me the confidence that I need to shine.”

When he was 9 years old, a horrible childhood tragedy left Kayvon, his older brother, and younger sister without their parents. In the traumatic aftermath, the young Asemani siblings moved from the streets of Baltimore to the lush, rolling hills of Hershey, Pennsylvania. It was at the Milton Hershey School, which has provided low-income children with high-quality education for more than 100 years, where Kayvon learned to persevere through turmoil that could have easily kept him from reaching his full potential.

“I’ve always had to work hard without making excuses or expecting anything handed to me,” Kayvon says. “If I didn’t have that mentality and hadn’t faced adversity at such a young age, I’m not sure I would be at Penn.”

In just his first year at the University, Kayvon has established himself as a celebrity of sorts. Crowds are drawn to him and he’s become a mainstay at major campus events like Spring Fling and the Blutt Band Slam. He even headlined his own sold-out concert, “The Kayvon Show,” this past April in Houston Hall. As his profile continues to rise, he strives to use his popularity to comment on larger social issues in an intimate and approachable way.

“My lyrics have always been the most important part of my music. I aim to make sure that the music has a message,” Kayvon says. “Since I’ve been at Penn, my audience has increased and I realize that I have a larger influence. It’s my responsibility as an artist to do something positive through my music.”

A recipient of the James and Gail Riepe, the Annexstad Family Foundation Leaders for Tomorrow, and the Bruce S. Lane Endowed Scholarships, Kayvon knows just how important financial aid has been for him both academically and personally.

“These scholarships have been hugely responsible for my success at Penn, and the generosity of donors has absolutely helped make this all possible,” Kayvon says. “Just knowing that there is someone who believes in me is an amazing feeling and gives me the confidence that I need to shine.”
Witnessing the Impact
Making connections inspires Toby Wolf, PAR’86, to continue supporting students

When Toby Wolf, PAR’86, attended her first Scholarship Celebration five years ago, she was taken aback.

“I was amazed at how many people were there. The hall was jammed. It was a jolly affair,” she said. “My students were so talkative and we all had a lot of fun together.”

Together, Wolf and her late husband, Dr. Jack Keil Wolf, EE’56, along with their daughter Sarah Keil Wolf and late son-in-law Charles Hallac, established several scholarships for engineering students, including funds that support women going into the field.

In 2012, Toby Wolf established the Jack Keil Wolf Memorial Scholarship as a tribute to her husband, who was a professor at the University of California-San Diego and a pioneer in information theory and digital communication technology. Dr. Wolf’s work in data compression and storage laid the foundation for the form, function, and ubiquity of many of today’s most commonly used devices like mobile phones and flash drives. He obtained his doctorate from Princeton after graduating from Penn, where he received generous financial aid.

“My main motivation was that Jack received a four-year tuition scholarship,” she says. “Without that, he would not have gone to Penn.”

Since attending her first scholarship celebration, Wolf makes sure the date is circled on her calendar every spring and fall. “Penn students are marvelous, innovative, interesting, and intellectual.” Wolf especially enjoys encouraging her scholarship recipients to make use of their engineering degrees by going into science industries instead of other career fields. “I’ve always advocated for women in engineering, and Jack did as well,” she says.

The annual celebrations encourage Wolf to continue her involvement as a scholarship donor. “Each year when I walk into the room, I am overwhelmed by the number of students there. It puts into perspective just how many students Penn is able to help,” Wolf says. “As long as I am active, I will absolutely continue supporting financial aid.”

ABOVE: Toby Wolf with recipients of her family’s numerous scholarships
Soon after I was born, my father left the politically charged island nation of Haiti and risked his life to come to the United States. His mission was simple: to create better opportunities for his family and children. It was not easy living in our low-income immigrant community. My father sometimes worked three jobs, working in the orange groves and doing other seasonal work. It was always uncertain whether he would have enough to pay the rent or buy groceries. However, having been an educator in his home country, he was an avid believer in the steadfast pursuit of education. I, too, learned to cherish education, believing that it would be my key to unlocking a better future.

