

# VILLAGE NEWS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>A Change for Exchange</i>	2
<i>Penn Abroad</i>	2
<i>Living in Du Bois</i>	4
<i>House Council Update</i>	4
<i>Ask Pam</i>	5
<i>What! No Grits</i>	5
<i>The Buzz</i>	7
<i>DuBois FIT</i>	8
<i>Playing the Social</i>	9
<i>Playing Santa Clause</i>	10
<i>Editor: Garvin Hunt</i>	

## CELEBRATING THE NEW DU BOIS

BY MS. TRISH

When word spread of the W.E.B. Du Bois College House's upcoming renovations over the summer of 2009, it was immediately decided that there would be a Grand Re-opening Celebration. However, no one could have anticipated the changes that would take place in the House from mid-May until the end of August, when the work was completed. On the outside, the bricks were repaired and cleaned; all windows were replaced with beautiful large panes that drew in the sunlight to make rooms brighter and more inviting. Inside the building, the lobby had been completely remodeled by closing off the Walnut Street entrance, tearing out the old mailboxes and relocating new ones behind the modernized information center, and adding a ramp to make access easier; huge glass-paned windows and doors provided a beautiful view of



Penn's campus on one side, and a garden that had been planted on the Walnut street side; walls had been painted; old and stained carpeting had been pulled up and replaced with tile flooring; brickwork had been cleaned; wood paneling installed; economical, but brighter lighting had been put in; two new lounges were built, one each on the second and third floors; the heating system had been updated; two new sinks, a dishwasher, a larger refrigerator, and a double unit stove were placed in the kitchen; air-conditioning was installed in all of the common rooms; the computer lab was completely revamped with new computers and work stations; and brand new matching furniture was purchased for all common areas and student suites. We could not have asked for more; it was certainly something to celebrate.

(Continued on page 3)

## WATER, THE VILLAGE, AND GUMBO

BY REV. WILL

The first time I crossed Lake Pontchartrain into New Orleans traveling from my hometown in North Louisiana, I remember being struck by how the water seemed to be just inches from the underside of the bridge and how expansive the lake seemed. I had twenty three long miles to ponder these two thoughts. Louisianans boast—with some substantiated bragging rights—that this is the longest bridge expanse in the world. That's another way of saying, "Man, that would be a lot of water to have to drink!" Those early life thoughts came rushing back to me when I learned at a Residential Faculty Council meeting that "Water" would be the theme for the academic school year '10-'11.

(Continued on page 9)



Rev. Will

# A CHANGE FOR EXCHANGE

BY ABHISHEK PANDIT

The W.E.B. Du Bois College House (just “The House” as it is affectionately known) prides itself on being called the ‘UN of UPenn’ and quite rightly so. It is the cynosure of the values, UPenn stands for, most notably diversity. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that this ‘village’ boasts a sizeable proportion of exchange students. Many exchange students are here for a maximum of one academic year and they couldn’t be in a better epicenter of activity than Philadelphia.

As exchange students, you are not only in a new college/ region but, a totally different (and wonderful) country that possesses some of the best natural and man-made wonders to behold. As such, Penn exchange students should embark on taking full advantage of touring not just Philadelphia but also, neighboring communities.

The website [www.visitpa.com](http://www.visitpa.com) is a good start where you can obtain a deluge of information on tourist attractions in surrounding counties and states. You could streamline your search pertaining to your specific interests.

So, if the inverted roller coaster at Dorney park in Allentown is not your cup of tea, you could always drive down to the scenic Longwood gardens at Kennett square in Chester county. Or maybe, you are more interested in the history of this nation and would like to visit Gettysburg- the site of one of the most important battles of the Civil war. You could obviously, just end up spending a lazy Sunday afternoon in Fairmount park (the largest urban park in the country) on the banks of the Schuylkill river running through the heart of Philadelphia.

Either way, you are bound to be left enthralled with the plethora of attractions in and around Philadelphia. My top 5 recommendations, however, before you finish your tenure at Penn, are the following:

New York- [www.nycgo.com](http://www.nycgo.com)

If Philadelphia is the birthplace of America, New York is where America grew up to be a role model. No matter where you are from, you can never feel out of place in New York. It is the melting pot of cultures and cuisines and is arguably, the unofficial capital of the world. A trip to this city should be on every student’s calendar.

