LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we ring in 2016, we want to pause for a moment and thank you for your generosity to, and support of, the University in 2015 — so many of you gave freely of your time, energy, and financial resources, and for that we are most grateful. Looking ahead to the first half of the new year, we are anticipating Penn’s 260th commencement — quite a milestone! And prior to that, we look forward to seeing you at the Harrison Society luncheon on Thursday, April 7.

Dr. Gutmann will join us for this festive event at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology — particularly timely because, as you will read further in this issue, this year we celebrate the 100th birthday of the Museum’s Harrison Rotunda. We look forward to seeing you here on campus or closer to your own home, or to hearing from you by phone or e-mail.

Marcie L.H. Merz, JD,
Executive Director & Associate General Counsel

With best wishes,

...
THANK YOU!
Here at Penn, it is the people who make the difference. With the support of Harrison Society members like you, our University is teaching, discovering, and achieving more than ever.

We invite you to explore the latest edition of People Supporting Penn, the University’s interactive website, recognizing all those who made gifts to the University during fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015).

The University extends its deepest gratitude and appreciation to all Harrison Society members for their outstanding generosity, which helps in the continuation of Penn’s tradition of academic excellence. This year we are happy to honor members who have joined the Harrison Society through June 30, 2015.

HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY TO THE HARRISON ROTUNDA

Since its Founding in 1887, the Penn Museum has been a museum of the world and for the world. The Penn Museum comprises seven wings opened between 1899 and 2004 and the building itself is an extraordinary artifact, with distinctive architectural features including the Harrison Rotunda. This year we celebrate the Harrison Rotunda’s 100th birthday!

One of the grandest domes in the country, the Penn Museum’s Harrison Rotunda, soaring an impressive 90 feet high, was completed in 1915 and has long been home to an internationally renowned collection of Chinese art. On the upper level the interlocking tile dome is topped by a glass lantern. The floor is 90 feet in diameter, making for harmonious proportions. The lower chamber of the Rotunda houses an auditorium seating 800. A monumental domed ceiling with a bronze sunburst at its center illuminates the Harrison Auditorium. Two features made it the talk of the town in 1915: it had a system to purify and circulate air, and masonry construction techniques permitted a pillar-free space, offering unobstructed views anywhere within the auditorium.

Charles Custis Harrison, the namesake of the Harrison Society, was Provost of the University of Pennsylvania from 1894 to 1910. Afterwards he devoted himself entirely to the Museum, serving as Vice-President and President of the Board of Managers until his death. He was one of the Museum’s most devoted patrons, and the Harrison Rotunda is named in his honor.

Thank you for everything you do for Penn!

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THE USED KEY IS ALWAYS BRIGHT.
–Benjamin Franklin

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA HARRISON SOCIETY
WINTER 2015