ABOVE: VUB Students enjoy dinner and the theater. The students visited People’s Light and Theater Company in Malvern, PA to view August Wilson’s play *Fences*. The outing supplemented their study of the play in their Literature 200 class.

The 2015 Spring and Summer semesters are coming to a close. The 15-week-long semesters began on Monday, January 12th and Monday, May 4th, with new and returning veterans enrolled in classes that include English, Spanish, math, computers, and science. In addition, the Special VUB Math Boot Camp is helping to provide students with extra practice in Math in a fun, collegial and challenging environment, where students develop their math skills at their own pace. We wish all students good luck!

**Veterans Upward Bound Mission Statement**

The TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program, an educational opportunity program funded by the U.S. Department of Education, advocates for the learning experience of under-represented Philadelphia area military veterans. The program provides intensive pre-college academic courses and comprehensive supportive services to promote the academic development of veterans towards the pursuit of a post-secondary education.
Hello VUB Students, Staff, Friends and Colleagues –

This past year many of us with the Veterans Upward Bound Program at the University of Pennsylvania experienced the real meaning of **HONOR**. We were fortunate enough to have a team of Wharton Management 100 students sponsor a trip to Washington DC and take 28 VUB students and 2 VUB staff, as well as the 10 students on the Wharton Team, on an academic and cultural enrichment trip to our country’s capital. We toured George Washington University, the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, and the Vietnam Veterans and Vietnam Women’s Veterans Memorials. We enjoyed a dinner and play in the evening. It was an honor to enjoy and learn from each of these sites and activities, particularly the memorials. However the pinnacle of the trip was at Arlington Cemetery. Many in the group had not seen President John F. Kennedy’s burial site or that of his brother Senator Robert Kennedy. There were rows and rows of tombstones. They symbolized thousands who have lost their lives for our country and who served to bring freedom to the United States and the world. The 420 acres of burial sites reminded all of us of how privileged we are that others have gone to war to defend us. Many of the VUB students remarked that for the first time they realized how fortunate they were to have come home alive after serving in the military. It was an honor to fully realize the ultimate sacrifice that others have made for us. As many know, the most visited tomb in Arlington is The Tomb of The Unknown Soldier. This tomb symbolizes all of the unidentifiable men and women who have served in the military and died for our country. On the afternoon that we visited The Tomb of The Unknown Soldier we were greatly honored to have four VUB students lay a wreath at the tomb. The words “Veterans Upward Bound University of Pennsylvania” were written on the banner across the wreath. With an honor guard leading the way the four students prepared to walk down the stairway leading to the tomb. They held their heads high as they approached the wreath, gently picked it up, moved it closer to the tomb, and listened to the bugler play Taps. Those of us in the audience watched as our comrades performed this act of honor. It was truly an honor to witness the four VUB students who have served our country lay this wreath. Tears were streaming from our eyes. This was an incredibly moving experience. As many students commented, it was a spiritual experience. It is an honor to be in the company of Veteran Upward Bound students. Our veterans have been through so much, and they continue to go through much, yet they keep on moving towards goals that will positively move their lives forward. What a gift it is to serve them, and in fact to learn from them. They give us lessons of perseverance and patience and of joy despite being in physical and emotional pain. To all, enjoy the remainder of your summer and we look forward to the honor of serving you, as you have served us, during the upcoming 2015 Fall cycle.

**Diane Sandefur**
VUB Director
The Fall semester provided lots of opportunities for learning inside and outside of the classroom. Notably, a group of Literature students joined together for a trip out to Malvern, PA, to the People’s Light and Theater Company and the Farmhouse Bistro to enjoy dinner and the theater. The students had been working hard at reading and analyzing the play in their Literature 200 classroom. So, the outing to Malvern was both enjoyable and educational. Before the play began, students enjoyed dinner at the Farmhouse Bistro, a casual and delicious dining spot adjacent to the theater. After dinner, students saw the emotionally gripping Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning drama, performed in extraordinary fashion with Michael Genet in the starring role as Troy Maxson. Students’ reactions were unanimously favorable. Student Amir Robinson commented that “overall, the play was very beneficial.” He found that although the story was set in the 1950’s, it dealt with issues that are “contemporary and relate to people in our times.” He added that the acting was excellent, and the food was delicious!
Wharton Students Raise Funds to Provide Washington, DC Trip

Students in the Veterans Upward Bound program enjoyed an opportunity to visit the Nation’s capital this Fall, thanks to the efforts of the Black Diamond Team from Wharton’s freshman Management 100 class. To help fund the trip, the Black Diamond Team raised $4,400 from businesses across the nation. Forty travelers headed to Washington DC on a crisp, clear day in November. The group consisted of twenty-eight VUB students, two staff, and ten Wharton undergraduates. The well-planned event included a campus tour of George Washington University; trips to selected Museums; a visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where VUB students ceremoniously placed a wreath; dinner in a revolving rooftop restaurant; and theater tickets.

