Homecoming 2009

Arts & Culture

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Alumni Awards of Merit
Penn’s highest honor celebrates 75 years
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Class Awards

Class of 1959 | CLASS AWARD OF MERIT | "Unsurpassed in individual achievement and loyalty, as well as in service and generosity" with "dedication to philanthropy on a local, national, and global scale," you have contributed "a combined total of more than $100 million to the University" and for your 50th reunion, breaking "participation records, with over 400 classmates making gifts to the class fund."

Class of 1974 | DAVID N. TYRE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CLASS COMMUNICATIONS | "Bridging the print and the electronic age," you have "steadfastly connected with each other straight from the heart" and with "your highly evolved e-newsletter,... you garnered high attendance for your fabulous 35th reunion" maintaining "unity and school spirit through your multifaceted communications network."
the fundraising efforts. You further strengthened our collections by donating your own papers. And, when the University celebrated its 250th anniversary, you led the Philadelphia Orchestra in a commemorative concert.

In keeping with the sonata form that has been an important part of your musical life, we like to think of Penn as the exposition, your conducting career as the development, and your return to Penn for the Creative Spirit Award as the recapitulation—with a little cadenza to include your poetry. In presenting its first Creative Spirit Award to you, James DePreist, we say Bravo, Maestro!

**Lela S. Jacobsohn, C’97, ASC’02, Gr’07 | Young Alumni Award**

Beginning your Penn life as a Benjamin Franklin Scholar, you made the Dean’s List, the Morton Board Senior Honor Society, and Phi Beta Kappa, and graduated Summa Cum Laude with both the Alumni Society Student Award of Merit and the Trustees’ Council of Penn Women Leadership Award tucked under your arm. As it turned out, you were just getting started. Since then, you have been recognized with the President and Provost’s Citation for Exceptional Commitment to Graduate and Professional Student Life and the 2005 Alice Paul Award.

While working toward your Master’s and Doctoral degrees at the Annenberg School for Communication, you led the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly. Former provost, Ron Daniels, commenting on your participation on his Planning and Budget Committee, called you the most effective student leader he had ever worked with. You also performed brilliantly as the Graduate Student Liaison for both the Trustees’ Council of Penn Women and various Trustees’ Committees, as well as for the University Council and the Graduate Student Center Advisory Board. These accomplishments occurred while you were also earning several fellowships and other awards and writing your dissertation. Dean Michael Delli Carpini of the Annenberg School, noting your breakthrough studies in health communication, says that in 30 years of working with graduate students, he has never met anyone who “combined academic strength and commitment to the institution with such skill and passion.”

Even as you performed these student and University governance roles, you were a very active undergraduate alumna, serving on the Secondary School Committee and the Penn Alumni Committee on Communications, and—indeed—as the Gift Chair for the Class of 1997 10th year reunion. Currently, you are a Graduate School Representative on the Penn Alumni Board of Directors, a member of the Penn Alumni Council, and a mentor and speaker for the Penn Alumni Career Network.

We are delighted that your career at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia as a Health Communication and Behavioral Scientist has kept you near Penn, and that your Wharton-alumnus husband is part of our medical school faculty. It is a statement of your family’s dedication to Penn that also includes your father, sister, and brother-in-law who are all graduates of the University.

Your intelligence, integrity, compassion, and extraordinary dedication, make you one of Penn’s treasures. We are proud to present you with the 2009 Young Alumni Award.

**David P. Montgomery, C’68, WG’70 | Alumni Award of Merit**

From your days as a scholar-athlete bouncing from baseball, basketball, and football—to your current position as General Partner, President and Chief Executive Officer of the World Champion Philadelphia Phillies—you have remained one of Penn’s “most valuable players.” As an undergraduate you were a member of Phi Sigma Kappa, served as Social Chairman of the Interfraternity Council, joined Kite & Key, and were elected Abbot of the Friars Senior Society.

After earning your MBA from Wharton you went directly to work in the Phillies Sales Department—which made you a pitch to sorts—from where you rose steadily over the years to your current role.

Season after season, you have gone to bat for your alma mater, as an Alumni Trustee on the External Affairs Committee and the Neighborhood Initiatives Committee, on the Penn Alumni Council of Representatives’ Board of Directors, Nominations Committee, and Alumni Council on Admissions Advisory Board, where you are still remembered for giving discounted Phillies tickets to alumni children. In addition, you served as Vice President of the General Alumni Society, Co-Chair of the General Alumni Board and Co-Chair of the Task Force Sub-Group on Affinity Groups. You were named Friar of the Year in 1992 and served on the Class of 1968, 35th Reunion Gift Committee. Members of the Penn Club of Philadelphia cherish the special attention you give them at their annual Phillies event, where you take the time to highlight your favorite Penn organizations.

Among your greatest accomplishments at Penn has been your commitment to the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, where you apply your unique understanding of the audience-performance equation to your work as an Overseer. A great booster of the Philadelphia International Children’s Festival, you donate food for the Penn Family Picnic, to which you bring a very popular guest each year—the Phillie Phanatic.

You have also put your expertise in communication and the media to excellent use as a member of the WXPN Policy Board, serving as chair for three years, helping with the move to the new building, now a well-known Philadelphia landmark on the edge of Penn’s eastward expansion.

Widely cheered as a quintessential citizen of Philadelphia, you raise funds for a host of charitable causes throughout the area. Here at Penn, you cover all the bases, bringing boundless loyalty and energy to the roles of fan, publicist, manager, and all-round heavy hitter. No wonder your son was inspired to become, like you, a graduate of the College.

We at Penn think of you as our own special mascot and we are proud to present you with the 2009 Alumni Award of Merit.

**Lawrence J. Schoenberg, C’53, WG’57 | Alumni Award of Merit**

If you were a book, you would be historically significant, digitized, coveted by collectors, and studied by scholars. And you would certainly reside in Penn’s Rare Book & Manuscript Library, where the Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image (SCETI) would share you with the world.

As a real-life member the Board of Overseers of the Penn Libraries, where you served as Chair and are now Emeritus, you have presided over more than twenty years of the library’s growth and transformation. Your impact results from your expertise in both modern electronics and medieval manuscripts, and in the spark you ignited between them. Along the way, you ensured the Board’s ongoing strength through the recruitment of new members, including your wife, Barbara Brzidle, with whom you co-founded the annual Lawrence J. Schoenberg Symposium on Manuscript Studies.

You began sixteen years ago by funding the Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image, initiating technological advances in the Penn Libraries and transforming the library system to one of the most modern of its kind, widely acclaimed for providing cost-effective, high-quality digital scans of rare books and manuscripts.

Because of you, manuscripts—the lifeblood for those studying the Middle Ages or Renaissance periods—have been made accessible to students and scholars at Penn and beyond. You not only provided the necessary funds, but also requested to have faculty placed on the acquisitions committee, and gave graduate and undergraduate students hands-on access to manuscripts. As a result, professors from art history, classics, English, history, music, religious studies, and Romance languages now hold classes in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library, incorporating medieval and Renaissance texts into their teaching.

Finally, there is what you yourself have suggested may be your most lasting contribution to scholarship: the Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts. You devoted countless hours, over more than a decade, to create what may one day become the Universal Catalog of Manuscripts—something envisioned by many, but only now possible in the digital age. That you have entrusted this work to the Penn Libraries is further proof of your commitment to scholarship and your love for Penn.

Now, as your remarkable Penn narrative continues, we add an important footnote by proudly presenting you with the 2009 Alumni Award of Merit.