My teachers saw my potential, and one of those teachers referred me to QuestBridge, a program that matches students to colleges with no-loan financial aid packages. She encouraged me to apply and despite my lack of confidence, I did. My acceptance to Penn and the Wharton Class of 2015 was a day of celebration for my family and immigrant community. With depressing school dropout rates and daily realities of gang violence in our neighborhood, it helped them to believe that their little children could follow a similar path.

Since I came to Penn, my undergraduate journey has been a challenging but rewarding experience. I gained a profound appreciation and respect for my classmates and professors. With the opportunities I received at Penn, I have gained the confidence to pursue new paths for myself. Receiving scholarship aid has meant everything to me and my family... To all the current and future donors in this room, I say thank you for giving me such a wonderful inspiration.

To view video of Claudia’s entire speech, go to www.unsp.upenn.edu/celebrations
Sean Sheffer, NU’15 W’15

I’m from Las Vegas. The city to party—and indeed my life was a party—especially when, at 12 years old, you were a part of a family business that delivered party equipment. Imagine a U-Haul truck filled with thousands of fold-up metal chairs, hundreds of tables, and balloon house jumpers, and you at 12 years old, every Friday night, had to load it up.

In Sin City, high school was only an afterthought, a chance for me to escape work. Loading the U-Haul one day, I thought, “Maybe I could build a life for myself, maybe I could do something bigger, go to college. I dreamed. But then I thought about the costs. Numbers that were megabucks jackpots, but there was no cash-out for me. And then I remembered my city’s mantra—what happens here, stays here. I would never leave.

The night of this realization [a high school advisor] called me and said, “I saw your application and I know about your situation, let me tell you about our donor and scholarship programs, financial aid. Let me tell you about the University of Pennsylvania.” I closed my eyes, applied Early Decision and never looked back.

Today, I am a dual-degree student in the Nursing School and Wharton, pursuing a computer science minor in the School of Engineering. Because of you, I’ve traveled the world and pursued my love of tech. I’m from Las Vegas, and even when all odds were stacked against us, you, the donors, still took a bet—and for that I am forever grateful.

To view video of Sean’s entire speech, go to www.unsp.upenn.edu/celebrations
Halfway through my junior year of high school, my family found ourselves homeless. My world was shattered and I was scared of the future... yet I was lucky. We had a family, virtual strangers, open their home for us so we didn’t end up on the streets. People, strangers, and friends, pushed me to work hard despite adversity. Beautiful people who reminded me that we never lose until we stop fighting. So I fought.

One day I received a letter about an opportunity for high-achieving low-income students to attend an elite university. The program is called QuestBridge...and it opened my eyes to the possibility of attending Penn. Yet the credit deserves to go to the University of Pennsylvania, for taking a chance on me—for believing in what I had worked for and seeing beyond the statistics that told them I wouldn’t make it.

Here at Penn, with my Civic House family, my roommates, my friends, my professors, and all the other people who have stood by me, I finally found a home...The opportunity that you have so graciously made possible has changed more than just my life, but the life of my entire family. These four years have been a reminder to us all that the fight is always worth it. Because of the generous donors to the University of Pennsylvania, my dreams can be more than simple dreams, but reality...You have helped me learn how to do more than just survive, you have helped me learn to thrive.

To view video of Megan’s entire speech, go to www.unsp.upenn.edu/celebrations.

EXCERPT FROM REMARKS BY Megan Russo, C’15

ACWORTH, GEORGIA

RECIPIENT OF THE ANDREW AND MINDY HEYER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

SPRING2015 | GIVING THE ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP

1 Christopher Engel, C’81, PAR’12, PAR’18; Destiny Bingham, C’18; Gabrielle Frederick, W’16; Lisa Merritt Engel, W’83, PAR’12, PAR’18
2 Uma Alagappan; Ishita Batra, C’17; Vairam Alagappan, C’84
3 Jennifer Suh Whitfield; Joselyn Calderon, ENG’18; Justin Hash, W’17; Yajaira Torres, W’18; Benjamin J. Whitfield, C’98, W’98
On September 7th, 2002, I had contracted a life-threatening waterborne infection on my legs after swimming in the Pra River’s tributaries in my village. The best next step, according to physicians, was to amputate both legs. However, this moment turned out to be the first time that someone decided to take a bet on me—a new physician requested that his supervisors allow him a week to re-diagnose and treat my infection. I'm standing on two legs now, so you get the rest of the story.

