Celebrating the Support of Robert and Penny Fox
NEW GIFT FROM ROBERT AND PENNY FOX AIDS FELS EXPANSION

A gift from Robert A. Fox, C’52, and Penny Grossman Fox, ED’53, has helped launch a new era for the Fels Institute of Government, which is reorganizing and expanding in ways designed to increase Penn’s participation in and effect on public policy at the local, national, and international levels. As a result, Fels is poised to play a major role in the implementation of the public policy and social impact focus of Penn Arts and Sciences’ new strategic plan, “Foundations and Frontiers.”

The Foxes’ gift establishes the Penny and Robert A. Fox Faculty Directorship of the Fels Institute, with Professor of Criminology and Sociology John MacDonald as the inaugural director. In this role, MacDonald will chair the Fels Faculty Steering Committee, which includes representatives from seven Penn schools. He will also organize standing University faculty to teach core courses at Fels in partnership with practitioners with “real-world” experience.

MacDonald, who chairs the Department of Criminology, is a recipient of the David N. Kershaw Award from the Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management. The award honors scholars under the age of 40 who have made a distinguished contribution to the field of public policy analysis and management.

Dean Fluharty also appointed Penn School of Design Professor of Practice Mark Alan Hughes as faculty director of the new Fels Policy Research Initiative (FPRI). The FPRI will support research by University faculty in specific public policy areas and build infrastructure to enhance its public policy impact. Hughes led the creation of Philadelphia’s Greenworks plan and was a lead investigator of the U.S. Department of Energy-Energy-Efficient Buildings Hub at the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

In addition, Nelson Lim of the RAND Corporation joined Fels as its new executive director in August. Lim, who was a senior social scientist at RAND and professor of policy analysis at Pardee RAND Graduate School, has worked on a wide range of policy issues with local and federal government organizations, including as research director for the Military Leadership Diversity commission.

“Research being done by faculty throughout Penn can speak powerfully to public policy issues facing the world right now, but we need to draw those resources together to develop analyses and recommendations,” says Fluharty. “Building on Fels’ proud tradition of preparing exceptional students for careers of high impact in the public sector, these initiatives will provide pathways for increased involvement of standing faculty from across the University in public policy teaching and research, more direct interaction with policy makers, and even better preparation for the leaders of tomorrow.”

Renaming Recognizes Long History of Fox Support

This summer, Penn Arts and Sciences celebrated the dedication of the Fox Family Pavilion at the newly renamed Fox-Fels Hall. The naming recognizes a long history of support from Robert and Penny Fox, who have given more than $30 million for the Robert A. Fox Leadership Program, in addition to their recent gift to Fels. Fox Leadership offers research and service fellowships; teaching, advising and service-learning; events and training; and partnerships and special projects for undergraduates and recent alumni from across the University. Most recently the Foxes provided funding to create Fox Leadership International (FLI), which builds on current global initiatives and creates new programs to add a robust international component to every facet of Fox Leadership’s mission.

This summer, working with Fels Institute of Government, FLI organized a three-week leadership training and cultural exchange program that brought 40 students to campus from Jiangsu Province in China this summer.

“The support of Robert and Penny Fox has strengthened the ties between Fox Leadership and Fels, which share not only a building but a mission,” says Dean Fluharty. “Both programs will be vital as we work to translate the research and teaching of Penn into policies that will impact the world around us.”

Fox Leadership Keeping a Promise to New Orleans

In the ten years since Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast of the U.S., the people of the Robert A. Fox Leadership Program have combined to put in 45 person-years of service on the ground in New Orleans.

Dozens of Penn students have served as full-time alumni fellows and summer interns or made week-long service trips to the city. Just three examples of what they’ve accomplished: Judith Kim, C’09, created a program that operates a restaurant employing high-risk young adults; Neile Catzen, C’12, created a restructured Refugee Services program to bolster support for refugees; Gabrielle Alicino, C’13, coordinated NEWCITY Neighborhood Partnership to facilitate investment and collaboration in the Treme neighborhood.

“Penn’s commitment to New Orleans and our poorest and most vulnerable citizens is unique, and recognized by the leadership of New Orleans,” says Jim Kelly, CEO of Covenant House New Orleans, which helps homeless youth in the city. “It has been a gift from day one. As we continue to rebuild our lives and our community, we could not imagine the next five years without our everwescent Penn Fox Fellows.”