MEMORANDUM

To: Members of University Council

From: Amy Gutmann, President

Date: December 8, 2010

Subject: Report to the University Council

In the last month of 2010, we at Penn find ourselves with much to celebrate. Our University is becoming an ever more popular choice for students who seek an excellent education and the ability to apply their knowledge and improve the world. Our students and faculty continue to excel, and our campus continues its transformation into an increasingly beautiful, sustainable, and functional environment for all members of our community.

High school seniors have been hard at work preparing their applications for admission to Penn’s Class of 2015, and more young women and men than ever before have made our University their first choice. This fall, Penn received a record-breaking 4,557 early decision applications, a staggering 18 percent increase from last year’s admissions cycle. The students in the pool are academically talented, exceptionally diverse, and very eager to join our community. I am delighted that so many of the nation and the world’s most-talented young people would like to live and learn on our campus.

Students who attend Penn share the company of accomplished peers and world-class faculty members who garner prestigious recognitions and awards year after year. Among our notable accomplishments this year, Seniors Kristin Hall and GJ Melendez-Torres recently were awarded Marshall Scholarships; they will study economics and evidence-based social intervention at Oxford, respectively. Ei-ichi Negishi, who received his Ph.D. in chemistry from Penn in 1963, shared this year’s Nobel Prize in Chemistry with two other scientists. Earlier this semester, four professors from our School of Medicine were elected as members of the Institute of Medicine, bringing the total number of inductees since 2004 to 16.

Members of the Penn community also benefit from the many campus improvement projects recently completed or currently underway. In October, we celebrated the completion of the George A. Weiss Pavilion at Franklin Field during Homecoming Weekend and unveiled a new addition to the lobby -- a famed Heisman Trophy. Next to Weiss Pavilion, we will soon begin work on Shoemaker Green, a project that will connect to Penn Park. These and other projects ambitiously aiming for LEED certification -- the Morris Arboretum’s Horticulture Center, the Law School’s Golkin Hall, and Penn Medicine’s Translational Research Center -- exemplify Penn’s strong commitment to adopting and advancing sustainable practices.
At the last meeting of the Board of Trustees, a resolution was passed to appoint Dr. Larry Jameson Executive Vice President of the University for the Health System and Dean of the School of Medicine. Dr. Jameson is already hard at work with Dean Arthur Rubenstein and Penn Medicine’s leadership to ensure a seamless transition in July. Resolutions to reappoint Rebecca Bushnell as Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, and Michael A. Fitts as Dean of the Law School also were passed at that meeting.

It’s been a great year for Penn, and I thank all of you for working tirelessly to advance our highest priorities. With the support of our alumni, parents, and friends, who have contributed $2.89 billion to *Making History: The Campaign for Penn*, we have increased access to a Penn education; we have integrated knowledge across disciplines, and we have engaged with communities here at home and around the globe. I look forward to beginning a New Year with all of you, guided by our Penn Compact and energized by the promise of improving our world.