Lancaster County- <http://www.padutchcountry.com>

Ever imagined anyone living the simple life without electricity, automobiles or modern day gadgets? Take a look at the Amish people in Lancaster county, just an hour away from Philadelphia. The Amish are Dutch in origin who settled here over 300 years ago and still maintain their traditional life oblivious to the stark changes occurring around them.

Poconos- <http://www.800poconos.com>

Skiing, snow tubing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, dog sledding, ice fishing, ice skating...I think I made my point! And that’s just the winter itinerary. You could still have the chance to indulge in fall activities like biking, hiking and even white water rafting. My favorite though, would be paint ball- “the most dangerous game.”

Atlantic city- [www.atlanticcitynj.com](http://www.atlanticcitynj.com)

A one-stop destination for all the pure, unadulterated fun that you saw in Hollywood movies. Atlantic City guarantees fast-paced excitement and non-stop activities throughout the year.

Washington DC- <http://washington.org/>

Finally, make a trip to the US capital, one of the most planned cities. Contrary to widespread belief, DC houses more than just government buildings. It is a medley of historic monuments, breathtaking museums, a thriving art and theatre district and world class universities.

I hope the information in this article will entice you to get up and get going and explore the places and attractions around Philadelphia. After all, **“The traveler sees what he sees; the tourist sees what he has come to see.”**

Feel free to contact me to discuss your trip itineraries. I will gladly share my amassed touristy knowledge. Cheers!

## PENN ABROAD

BY KWADWO TETTY

Du Bois College House has traditionally been known for its vibrant supportive atmosphere where everyone is part of the family, but there is one other fact about our house that few people may be aware

of. Over the past semester, I have met numerous foreign exchange students living in our wonderful house. Having so many people from different countries makes our house

a global village where residents from all walks of life can peacefully dwell and learn about each other’s cultures. The first question I usually ask our exchange students is “Why Penn?” Although I have received several different responses, most of them tend to highlight Penn’s strong academic programs and ties with other universities around the globe.

(Continued on page 3)

## PENN ABROAD

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

After learning about this, I decided to dig up some information to enlighten you about study abroad opportunities for Penn undergrads:

1. Penn has a dedicated department (Penn Abroad) to help students find the right study abroad program.
2. Study abroad is open to students in all four schools – The College, Engineering, Nursing and Wharton.
3. Opportunities exist for all undergraduate levels so even if you are a freshman or in



your senior year getting ready to graduate, you can still find the right program that matches your curriculum.

4. Students keen on taking part in the program are assigned advisors who can assist them with finding the right country in which to study.

**Remember, plan ahead for the best experience!**

For more information please visit <http://sa.oip.upenn.edu/> or attend Penn Abroad 101 sessions.

## CELEBRATING THE NEW DUBOIS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Artist, James Du Pree

Thus, even before residents and staff began arriving on campus, plans for a celebration had already begun. This was to be the celebration of all celebrations! While Faculty Master, Reverend Will Gipson, went about his task of securing President Gutmann for the occasion, Ms. Trish, the House Dean,

and House Coordinator, Carrie Barjenbruch, began to plan the festive event: Brown's Kitchens, under the direction of Ms. Pat Holmes, the House's favorite caterer, was secured to provide the always delicious food; the lively jazz band, Reference Point, was hired to perform; detailed scripts were written for tours which were led by House Council leaders, D'andre Carr and Renata Henry; and an exhibit of the works of local artist and Penn alum, James Dupree, was arranged to adorn the walls of the Amistad Gallery. The vibrant, colorful exhibit entitled, "If Not Now, When America?" is dedicated to the election of our nation's first Black president and was arranged with the cooperation of the artist, the Black Alumni Society, and the Office of Alumni Relations. It was one of the biggest hits of the day's events and will remain on display throughout the remainder of the fall semester for the viewing pleasure of members of the Penn community.