On that occasion, I experienced my first of life’s greatest miracles: a second chance. Years later, a little envelope from Penn would become the next second chance. Financial assistance made it possible for a street kid like me to attend Penn. Whenever I reflect on my life, my experiences, and the fact that in just a month, I will be the first in my family and my village to graduate from college, the finest in the Ivy League, I sometimes ask myself, “What if I had never been given a second chance at life and a fair shot at education?”

Would I be where I am today as an aspiring physician who hopes to change the face of medicine among underprivileged populations in the future? Your assistance has enabled me to pursue an education that will make me an asset, not just for my family and my village, but also for my country and world at large. I hope we are all able to continually advance the legacies of our donors by giving second chances to others. I’m optimistic that this will be an honorable way of expressing our gratitude.

To view video of Shadrack’s entire speech, go to www.unsp.upenn.edu/celebrations

Shadrack Frimpong, C’15

RECIPIENT OF THE YARNALL INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP
We are grateful for the kindness of alumni, parents, and friends who contributed approximately $46 million to undergraduate financial aid in Fiscal Year 2015*. In addition to donors who supported our program by increasing their support of undergraduate financial aid in Fiscal Year 2015*, we are pleased to announce the names of new scholarship donors who made generous gifts in support of undergraduate named scholarships:

**Michael S. Aberman, MD, WG’02**
**Mohammed H. Afkhami-Ebrahim, C’96**
**Milena Alberto-Perez, C’95**
**Estate of Denise F. Androulakis, NU’51**
**Bilal Aslam, ENG’06**
**Jon Awong, ENG’98**
**Elizabeth Baus, PAR’19**
**Jon J. Kerekes, NU’95, GNU’95**
**Alison J. Kerekes,**
**James E. Kaye, W’85, WG’86**
**Anessa Karney, C’92, L’97**
**Dev B. Kapadia, ENG’94, W’94**
**Adam Kahn, W’05**
**Ryan S. Jackson, W’05**
**Olga Ivanova, ENG’06**
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**Dean B. Kopadia, ENG’94, W’94**
**Anaisa Karney, C’92, L’97**
**James E. Kaye, W’85, WG’86**
**Alison J. Kerekes, N’95, GNU’95**
**Samuel S. Kim, C’85, W’85**
**Ashish Kishore, ENG’91, W’91**
**Colleen Kelly Kishore**
**Gene Y. Ko, C’94 W’94**
**Julia Kovacs**
**Michael Kovacs, W’06**
**Rajan Kundra, W’93**
**Estate of Anna Merkle Lennox, C’35, C’36**
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**Cynthia Warsawsky Mark, C’93, W’93**
**Matthew Mark**
**Arnold J. Markowitz, PAR’11, PAR’16**
**Daniel I. Markowitz, ENG’11**
**Dawn S. Markowitz, PAR’11, PAR’16**
**Samantha M. Markowitz, ENG’16, W’16**
**Adam L. Michaels, ENG’98**
**Natalya Michaels, W’98**
**Hemal N. Mirani, C’97, WG’97**
**Joseph S. Handler, M.D., C’50, M’54, FEL’60**
**Brett D. Hellerman, C’81**
**Coleen Hellerman**
**Colin A. Thune, C’05**
**Ashish C. Shah, W’92**
**Janice Pulley**
**Kirk Pulley, W’90**
**Hayley Rosenman Rejwan, C’96**
**Lloyd J. Rosenman, W’00**
**Trevor L. Pearman, PAR’17**
**Tara L. Pels, W’48**
**The Penn Ten**
**David Perez**
**Estate of Joan Plava**
**Estate of Eleanor Anglin Price, Ed’31, GEE’61**
**The Penn Ten**
**Estate of Anna Merkle Lennox, C’35, C’36**
**Estate of Donald A. Pels, W’48**
**The Penn Ten**

To realize the power of your will, contact Penn’s Office of Gift Planning at 800.223.8236 or giftplanning@upenn.edu or visit www.giving.upenn.edu/giftplanning.