To: The General Assembly of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, Katie Bonner (Executive Director - Office of Student Affairs), Barbara Hewitt (Executive Director - Career Services), Beth Winkelstein (Interim Provost), Tamara Greenfield King (Interim Vice Provost for University Life), John L. Jackson, Jr. (Incoming Provost), Hikaru Kozuma (Incoming Vice Provost for University Life)

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RE: Amendment to GAPSA's 2022/2023 budget to reallocate $700,000 from our reserve balance to Career Services. $500,000 shall be used to create an endowed funding line to support unpaid/underpaid internships for graduate and professional students in perpetuity, and $200,000 will be made for immediate distribution, with any remaining funding reverting to the endowed funding line.

ABSTRACT:
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) should commit to reallocating $700,000 from the reserve balance to support graduate and professional student unpaid/underpaid internships.

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WHEREAS, The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) is charged with representing all graduate and professional students enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, GAPSA and the G12+ student governments have advocated over the years for increasing support to graduate and professional students with unpaid/underpaid internships; and

WHEREAS, There currently is no centralized University-wide resource to support unpaid/underpaid graduate and professional student internships; and

WHEREAS, The undergraduate population has a robust funding system housed in Career Services for their unpaid/underpaid internships, with no graduate and professional student analog; and

WHEREAS, Career Services has attempted, for several years, to jumpstart a program similar to undergraduates for graduate and professional students, but there remained a funding discrepancy; and

WHEREAS, If GAPSA provides an initial investment to create a graduate and professional student unpaid/underpaid internship program, it will hopefully provide a proof-of-concept, attracting more donors by demonstrating the compelling need that is being underserved; and
WHEREAS, GAPSA is filling a gap that should have been an administrative priority, and it realizes students cannot wait another decade for action to be made to mitigate the problems associated with unpaid/underpaid graduate and professional student internships; and

WHEREAS, GAPSA hopes to develop the momentum to attract more support to invest in our students; and

WHEREAS, GAPSA has a fiduciary responsibility to graduate and professional students, acknowledges the critical role it has as stewards of general fee money, and remains dedicated to utilizing its funds in a meaningful way to support its constituency; and

WHEREAS, The University is removing GAPSA’s ability to maintain carryover, and we underscore that a shift in an account from one that allows for the carryover to one that does not makes it more challenging to plan for large-scale advocacy projects (e.g., menstrual product access, food insecurity, supporting various centers on campus) by removing the essential financial cushion of reserves; and

WHEREAS, GAPSA strongly believes the University, as a whole, must do better in supporting graduate and professional students with unpaid/underpaid internships; and

WHEREAS, GAPSA maintains a sizable reserve balance (approximately $1.2 million) and wants to demonstrate to the University it has a good faith belief that supporting graduate and professional students with unpaid/underpaid internships is an essential cause; and

WHEREAS, GAPSA has a responsibility to uplift and support graduate and professional students; and

WHEREAS, Career Services already manages an endowed funding line for money that supports undergraduate unpaid/underpaid internships; and

WHEREAS, A GAPSA-created endowed funding line could be managed in the same way so that each year a percentage of these funds’ interest could go towards supporting unpaid/underpaid internships for graduate and professional students; and

WHEREAS, A GAPSA-created endowed funding line would exist in perpetuity, lasting beyond our time at this University and touch generations of graduate and professional students; and

WHEREAS, Current graduate and professional students also have immediate needs, and setting aside a pool of funds to support high-need graduate and professional students with unpaid/underpaid internships for the summer of 2023 is a priority for GAPSA; and

WHEREAS, Career Services has reaffirmed that these resources would be available to any student among the G12+;

RESOLVED, GAPSA shall amend its 2022/2023 budget by reallocating $700,000 from our reserve balance to Career Services. $500,000 shall be used to create an endowed funding line through Career Services, and $200,000 shall be used for the immediate distribution of some funds (with the remaining portion, at the end of the summer, being sent to the endowed funding line). If the GAPSA reserve balance does not carry over this year, at the latest, two weeks prior to the end of the fiscal year, the remaining reserve balance, if there are no other GA-approved projects, will be transferred over to Career Services. Career services shall credit GAPSA according to institutional guidelines.
RESOLVED, GAPSA calls on the University to fundraise and find resources to support and continue the development of unpaid/underpaid graduate and professional student internship resources.