Over a hundred members of the Penn community joined Du Bois residents to help celebrate the momentous occasion. These extended family members included: the Office of College Houses and Academic Services (CHAS); Housing and Conference Services (HCS); Public Safety; Alumni Relations; the Black Alumni Association (BAS); Allied Security; Facilities; the African American Resource Center (AARC); Penn Women's Center (PWC); as well as faculty and staff from the undergraduate, graduate and professional schools. As guests feasted on the good food; clapped and tapped their feet to the rhythmic music; listened to speeches from the House Dean, President Amy Gutmann, and the Faculty Master; then toured the House from top to bottom, it was obvious to all that everyone appreciated the many wonderful changes to the W.E.B. Du Bois College House. It's been a long time coming!



Ms. Jane views the art exhibit

## LIVING IN DU BOIS: A GA'S PERSPECTIVE

BY ASHLEY MAPP

I'll never forget the long trek from Hampton, VA to Philadelphia, PA for my Graduate Associate interview. Walking in with my black suit and my Obama pin posted proudly on my blazer, I felt at home immediately. Students were walking back and forth in the hallway. The staff cracked jokes with the individuals at the front desk and Ms. Trish sat busily in her office typing away on her personal computer.

I never imagined that I would be able to be not only a part of the Du Bois family, but also the Director of Consciousness in Black Film and Theater (CBFT). This program provides knowledge about the African Diaspora. It takes you beyond the textbook or an 8:00 AM lecture in Huntsman Hall. Rather, this program engages the viewer and provides food for thought. This year's theme for the Film Series is: *Around the World & Black*. The series explores the experiences of Blacks from all walks of life, globally as well as nationally.

We began the series in mid-October by looking at Mapansula. The film depicts individuals in South Africa's Apartheid. It was followed by authentic African cuisine. On November 30, we delved into the lives of *Black Russians* and explored their circumstances with authentic Russian food and the presence of the filmmaker, Kara Lynch.

Prior to the *Black Russian* film, the 2nd floor West wing as well as other Du Bois residents went to see the film, *Precious*. *Precious* uncovers the deep and dark secrets of abuse as experienced by a 16-year-old teen girl. Later, we held a small discussion about Black beauty, forms of abuse, and resources in the African American community. There was such an interest in the discussion that residents and I agree we need a house dialog about the film next semester. More information will be provided shortly, so stay tuned.

Additionally, next semester we will commemorate the life of Martin Luther King with another film. The *Around the World & Black Film Series* will travel to the Skye Lounge in Harrison College House, where we will view *Made in America*. *Made in America* takes you into the world of the Bloods, the Crips, and the rise of gang violence in Los Angeles, California. The viewing will be followed by an enlightening discussion about gangs in America and their influences on young blacks.

The girl in the black suit now carries the title of Director, but still wears her Obama pin proudly. Come explore the *Around the World & Black Film Series*!

## HOUSE COUNCIL UPDATE

BY D'ANDRE CARR

From Tuesday night bi-monthly study sessions to coming together to celebrate Thanksgiving, W.E.B. Du Bois House Council has had an exciting start to the academic year. House Council is the student governing body of the Du Bois College House unifying residents with various types of academic, social, and cultural events. The student leaders, D'Andre Carr (president), Jeffrey Amoakohene (vice president), Collin Williams (treasurer), and Renata Henry (secretary), have had quite a productive semester. It started with their kickoff event, the House Council Mixer where residents, new and old, came out to learn about House Council and their mission and goals for the academic year. They also gauged interest for prospective House Council applicants and in following weeks, filled the positions of Academic Excellence, Social Events, and Souls of Du Bois Co-Chairs.

For freshman, beginning new academic pursuits on the collegiate level could be rigorous, challenging, and overwhelming. That's why House Council held their Academic Resource Informational which featured advisors from a variety of undergraduate support centers ranging from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) to the Weingarten Learning Resource Center. The Bi Monthly study hours offer residents a comfortable environment and snacks so they can study more productively. Finally, House Council, in collaboration with the House Dean's office held the annual Thanksgiving Gala and food drive. The program included exquisite dining catered by Brown's Kitchen, performances from talented University of Pennsylvania students, as well as the familial atmosphere that contributes to the House dynamic. Due to the overwhelming generosity of our residents, over 100 cans and boxes of food were donated to local charities for the Thanksgiving holiday.

