



**Vice Chair
January 2009 Report**

As defined by GAPSAs Constitution, the Vice-Chair manages all major operations and this year this includes Gradfest09 and the Leadership Retreat.

GradFest'09

Fall 2008 Summary

Gradfest09 seeks to continue the graduate student tradition and celebrate the end of the academic year by uniting the 12 graduate schools, alumni, friends, and family all under the banner of the University of Pennsylvania. Gradfest is in its third year and hopes to be bigger and better than ever! In addition to the highly popular carnival games, Spirit of Philadelphia Boat Cruise, and Graduate Student Fun-shops, Gradfest09 will present the first ever inter-school Olympics! This spirit of friendly rivalry between the graduate students will present students challenging, competitive and just plain silly sporting events, such as tug of war, three legged hop, and water balloon tosses! Gradfest09 is targeting to double the graduate student turnout through increase co-operation with the graduate student governments, administration, and alumni relations. Gradfest09 will give all graduate students a reason to come and celebrate their Penn identity and strengthen their connection with the University.

GradFest Fundraising Update

Gradfest has been traditionally student organized and administered and depends 100% on corporate sponsorship for its \$45,000 budget. To date, Gradfest has contacted 30+ Corporate Sponsors and is still waiting on many replies. Gradfest is committed to finding outside sponsorship because of the value it adds to the graduate student community. However the current economic realities is forcing the Gradfest committee to rethink this model. In economic downturns, the marketing budgets of corporations are usually one of the first budgets to be cut, the very same budgets that Gradfest depends on for corporate sponsorship. Finding alternative funding sources for Gradfest09 is a priority for the committee and any ideas will be eagerly entertained.

In the fall, I requested a resolution for GAPSAs to fund Gradfest to the amount of \$12,000 out of the surplus. I am pleased to report that this past December, the Provost's Office has agreed to fund Gradfest up to \$20,000! In addition, the Graduate Student Center has also dedicated \$2,000 towards Gradfest.

It should be noted at this point that although finding fiscal sponsorship is difficult, this should not reflect the amount of sponsors who are more than willing to provide sponsorship through coupons, prizes, and other goods.

Gradfest09 Committee Members

Stephanie Rhodes, School of Education

Pamela Liu, Dental School

Gregory Hughes, Dental School

Tu-Quyen Nguyen, School of Education

Melissa Buck, Fels School of Government

Andrew Henry, Dental School

Dukyoung Lee, School of Design

Alejandro Hagan, School of Social Policy & Practice, The Wharton School

GAPSA Leadership Retreat Update

Last year, GAPSA together with the Office of Student Life, and VPUL organized the first-ever graduate student retreat designed to provide a formal leadership development program for Penn's future leaders. The results of the program were an outstanding success, as demonstrated by the presence of a few GAPSA executive board members!

This year, GAPSA hopes to not only replicate last year's success but also improve upon it by promoting existing leadership events on campus, and provide school specific leadership development opportunities that are customized to a school's perspective and need.

This year leadership retreat will build upon the success of last year and offer new elements of depth for those students who have a high exposure to leadership retreats through a series of additional specialized workshops. The retreat as a whole will continue to on topics and issues most germane to the problems, opportunities and realities facing graduate students. Together with the Office of Student Life the retreat will take place March 13th-15th at the Fellowship Farm, Pottstown PA.

Budget Update

Committee Food Expenses: \$202.26

Submitted by Alejandro Hagan, GAPSA Vice Chair