April McCrea most enjoyed her trip to the National Museum of Natural History. She said that she learned a lot about animal life from seeing the life-sized displays of animals that before, she had only seen in photos and documentary films. The exhibits gave her a more realistic perception of the comparative sizes of the different animals.

Sam Ayoub spoke with overwhelming emotion about his visit to Arlington Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It caused him to reflect on how young the soldiers were when they gave their lives for our country and our freedom. “The Arlington experience is one of remembrance of generation after generation of service to this Nation. It was a privilege for me to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.”

BELOW: VUB staff, VUB students, and students from the Wharton Management 100 “Black Diamond Team” during their trip to Washington DC.
**Washington, DC Trip**

**ABOVE LEFT:** VUB and Management 100 students pose together in front of the National Gallery of Art during their cultural tour of Washington DC.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Students tour George Washington University.

**BELOW:** Students were deeply moved as they participated in placing a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
ABOVE: Wharton students surprise VUB students with generous laptop donation at a luncheon event designed to honor the veterans.

A group of freshman students, in the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton Management 100 class, decided to use their emerging management skills to support local veterans enrolled in Veterans Upward Bound. They asked VUB director Diane Sandefur where the greatest need might be. Diane quickly responded: “Laptop computers!” That was all it took for the group to engage in the effort to obtain laptops for VUB students. The Wharton group identified Philadelphia based businesses which might be able to support the laptop initiative. Support came from the Pfizer Corporation, which donated 111 laptop computers and from Boeing, which donated 23. Additionally, the students raised funds to provide flash drives, lanyards and a delicious lunch for all VUB students. VUB students were delightfully surprised by the event and the generous gifts. They have since learned to put their new computers to good use, after the Wharton group planned additional training on laptop technology.

Veterans Upward Bound Scholarship Fund

One way of making a positive difference in the life of a VUB graduate is to award scholarship monies that will help fund their college education. The TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program at the University of Pennsylvania offers three scholarships annually. The scholarships support TRIO VUB Graduates to offset their college expenses. Every VUB recipient of the scholarship funds is a deserving and successful student.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to the scholarship fund, you may mail your check to: “The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania”, Attn: Diane Sandefur, Director of VUB, 220 S. 40th St. Suite 260, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Or go here to make an online contribution: https://medley07.isc-seo.upenn.edu/giving/jsp/fast.do
and type in TRIO Veterans Upward Bound in the upper right hand select box.
Veterans Upward Bound graduate, and Math Boot Camp Instructor **Drew Bendler** is amazed at where his life is taking him now. Growing up in Camden County, New Jersey, Drew was one of those young men who believed that college was not for him. Drew disliked high school, and was eager to head straight into the military upon high school graduation. Drew enjoyed a highly successful fourteen year career as an Infantry soldier in the United States Army. After leaving military service, Drew discovered the Veterans Upward Bound program at the University of Pennsylvania and with fear and trepidation, he enrolled. Since then, Drew’s life and goals have transformed. An aspiring math teacher, Drew now attends Camden County Community College and takes classes required to become certified to teach math. He is on the Dean’s List at his school. He is gaining teaching experience by designing and instructing Math Boot Camp for current Veteran’s Upward Bound students. Math Boot Camp provides an informal setting for math practice and homework help. Students progress at their own pace. Drew’s curriculum is designed to augment a student’s current VUB math class, or to prepare the student for the classes he or she will attend in future semesters. Drew will soon graduate from CCCC, and plans to further his education at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Let’s extend a big welcome to our newest VUB staff member, Counselor **Denise Byrom**. Denise comes to us from The Department of Veterans Affairs in Buffalo, NY and more recently working in Higher Education at Burlington County College and Peirce College. She has worked directly with military students and dependents, as a Military Admissions Counselor and a VA Certifying Official. Denise loves working with the veteran population and truly believes that hard work and dedication will allow you to live out your dreams. Her personal motto is “It’s not supposed to be easy! If it were easy everyone would be doing it”. Denise graduated from Buffalo State College and Canisius College for graduate school. She is originally from Rochester, NY and thinks that these Philadelphia winters are a joke; she can tell you all about snow and cold weather. Denise is here to help you in any way that she can and looks forward to getting to know you all.
The summer semester provided a lot of opportunities for college tours, museum visits, and even walking through a castle! The group first toured West Chester University. The school was founded in 1871 and is a public institution that offers more than 100 undergraduate degrees in the arts and sciences, education, teacher certification, and advanced study preparation in medicine and law. The highlight of our visit to the campus was stopping by their Veterans Center and meeting the Coordinator Lillian Morrison. She welcomed us with open arms and was excited to see so many Veterans visiting the office. On our way out she also provided us all with boxes of Girl Scout cookies.