The W.E.B. Du Bois House Council has worked hard this Fall and is excited to continue to serve residents in the Spring.

D'Andre Carr  
President



D'Andre Carr and Jacqueline Faison  
show off food donations



## ASK PAM

BY PAMELA LIU

**Question:** My roommate is driving me crazy! What are my options?

**Answer:** The college dormitory is a magical place – for many students, it is not only their first home away from home, but also a place to make interesting friends with diverse life experiences – and maybe even meet the love of their lives! However, it can also be a place where roommate problems exist – arguments may arise from learning to co-manage a shared space, differences in cleanliness, a back-stabbing roommate, or plain old incompatibility.

If you are experiencing issues with a roommate who is driving you crazy (and not in the sense meant by Britney Spears), I would advise you to follow these steps...

**1) Talk it out with the person with whom you're having a problem before you get a third-party involved.** When you approach your roommate, try to be level-headed and avoid using an accusatory tone. No one likes a whiner; chances are they will drive you even crazier when they start to get defensive. All humans think alike – when we sense that we are attacked, we will become catty even if we know we were in the wrong!

**2) Try to have a list of talking points.** This list will ensure that you get out all you want to say without getting off on a tangent (e.g. you start arguing after your roommate starts to get catty and defensive). Chances are that these roommates have no idea that they are driving you crazy and will be more considerate of your wants and needs from here on out. But if not...

**3) COMPROMISE!** Have you considered that you might also be driving your roommate crazy? When you are finished addressing your own concerns, give him/her a chance to speak his/her mind! It's hard to be the bigger person – but it's so important to learn the art of putting yourself in someone else's shoes. Do your roommate's concerns sound reasonable? Could a workable solution be reached? True compromise doesn't mean that everyone will walk away happy, but chances are the biggest issue on both your plates will become dust in the wind when you open your mind to compromise.

**4) Talk to your GA!** We are all here to help you, we will always try to support you through it, and most importantly, we don't bite. Ask us to take you out to Starbucks in the Commons – we can soothe your pain away while you talk to us about your situation. We can also act as mediators when you try talking to your roommate again.

Good luck!

Pam

Submit your own question to me for the next Village Voice Newsletter! [paliu@dental.upenn.edu](mailto:paliu@dental.upenn.edu)



*"...you might also be driving your roommate crazy?...give him/her a chance to speak his/her mind!"*

— Pam



## WHAT, NO GRITS?!

As the sweet smell of pancakes wafted through the air, even those students who failed to read the emails or the flyers posted announcing the Sunday Brunch were forced to follow their noises to the MPR on Sunday, November 1st. When they arrived they found their Graduate Associates and Ms. Trish, the House Dean, busy preparing a late morning/early afternoon feast for the House's first brunch of the semester. The hefty menu included apple, banana and chocolate chip pancakes and waffles; hash brown potatoes; scrambled eggs; an assortment of breakfast meats; buttermilk biscuits; fried chicken; tossed salad; fresh fruits; homemade strawberry preserve, and juices of all sorts. This was not to be the ordinary college campus meal. By the time set-up was complete, there was, understandably, a long line of hungry students anxiously awaiting a delicious meal.

Although it entailed a great deal of work with preparations beginning the night before and four hours of non-stop cooking the next morn-

ing by chief chef, Ms. Trish, and her assistants, GAs Ashley Mapp, Daphne Charles, Pamela Liu, and Abhishek Pandit, it was not all work and no play. There was soul music playing as the group worked; good conversation, especially about the groups' cooking skills; joking around about the fear of cooking exhibited on the faces of GAs Sebastin Weaver and Kwadwo Tettey, and playful fussing when Jeff Colonel's and Kwadwo's eggs were not quite beaten enough. Once all of the food was cooked, set up, and students were seated with their plates piled high with food, the House Dean walked around to greet residents and to make sure everyone was enjoying themselves. As she passed one table, she heard a young lady remark to a fellow resident, "If this isn't love, what is?!" That comment made it all worthwhile and no one even missed the grits.

