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Dr. Pedro Noguera, Harvard Educator and Urban Education Expert to Speak at Philadelphia University’s Convocation

*Four dedicated high school teachers to receive Centennial Medals at ceremony*

**Philadelphia (August 17, 2001)** — National leader in education policy and reform and Harvard educator, Dr. Pedro Noguera will welcome Philadelphia University’s incoming class with a keynote address on Thursday, August 23.

A Distinguished Educator and Berkeley Distinguished Teaching Award recipient, Dr. Noguera specializes in the reform of urban education, a topic highly relevant to Philadelphians. His dedication to hands-on learning and improving inner-city schools is threaded throughout his dynamic and profound lectures. According to Dr. Noguera, “I have no delusions. I fully understand what the circumstances are in urban schools. Yet I feel optimistic about change. The optimism is rooted not in faith, but in what I know and have seen.”

Following Dr. Noguera’s address will be the presentation of Centennial Educators Awards by University President James P. Gallagher, Ph.D. At a ceremony unique to Philadelphia University, four high school teachers who have made significantly impacted the lives of their former students, who are now Philadelphia University freshmen, will be honored.

“With the current teacher shortages and lack of qualified instructors in secondary education today, it is rare to hear about outstanding teachers. Since 1984, Philadelphia University has chosen to recognize these dedicated and caring educators,” said President Gallagher.

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Incorporating Volunteerism into the College Experience

Convocation is the formal opening of the academic year, a time to “call together” both students and faculty as a scholarly community. Continuing the official welcome week activities, hundreds of incoming students will take that spirit of community into the streets of Philadelphia for the sixth annual Community Service Plunge on Saturday, August 25.

During the Plunge, new students will spend the day doing volunteer work for numerous charitable organizations throughout Philadelphia, including:

- Helping build a home for the Germantown chapter of Habitat for Humanity;
- Preparing a picnic lunch and socializing with the residents of Sacred Heart Manor retirement community on Germantown Avenue;
- Assisting with cleaning of the Philadelphia Zoo;
- Repairing trails and removing evasive vines from the pathways of the Wissahickon Valley parks through the Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers organization;
- Organizing a day of games and fun for the residents of Interim House and their children. Interim House is a rehabilitation center for drug-addicted mothers located at 4150 Parkside Ave;
- Weeding and gardening at the Brewery Garden – a community garden at Conrad Street and Indian Queen Lane in East Falls.

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a fully accredited private university serving 3,500 full- and part-time students from 38 states and 42 countries. The University offers more than 40 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, encompassing the fields of architecture, design, business, textiles, fashion, science and health.