MEMORANDUM

To:        Members of University Council
From:      Amy Gutmann, President
Date:      February 18, 2015
Subject:   Report to the University Council

Provost Price and I were delighted to announce that after a comprehensive and rigorous search, Penn Law Professor and Deputy Dean Ted Ruger will become Penn Law’s new dean effective July 1, 2015.

Ted epitomizes Penn’s commitment to innovative cross-disciplinary scholarship, infusing his teaching and research in constitutional law with new perspectives from the humanities and the social sciences. He is an incredible advocate for Penn Law’s educational programs and for students, one of whom wrote to say she hoped “every student would have the opportunity to benefit from his sage guidance, calm presence, sense of humor, and vision for Penn and its students.” Ted is also an inclusive leader who brings together students and faculty with a wide array of interests. As we celebrate Ted’s appointment, we also gratefully acknowledge Presidential Professor Wendell Pritchett’s superb service as Interim Dean of the Law School.

I also join the Provost in thanking the many people who have worked long and hard to make the new Penn Wharton China Center a reality. Our opening celebration next month and the 100 days of exciting programming to follow will showcase Penn’s global reach and shine a light on opportunities for even greater engagement in China. We will conclude the first 100 days with a formal Dedication and Gala Celebration in September 2015. Stay tuned for additional information on our new Penn Wharton China Center in Beijing and these various events.

Congratulations to Penn’s own Dr. Giang Nguyen, who will become the new Executive Director of the Student Health Service later this spring. An invaluable member of Penn Medicine and the Perelman School for several years, Dr. Nguyen brings to this new role his strengths as a world-class clinician and an effective community outreach organizer. With his leadership, Student Health Service and our entire Penn student community will be in very good hands.

In the past year, we led a comprehensive review of the University’s protocols for responding to reports of sexual violence. Penn has an excellent structure in place for preventing and addressing sexual violence on campus, but, as a leader, we continually look for ways to improve. On January 26, we announced the appointment of Penn’s first Sexual Violence Investigative Officer, Christopher Mallios. Mallios served for many years in the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office and brings strong expertise in the areas of family violence and sexual assaults. I know the Penn community will join me in warmly welcoming him to the University.

We recently announced that three Penn seniors have received Thouron Awards to pursue their graduate studies in the United Kingdom:

- Rocky Diegmiller is applying to the University of Cambridge for a master’s degree in applied mathematics
- Vinicius Ferreira is applying to the University of Cambridge for a master’s degree in physics
- Kristina Pelekoudas is applying to the University of Oxford for a master’s degree in public policy

Congratulations to our 2015 Thouron Award winners!

Congratulations as well to the Women’s Squash Team, which recently finished the season as the undefeated Ivy League Champion. This is our Women’s Squash Team’s third Ivy championship and a credit to the hard work of both Penn’s talented student-athletes and our coaches. Well done!

Finally, we announced that this year’s Commencement Speaker will be Ambassador Samantha Power, the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations and a member of President Obama’s Cabinet. Ambassador Power is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and an internationally renowned champion for universal human rights, global prosperity, and democracy. We are thrilled and honored that she will address this year’s graduating class. Ambassador Power is joined by a distinguished group of honorary degree recipients, including Arthur Asbury, Lee Bollinger, Joan Myers Brown, Rita Moreno, Ellen Ochoa, and Cass Sunstein.