*(See photos of the Sunday Brunch on the following page)*



# The BUZZ

## ...HAVE YOU HEARD IT?

BY DAPHNE LYNN CHARLES

Have you heard the buzz? The W.E.B. Du Bois Politics and Cultural Pluralism Residential Program (PCP) is on fire—in a good way! Students from Du Bois College House and the outlying University of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia communities are joining forces through a program that enlightens, educates, and inspires. Together, we continue to implement phenomenal programming that explores issues and challenges that plague our community, nation, and world. This semester has been an exciting one thus far! Below, take a look at some of the great events we have produced in Fall 2009:

### Capitalism: A Love Story Movie Viewing

Who says a night on the town can't be productive? The PCP Program has a group of students who form the foundation of the program. For this movie viewing, students and Program Director, Daphne Charles, went on an adventure into Center City to view the movie, *Capitalism: A Love Story*. The movie highlighted the social ills caused by a capitalistic system. Issues included life insurance policies taken out on employees of some prominent companies; the religious response to capitalism; red-lining in low-income communities; a lack of living wages for pilots; former employees of a factory who fought back against mistreatment after the unexpected shut-down of their plant; and the emotional and somewhat violent response of those who had their homes and henceforth, their livelihoods, taken away as a result of the economic downturn. It was a loaded movie, followed by loaded conversation afterwards by program attendees. In the end, the movie reinforced our knowledge that education and awareness is truly the foundation for action, especially in a society where unequal access to resources is greatly attributed to unequal access to knowledge.



### Uncharted Territory

In a democratic society, what you don't know might hurt you...or somebody else for that matter. *Uncharted Territory* was an effort to bring powerful, yet unheard voices of Philadelphia into one room where they could simultaneously be heard by Du Bois students. Detective Paul Sawicki of the University of Pennsylvania Police Department; Philadelphia Youth Action high school and college students united for social change; Lurline Jones, school teacher for 30 years in Philadelphia Public Schools and education activist; and The Philadelphia Unemployment Project, fighting for health care and advocacy for services for the unemployed, created interactive presentations that had students and staff leaning on the edge of their tables, reluctant to leave their group presentations because of the depth of their engagement with the presenters. Students literally signed up on the spot to be active supporters and volunteers for different initiatives. The event proved that students do indeed fight for social change, if given the awareness and the opportunity to do so.

### A Poetry Exchange: The Politics of Race, Culture, and The Human Experience

PCP started the semester off with a bang with programming that brought about 75 university students to the W.E.B. Du Bois College House Multipurpose Room. That night, the Consciousness in Black Film and Theatre (CBFT) Program co-sponsored A Poetry Exchange: The Politics of Race, Culture, and The Human Experience. It was a night of poetry and dance by our feature performers, Alysia Harris, Anwar Johnson and Joshua Bennett; Du Bois students; and yes, House Dean Patricia "Ms. Trish" Williams.

## WATER, THE VILLAGE, AND GUMBO

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Now, as we prepare for the final weeks of the '09 fall term, I want to plant the theme of "Water" as a thought in your mind for Spring '10 and the next academic year. While the Provost, faculty, and other administrators are trying to find just the right text for the theme year for the Penn Class of 2014, I'm already thinking about what we at Du Bois might give some attention to under the banner of that theme.

All of us know that New Orleans actually survived Hurricane Katrina relatively well. In fact, the most dramatic and life threatening damage resulted not so much from the hurricane itself, but from compromised storm walls and the failures of government at all levels. These two factors—the engineering associated with the flood walls as well as an unconscionable breakdown of governmental agencies tasked to respond to catastrophes—were the true points of "wounding" for the citizens of New Orleans and other affected Gulf Coast communities. The floodgates of misery and destruction hinged primarily on these two sobering realities. In other words, the devastation and deprivations we associate with the thousands of images we all have of that disaster were less "acts of God" than they were failures to act on the part of human beings either before Katrina or in the immediate aftermath of that Category 5 storm on August 29, 2005.

