



Equipped for Success

Creating opportunity on campus for all students



Penn's impressive track record of ensuring that admitted students' full demonstrated need is met with grants-based financial aid is matched

by its commitment to ensure that students thrive once they are on campus. The University provides a supportive network of academic, extracurricular, and social resources to help students coming from a wide variety of backgrounds make the best of their Penn experience.

The competition among peer schools to attract the top talent is fierce. But it is a challenge that the Office of Undergraduate Admissions welcomes and meets. "We offer a top-notch education with a vibrant extracurricular life in an exciting city," says Nicole Maloy, W'95, Associate Dean for Equity and Access at Penn. "We work hard through on-campus programming, school and regional outreach,

and community-based organizations around the country that focus on supporting college-bound youth to ensure that students from historically underrepresented groups will find their way to Penn and apply." Some of Penn's partners in identifying excellent students from diverse backgrounds are QuestBridge, KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program), Say Yes to Education, and College Track.

The Office of the Vice Provost for University Life (VPUL) has staff whose goal is to unify the various resources—both programs and people—available to help students succeed once they are on campus. "The key is making sure those resources are connected with each other to support students holistically," says Karu Kozuma, VPUL's Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs. "When we see students struggling academically or if they are challenged with finding an internship or summer opportunity, we are able to connect the dots and address students' needs."

"We are committed to welcoming students and providing them with tailored, sustained support and mentoring from the moment they arrive on campus."



Sowing the Seeds of Leadership



Marcus Mundy, C'14

Penn encourages students from all backgrounds to summon their inner strengths

Coming to Penn as a freshman can be daunting. One of several pivotal programs for incoming students designed to ease their transition from high school to Penn is the University of Pennsylvania College Achievement Program (PennCAP). If Marcus Mundy's experience is any indication, PennCAP not only helps students transition into college—it also builds leaders.

"Coming out of the program as a participant, I would say that I had a lot more confidence than when I began," says Mundy,

C'14, a Philadelphia native and recipient of the city's Mayor's Scholarship. "As a counselor in PennCAP, I was able to take a huge role in reaching out to students and create inclusive spaces, letting them know that all of their issues are important."

Mundy, who now works as a coordinator in the graduate studies program at the Annenberg School for Communication, completed PennCAP's Pre-Freshman Program (PFP) and went on to travel the world with the Glee Club, serve as a Penn Abroad ambassador, and hold leadership roles in several student organizations. Upon graduation, he was elected by his class to receive the prestigious Spoon Award, Penn's oldest senior leadership recognition.

Mundy credits his success in part to the experiences he had during PFP, a program designed to equip students requiring extra support with the skills and resources they need to succeed. Each student in the PFP is assigned an upper-classman mentor; program graduates, like Mundy, then have an opportunity to serve as mentors to new students.

"The students in the PFP typically have a more difficult time adjusting to the type of environment at Penn," Mundy says. "If you are coming from a small town or are the only person from your high school at Penn, you can feel like a small fish in a huge pond. The program gives you specific connections to people who can give you advice."

The Pre-Freshman Program's strength, according to Mundy, lies in the carefully designed activities meant to encourage participation and facilitate social interaction between students who, at first, seem to have little in common.

"PennCAP did a really good job at equalizing the playing field," Mundy says. "Every activity was for the entire group and encouraged everyone to have a voice. They helped students understand how to participate in a recitation, how to interact with professors, and get along with students who have opinions completely different from their own."

As a counselor, Mundy enjoyed teaching students how to advocate for themselves academically—telling them it is OK to change majors or ask for special permission numbers for courses—and introducing students to the Weingarten Learning Resource Center or the Penn Libraries' equipment lending program.

Most of all, "I strived for a space of total inclusion," he says. "Bring all of your issues to the table because they are important here. You aren't just a student—you're an athlete, you're a daughter, you have other responsibilities and while you're at Penn, you can get the help you need." ■

For many students, that introduction begins even before they attend New Student Orientation. The Pre-Freshman Program (PFP), offered by PennCAP (University of Pennsylvania College Achievement Program), invites select admitted students to campus in July, approximately six weeks before the official start of the fall semester. The students, who come from around the country and the globe, live together on campus and receive an introduction to life at an Ivy League university. They have a chance to work with Penn graduate students and faculty, take workshops that serve as primers to their formal programs of study, receive tutoring and help developing strategies for studying and time management, all while building relationships with each other that often last throughout their time at Penn and beyond.

"PFP students who continue in PennCAP are assigned a staff advisor and peer mentor for the duration of their time at the University," says Rev. Will Gipson, Associate Vice Provost for Equity and Access at VPUL. "We are committed to welcoming students and providing them with tailored, sustained support and mentoring from the moment they arrive on campus." ■