To: Office of the University Secretary
From: Joseph Friedman, GAPSA Chair
Re: University Council Status Report for March 28, 2012

Dear University Council:

For this Council update, I think it will be most useful to excerpt GAPSA’s university wide email for the month of March. This email provides an overview of our financing and advocacy work, as well as showcases a fantastic slate of events. One of our goals is to provide even more information for students about where their general revenue dollars are being spent, and to hopefully encourage the home school governments – which have large budgets of their own at each Penn graduate school – to provide similar updates to their constituencies.

Thank you to the Executive Board and General Assembly for their incredible commitment and passion.

Joe Friedman

Our initial revenue totaled some $1.2 million. After distributing over 50% of this revenue to the home school governments across Penn’s twelve graduate schools, we apportioned the balance towards community building events, academic projects, student group funding, and other important initiatives, such as the Emergency Child Back-Up Care Program for students with children.

With the help of some sixty-five GAPSA members, we carefully distributed over $130,000 to students working on research projects and traveling to academic conferences, over $130,000 to social and student program events, and over $60,000 to more than one hundred student groups across campus (GAPSA Funding). We are also in the closing stages of disbursing some $38,000 to recipients of the President Gutmann Leadership Award and, in conjunction with the Provost’s Office, awarding stipends in the amount of $36,000 for the GAPSA Provost Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Innovation. We solicit applications from Penn’s 12,000+ graduate study body, and, as you can imagine, hear from many deserving applicants. I strongly believe this year’s use of funds – detailed only very briefly above – has served laudable ends for record numbers of students, and benefitted from revamped application procedures and even more transparent guidelines.

Funding is only a part of GAPSA’s mission. We work closely with Penn’s Administration to ensure we are constantly contributing to the discourse of diversity that is so vibrant on campus. We appoint 15 students to University Council and over 30 students to other University committees, such as the Facilities Committee, Honorary Degree Committee, and Open Expression Committee. Five students sit as liaisons to Board of Trustee Committees, and there are a host of other forums where graduate voices...
abound, such as the Student Health Insurance Advisory Committee, Lindback Teaching Award Committee, and Division of Public Safety Advisory Board.

We have also worked towards new initiatives, including a new GAPSA website, which has garnered over 32,000 hits since September compared to 2,000 last year, a comprehensive group database (Full Student Group Database), revamped weekly emails to quickly convey relevant information, and an unprecedented number of community building events (Event Calendar), including 76ers and Phillies tickets, theater tickets, boat cruises, an international food cart event, apple picking, and many others. We had a fantastic series of events for GradFest, including an exciting talk from the co-author of *Freakonomics*, as well as student life workshops, and reached new pockets of students through our GAPSA Advocacy and Funding Luncheons. Going forward, we hope to highlight some of the innovative programs for students sponsored at the individual schools.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you’d like further information.

Joe Friedman

MARCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) **Elections for 2012-13 GAPSA Executive Board**

Elections will be held on Wednesday, April 11 from 6-9pm at Houston Hall. The Board is comprised of 12 positions; terms last one year. Any Penn graduate student is eligible to run. To learn more about the responsibilities, you can contact a current Executive Officer here. Questions about election night should be directed to VC for Equity and Access, Rachel Delgado, at gapsa.vcpluralism@gmail.com.

(2) **Landlord Survey and Results**

Check out how Penn students feel about different HOUSING options across the City. Thinking of moving to a new building next year? This is the perfect resource for you: click on the red Landlord Survey Results tab on the bottom of the GAPSA home page. Also, to help incoming students, please fill out a brief survey submission here.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Social and community building events to further integrate Penn’s 12,000+ graduate student body.

(1) **GAPSA-SAS.gov International Music Party! (Thursday, March 22)**

An international music theme party beckons you to stay in Rittenhouse until the early morning and to put off sleep for a few more hours. **Drinks:** First 300 Penn grad students will receive a free signature cocktail ticket. Cash bar for everyone else at special price! **Location and Time:** Whisper Club, 1712 Walnut St. from 9 pm–1 am. **Price:** $5 for Penn grad students, $10 for guest. Bring Penn grad ID and everyone needs 21+ driver’s license/passport/valid ID. Contact Giselle Liu, Vice Chair for Social Activities, gapsa.sa@gmail.com, with questions.

(2) **West Side Story (Broadway) (Wednesday, March 28)**
“From the first note to the final breath, West Side Story soars as the greatest love story of all time. The new Broadway cast album of West Side Story recently won the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Musical Show Album.” Time: March 28, 7:30–10:00 pm. Location: Academy of Music, 240 South Broad St. Price: $30 each / Limit to 2 tickets per Penn grad ID. Ticket sale starts at 1 pm at the Grad Student Center on Wednesday, March 21.

(3) GAPSA Happy Hour at Ladder 15! (Thursday, March 29)

Meet Penn students from the School of Medicine, School of Education, Wharton, etc. at GAPSA’s next happy hour. Location and Time: Ladder 15 (1528 Sansom St.) on March 29, 7-9 pm! Drinks: First 200 Penn grad students will receive two drink tickets; cash bar for everyone else at special price. Bring Penn grad ID and valid 21+ ID. Email Giselle Liu, gapsa.sa@gmail.com with questions.

(4) Third Annual GAPSA Wine-Walk (Thursday, April 5) – ON CAMPUS

This extremely popular event is on the horizon! ON CAMPUS. April 5th, GAPSA Wine-Walk will bring you a fantastic experience of wine tasting. You will start from one Penn school, walk to other schools, and end up at a different Penn school. Stay tuned for the route! Email Giselle Liu, gapsa.sa@gmail.com with questions.

(5) Dinner at Positano Coast (Friday, April 6)

Enjoy a four-course dinner in Old City with both old and new friends! Time: Friday, April 6, 7:30–10:00 pm. Location: Positano Coast, 212 Walnut St. Price: $15 each / Limit 2 tickets per Penn grad ID. Tickets on sale at Grad Student Center at 1 pm on Monday, March 26. Contact: Seattle Wang, gapsa.sp@gmail.com with questions.

(6) Trip to Six Flags Great Adventure (Saturday, April 7)

Join us on an adventure to the theme park's opening weekend. Price covers transportation, entrance to the park/safari and a meal voucher. Time: Saturday, April 7, 10:00 am–7:30 pm. Location: Six Flags Great Adventure, New Jersey. Pick-up location: 3600 Chestnut St. Price: $20 each / Limit 2 tickets per Penn grad ID. Tickets on sale at Grad Student Center at 1 pm on March 26. Contact: Seattle Wang, gapsa.sp@gmail.com with questions.

(7) GAPSA Moonlight Spirit Boat Cruise (Friday, April 27) – tickets on sale now!

How do you want to celebrate the end of the semester? Join us at our annual moonlight boat cruise on April 27: a 2 hour on-the-water, 1 hour at-the-dockside experience departing from Penn's Landing. It is one of school’s biggest events for grad students with open bar, food, music, and dancing on the Spirit of Philadelphia cruise ship. Tickets and more details can be found at: http://tkt.ly/GzWj8A.

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