However, one hopeful spot in the midst of the tragedy that followed Katrina was the way the institutions of civil society (churches, synagogues, mosques, universities, women's groups, men's groups, bike clubs, etc.,) and individuals and families operating as special envoys to fellow citizens, organized and moved into action to help other hurting people and neighborhoods. With leadership from President Gutmann, Penn, its faculty, staff and students, poured hours of time and energy, particularly over the first three years after the tragedy,

into meeting needs as diverse as mental health support targeted at affected children and youth and engineering know how; disaster clean up and demolition of damaged homes; consultation on inter-governmental collaboration and sanctuary for dislocated students and artists; one year academic terms at Penn for some students from affected colleges, as well as many other interventions that continue even to date. And yet there is still so much more to be done.

So my hope is that as we approach the fifth anniversary of the Katrina Disaster and look forward to the academic theme year of "Water", we at Du Bois might help to define and offer additional responses to an American tragedy. I suggest that we begin first with a celebration. That's right. Let's celebrate what Penn has done and is doing by hosting a house wide Mardi Gras celebration in February 2010 complete with my homemade gumbo. Krewe beads. New Orleans jazz music. Zydeco. Best Mardi Gras costume contest. We'll have a good time—seriously. And just as seriously we'll begin in January to consider some research topics and community service activities that might focus on issues of water management and engineering; spoken word, musical and other artistic representations of water and its impact on the formation of communities as well as their sustenance. Engagement with Gulf Coast residents who relocated to Philadelphia, providing forums for them to speak out about their experiences and adjustments over the past nearly five years. I'm confident that your own ideas will be many and that we will have a head start on the academic theme year.

So, be on the lookout for updates and more targeted invitations to you to help make the next academic theme year one in which we leverage our interests in such a way that we do something remarkable that also commemorates a tragic memory in a life giving, hopeful and extraordinarily thoughtful fashion. Moreover, it will give us a good gear in which to build on our strong connections as "The Village."



## DU BOIS FIT: READY, SET, GO!

BY SEBASTIAN WEAVER



Trying to stay fit this semester? Come out and participate in the Du Bois Fit Program, which seeks to provide residents with a way to maintain a healthy lifestyle while undertaking rigorous academic schedules. Besides working out in our fabulous gym and cardiovascular rooms, programs will be held every month in the spring semester and will cover an array of issues. Topics, such as: healthy eating, dance, rock climbing, Pilates, yoga, on-the-go "10 minute exercising," dodge ball and stress relieving mechanisms will be included. Events will take place inside and outside the W.E.B. Du Bois College House.

First, Du Bois Fit will be hosting Healthy Eating, a program that emphasizes the components of maintaining a balanced diet on a college campus, with a college budget. This includes, but is not limited to: healthy ingredients, appropriate portions, making time for meals, balancing meals, and recipes. A Chef from Penn Dining will be in attendance.

The second Du Bois Fit event will be held on Friday, February 19th. It is a trip to view a professional basketball game at the Wachovia Center. We will watch high flying, spectacular Andre Iguodala, Elton Brad and the rest of the Philadelphia 76ers taking on the San Antonio Spurs at 7:00pm.

Third, we will be coordinating an event where we will teach residents how to obtain a beach body in 10 minutes a day. With Spring Break just around the corner this March event will be sure to get those bodies in shape. Come and join in at the W.E.B. Du Bois Multi-Purpose Room as we trim and tone those arms, legs, abs, and everything else.

The 2010 Program is being led by Graduate Associates Sebastian Weaver and Jeffrey Colonel. Remember, it's never too late to get fit!

## PLAYING THE GAME: SOCIAL SUCCESS IN COLLEGE AND BEYOND

BY JEFFREY COLONEL

The most important skill that a person can have is not one they teach you in school. It is written in few books, discussed in few lectures, and you can't put it on a resume. But without this skill, you will be passed up for jobs, for friends, and for your goals. That skill is the ability to gain the trust and affection of others.

While many people who have effective "social skills" would be unable to define exactly what about them brings them success with people, an entire field of psychology exists to study exactly what makes us fond of some people but not others. A few basic rules have come out of this field that anyone can take, practice, and use to make themselves more effective at communicating with others.

College is the perfect time to practice the most important skill of all – our social skills. Whether it is with networking, making friends, joining clubs, gaining the respect of our professors, or interviewing for jobs and internships, the ability to make ourselves noticed and liked is as important as any grade for a class. To help us with that, organizational psychologists have created a few basic principles to help put effective social interaction in a clearer perspective for us.