Later that day, we then went to Brandywine Museum to see the featured Horace Pippin exhibit “The Way I see it”. Pippin was a self-taught African American painter and a veteran who served in Europe during World War I. At the museum the group enjoyed lunch and the scenic views of the banks overlooking the Brandywine River.
Summer Excursions...Next Stop, Delaware Valley University

The travels continued throughout Pennsylvania as we headed north into Doylestown, PA. The group traveled on Septa’s Regional Line which conveniently dropped us off on the University’s campus. While reading this you might be saying to yourself “Delaware Valley University? Don’t they mean Delaware Valley College?” As of April 2015 DelVal was officially granted University status. Congrats to the University on such a great achievement.

Upon arriving, we were greeted by amazing staff members. They took the time to provide us with admission information and guided us on a tour of the magnificent 570 acre campus. DelVal offers more than 25 undergraduate majors and a variety of adult education courses. Many graduates of the school take positions within the pharmaceutical and food industries, work in government or business, or go on to become veterinarians or start their own companies.

Before leaving we stopped by the Vet Center on campus. The center is a gathering place for student- veterans and military members, offering personalized services to fulfil each veteran’s needs. Staff at the center provide: counseling, advising, registration and financial aid guidance.
VUB In Action!!!

VUB site seeing and taking in all the information at Delaware Valley University
While in Doylestown we put on our walking shoes and trooped through the beautiful suburb. After some great exercise we made our way to Fonthill Castle. The castle was the home to an American archeologist and tile maker, Henry Chapman Mercer. It was built between 1908 and 1912. The castle features 44 rooms, over 200 windows, 18 fireplaces and 10 bathrooms. It contains a lot of built in furniture and is embellished with decorative tiles that Mercer made at the height of the Arts and Crafts movement. In addition to his expansive collection of ceramics embedded in the concrete of the house, the castle also contains over 6,000 books. Our tour guide went into great detail about the life Mercer lived and his eccentric personality was displayed though the décor and furnishings in his home. Fonthill Castle attracts over 30,000 visitors annually from all over the world.
Worth 1,000 Words...

Learning, Educating and supporting our Vets all summer long !!!
A Tour Through our Very Own... University of Pennsylvania

If you live in or around the Philadelphia area there is one thing we know they do not lack, institutions of higher learning. One in particular is, The University of Pennsylvania, commonly referred to as “Penn” or “UPenn”. Penn was established in 1740 by Benjamin Franklin – printer, inventor and future founding father of the United States. Franklin’s educational goals were to train young people for leadership in business, government and public service.

The civic institutions that Franklin helped launch include the county’s first subscription library and first hospital, in addition to what would become America’s first university, The University of Pennsylvania. To this day, Penn’s 302 acre West Philadelphia campus reflects innovation, and creativity across all boards.

While on tour of UPenn’s campus the students were able to see the world’s first electronic, large scale, general-purpose digital computer (ENIAC, 1946), Penn Archeological Museum, the first Student Union Building in the country, College Hall, a Frank Furness designed building and the secret Bio pond.
APOLOGY To the Next Generation
By Warren Russell

I have been waiting to write this poem for a long, long time, but the problem was, I couldn't find the rhythm. After thinking about it, I realize there’s no rhythm or reason. I left you in your early life season. I don't know what to say about what I have done. Oh, I'm sorry for leaving you out there like that, my daughter, my son.

I was young and that’s not an excuse, but that the one I’m going to use. I need to tell you, I know for whatever reason, good, bad or indifferent, it wasn't your fault. Maybe I went into the military, or got caught up on drugs. Maybe I had to commit a crime because in my pocket I didn't have a dime. Sitting around thinking, missing you, this is what I had to do; I had to tell you my sons and my daughters how sorry, how sorry I am not being there when you needed someone to provide, teach you how to respect yourself and treat yourself and others right. You needed a friend, not only a friend but a Dad. A Dad to stand and support you when you're happy or sad.

Now you stand on the corner with your boys or your girls, but in reality, still alone. Hey!!!hitting that pipe, robbing people, or even smoking a bone. Because I was running around when I was young and confused as hell, I didn't even think, you were a blessing for me. There was no one to tell you they loved you.

I’m sorry I wasn't there to whisper in your ear, to tell you “Don't be afraid of monsters and ghosts.” Son and daughter, you are the most. I know I didn't do right for you then, but please can we start again?

Because you didn't have a father in your life, you had to deal with life’s strife. I know in a lot of cases you had a Mother, Grandmother, Stepfather, Stepmother, Grandfather or even Boyfriend a Girlfriend do what they need or needed to do in your life. I pray they were positive. As long as I live, I wish I was there to give.

Now hopefully I will let you know, I am so sorry that I did go. I didn't go. I didn't get a chance to know you. I didn’t get a chance to talk or show you the things that a Dad/Father would do, show you all that I knew. I know you have much hate in your heart, by asking your forgiveness, that will give us somewhere to start. I’m trying to help you get rid of those demons so You can see in yourselves there are so many young men and women existing without even a friend.

You have much hate so to know about peace, you don’t know where to start. In this my sons and my daughters, I have to take the blame for not being there to give you a name. I just want you to know I’m SO, SO, SO SORRY.