
To: Brenda Brand, Office of the Secretary
From: Andrew J. Rennekamp, GAPSA Chair
Date: March 19, 2009
Re: GAPSA University Council Status Report for March 25, 2009

Call for Nominations: GAPSA Executive Board Elections (April 8, 2009)

Elections for positions on the 2009-2010 Executive Board of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) will be held on Wednesday April 8, 2009 at 6pm in the Bodek Lounge of Houston Hall. Any current graduate or professional student at the University of Pennsylvania may make a nomination or be nominated. Self-nominations are encouraged. All nominations should be sent, by way of e-mail, to the current Vice Chair for Equity and Access, Esther Agbaje (gapsa.vcpluralism@gmail.com). Nominations will remain open until the start of the elections.

Call for Nominations: GAPSA-UA Public Safety Award (April, 29 2009)

Each year GAPSA and the Undergraduate Assembly (UA) team up to present an Award to a member of the Penn community, and specifically the Department of Public Safety (DPS), who has shown outstanding service during the course of the most recent academic year. This year the GAPSA-UA Award will be presented at a DPS Ceremony on Wednesday, April 29, 2009. Any Penn student may nominate an individual for the award (e.g. Police Detectives, Officers, AlliedBarton Guards, etc.). Nominations can be sent to the GAPSA Chair via e-mail (gapsa.chair@gmail.com) anytime before Monday, April 13, 2009.

GAPSA sponsors “PhD Comics” Jorge Cham Event (February 24, 2009)

The creator and author of the “Piled Higher and Deeper” comic strip and book series Jorge Cham spoke at Penn last month to an audience of about 400 graduate students, which packed out the Hall of Flags in Houston Hall. Cham, who earned his Ph.D. at Stanford University, gave a humorous talk about the “power of procrastination” and the plight of the graduate student, which was accompanied by many illustrations from his works. The free event included a Q&A session, free pizza, and a book signing. “PhD Comics” can be viewed online: <http://www.phdcomics.com>

GAPSA Supports Law Student Auction (February 26, 2009)

The Equal Justice Foundation, a GAPSA-funded, student-run, non-profit organization held its annual Auction on Thursday February 26, 2009 from 6-10pm. The Foundation exists to raise money for Penn Law students who are working in public-interest law over the summer and following graduation. Several items were donated to the Foundation by GAPSA to be auctioned off. These included GAPSA t-shirts, tickets to a GAPSA outing to a Phillies game, and tickets to the annual GradFest Boat Cruise. More information about the Equal Justice Foundation can be found online: <http://www.law.upenn.edu/groups/ejf>

GAPSA Exec Board Members attend White House Taskforce Meeting (February 27, 2009)

Six members of the GAPSA Executive Board were invited to observe the first meeting of the “Middle Class Task Force” chaired by Vice President of the United States of America Joseph R. Biden Jr. The event was held on Friday February 27, 2009 at 12:30pm on campus in Irvine Auditorium. The focus of the meeting was on “green jobs as a pathway to a strong middle class.” In attendance were several additional cabinet members as well as Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell (C’65), Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter (W’79), U.S. Senators Arlen Specter (C’51) and Robert P. Casey Jr. and U.S. Representatives Chaka Fattah (Fels’86), Robert A. Brady and Patrick J. Murphy.

GAPSA Cheers Philadelphia “Kixx” Soccer Team to Overtime Win (March 1, 2009)

On Sunday, March 1, 2009, GAPSA hosted an outing to the Wachovia Spectrum, where 50 graduate and professional Penn students cheered Philadelphia’s Major League Indoor Soccer team the “Kixx” to a 10-8 win in OT against the Rockford Rampage. Students paid \$5/ticket and received a free drink and a meal coupon.

GAPSA Leadership Retreat (March 13-15, 2009)

Last weekend, GAPSA, in coordination with the Office of Student Life and the Vice President of University Life (VPUL), hosted its 2nd annual educational “Leadership Retreat” for graduate and professional students. To participate, interested students seeking to improve their leadership skills were required to each submit an application highlighting their experiences and aspirations. Of the more than 75 applicants from each of the 12 schools, 35 were selected. These participants teamed up with Office of Student Life staff for the two-day intensive program hosted in Pottstown, PA. Areas of learning focused on group dynamics, power dynamics, leadership styles, and conflict resolution. Students returned on Sunday afternoon looking forward to pursuing leadership roles throughout the University.

GAPSA Chair “Twitters”! (Spring 2009)

“What are we doing?” The answer is “A whole lot!” – and now you can be in the loop too. Follow GAPSA Chair Andrew Rennekamp around campus (virtually, not literally, please) as he provides updates on GAPSA meetings, events, news, and new deals or programs for graduate and professional students. You’ll be the first to know what GAPSA is doing for you on and around campus. To sign up for the “Twitter” feed visit our website: <http://www.gapsa.upenn.edu>