1. All people want to believe that they are important.

What does it mean to be important? That depends on the person. According to Dale Carnegie, author of *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, if you can determine what makes a person feel important, you can define that person. Putting this concept into practice transcends the simple idea of respecting others. It means looking past ourselves and taking a sincere interest in the people with whom we interact. Not forced, but a sincere interest. If we show such an interest and are willing to talk in terms of another person's interest, they will often show much more warmth towards us than if we do not.

2. People only think as individuals.

According to Professor Dwyer of the Wharton School of Business, a great deal of misunderstanding is created when people attribute a group identity to another person. It is constantly done in our language, yet it is extremely problematic. If you read the news, you will see that "China" did this, or "France" said that. This is misleading – China and France did nothing, they are only ideas. Only individuals can act. Putting this concept into practice means seeing through the organizations with which we identify people. The police officer that pulls us over for speeding, the waiter that brings us our food, the professor from whom we need a recommendation, the girl on the volleyball team that gives us butterflies – all of these people wear the badge of an institution, and we will better understand all of them if we see them as individuals, instead of simply as representatives of the group with which we associate them.

3. Everyone thinks that they are reasonable.

Every time two people have a disagreement, both people think that they are in the right. Either humanity is split down the middle between reasonable people and complete fools, or it is human nature to think that we are right, regardless of the circumstances. One would think, given this rule of human nature, that people would give up arguing with one another, since the main result of argument is that each party comes out more convinced than ever that they are the reasonable one. So how can we use such a concept? Never approach someone as their opponent. Even if the person you are dealing with has very little perspective, you must remember that their opinions seem like the most logical option to them. If we can remember this, and always treat people's opinions with understanding, we can quickly turn a potential enemy into a good friend.

If you can remember these three simple rules, you will have a better chance of getting out of that speeding ticket, getting faster service at the restaurant, getting your recommendation from that professor, or getting a date with the girl on the volleyball team that makes you feel all funny inside. Ask yourself what people care about, and take a sincere, genuine interest in it. Remember that everyone is an individual and don't make any assumptions about their values based on any groups with which they associate. And remember that all of their values seem reasonable to them, and if you have to disagree, always do so as a friend, never as an opponent.



## THE 2ND FLOOR WEST WING PLAYS SANTA CLAUSE FOR A DESERVING FAMILY

BY ASHLEY MAPP

"To those whom much is given, much is expected" is an age old saying that has passed on from generation to generation. We are quite fortunate to be students at such a great institution, the University of Pennsylvania. As a result, we must heed to the words of the founder, Ben Franklin who instructed students that the true purpose of an education is service to others.

The University of Pennsylvania is located in the midst of an urban community with many strengths and weaknesses. It is incumbent on us to be good neighbors by sharing our many resources. As a GA, I chose to involve my residents in the University of Pennsylvania's *Adopt A Family* program coordinated by the Netter Center. Departments and groups are asked to adopt a deserving Philadelphia family and provide gifts for them for the holiday season. The families are identified by two agencies that work with families around housing issues; the families are then referred to the Netter Center for support during the holidays.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor West wing selected a small family that included a mother and her two children. We were given a wish list to shop for our family. Looking at the wish list, we were struck by the request for basic items such as diapers, warm clothes, and toiletries. We could not help but think about how fortunate we are as we wrapped the shirts, gloves, and toys for our deserving family.

Through our simple gesture of helping others we learned valuable lessons. Ben Franklin was right: education becomes more meaningful if we do good for others. Given our good fortune, we have a responsibility to help others. Besides, it feels good in the end.



Looking for something to do on a rainy day? Ms. Trish, our house dean, loans movies **FREE OF CHARGE** for 3 day periods. The newest additions to her extensive collection include:

- G-Force
- GI Joe: Rise of Cobra
- The Hangover
- Harry Potter: The Half-Blood Prince
- Inglorious Bastards
- The Proposal
- Star Trek
- Transformers: The Revenge of the Fallen
- Terminator Salvation
- Up