Provost’s Global Forum featuring Dr. Shirin Ebadi, 2003 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

We’ve just initiated the Provost’s Global Forum, which tomorrow evening will feature the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Dr. Shirin Ebadi, the first Iranian and the first Muslim woman to win that distinction. Dr. Ebadi is a courageous fighter for freedom and human rights in her native Iran and globally. The first woman to become a judge in Iran, Dr. Ebadi works tirelessly to raise awareness about issues like children in prison and forced child marriages and has taken on many controversial cases defending political dissidents. As a result, she has been imprisoned and fined many times.

The Provost’s Global Forum is an annual event intended to spotlight a key world leader; engage the campus in substantive dialogue on issues of global importance and local relevance; highlight interdisciplinary themes as part of Penn's global expertise; and establish Penn as a key source of knowledge and research in creating a global, civil society.

This inaugural event, which will be held tomorrow evening at 7 p.m. in Jon M. Huntsman Hall, Room G-06, is free but seating is limited. All interested members of the Penn community are invited.

This event is sponsored by the Office of the Provost, Office of International Programs, Middle East Center, South Asia Center, Center for East Asian Studies, African Studies Center, Penn Lauder Center for International Business Education and Research, Huntsman Program in International Studies & Business, Christopher H. Browne Center for International Politics, Interdisciplinary Program on Women & Islamic Law, the Women's Studies Program, Muslim Student Law Association, and the Penn Persian Student Society.

NCAA Report
The University of Pennsylvania is currently in the midst of its National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) second-cycle recertification review. The purpose of the review, which is routine for all Division I member institutions and is part of a broader reform agenda the NCAA originally enacted in 1993, is to ensure the fundamental integrity of intercollegiate athletics. Penn’s first NCAA review was successfully completed in 1996.

The NCAA Certification Steering Committee has completed its self-study as part of the recertification process. This self-study is required by the NCAA as part of the review process, designed to provide each institution with the opportunity to evaluate various aspects of the intercollegiate athletics program and receive feedback from its constituencies, including students, alumni, faculty, and peer evaluators. The study is divided into three major topics that were studied by the three subcommittees: Governance
and Rules Compliance, Academic Integrity, and Equity and Student Athlete Welfare. The Steering Committee has determined that the University of Pennsylvania is operating within NCAA operating principles and has identified plans for improvement to make the athletics program even stronger.

There will be an NCAA site visit May 30-June 2, at which point the NCAA will send outside reviewers to help complete the recertification process.

Book From Katrina Conference
On January 9, 2006, Penn Press published “On Risk and Disaster: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina.” This book is a compilation of essays resulting from Penn’s recent National Symposium on Risk and Disaster, which was a collaboration between Penn’s Office of the Provost, the Fels Institute of Government, the Wharton Risk Management and Decision Processes Center and Penn Press.

Book contributors address the roles of the public and private sectors in assessing, perceiving, managing, and dealing with risk in American society. They suggest strategies for moving ahead in rebuilding the Gulf coast and in dealing with similar future issues. While the nature of future disasters is unknown, this volume stems from the reality that some sort of future natural, security, or environmental disaster is only a matter of time and that both the public and private sectors need to be better prepared.

Penn Press utilized the technology associated with on-demand publishing to make this “instant book” available within a matter of weeks after the symposium. The book has been distributed to all members of Congress, among other national decision makers, as a resource to be used when deliberating how our nation should go about preparing for the national disasters that are sure to face us in the near future.

Katrina conference at Penn

There will be another Katrina-related conference, this one to be held on our campus on February 2nd and 3rd, focusing on the rebuilding efforts in the Gulf States. The conference is being coordinated by the Penn Institute for Urban Research and all interested members of the Penn community are encouraged to attend.