Vini Nathan, Ph.D., Architect and Interior Designer, Named Dean of Philadelphia University’s School of Architecture

*Dr. Nathan, who has been interim dean since July 2007, previously was director of the University’s Interior Design Program*

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 14, 2008 – Vini Nathan, Ph.D., an architect and interior designer who also has myriad experience as a teacher and administrator, has been appointed dean of Philadelphia University’s School of Architecture. Dr. Nathan has been interim dean since July 2007 and has been director of the University’s Interior Design Program since 1997.

“I couldn’t be more pleased to announce the appointment of Vini Nathan as dean of the School of Architecture,” said Jeffrey Senese, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty. “Her range of experience, both in the classroom and as a practitioner and administrator, is a tremendous asset to the entire University community.”

The School of Architecture, with 671 students, is the second largest school on campus and it encompasses programs in Architecture, Architectural Studies, Interior Design and Landscape Architecture. Students in these highly regarded programs have won numerous prestigious competitions, such as the Vitetta Architectural Student Competition and the KlingStubbins Interiors Annual Student Design Competition.

The Architecture and Landscape Architecture programs also are on the cutting-edge of the sustainable design movement, with courses that focus on green design and the development and use of environmentally friendly materials. In addition, the University’s Engineering and Design Institute, an interdisciplinary research center drawing from the University’s Architecture and Engineering programs, focuses on green materials, sustainable design and community outreach.

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“In the School of Architecture, students are guided to develop the skills, knowledge and vision they will need to address contemporary global issues and to become 21st century leaders in the fields of architecture, interior design and landscape architecture,” said Philadelphia University President Stephen Spinelli Jr., Ph.D. “Dr. Nathan’s expertise and experience will help to further enhance these programs, as they continue to address important real-world issues, such as diminishing resources and higher energy costs, gain experience overseas through programs in Milan, Rome and other top design cities, and gain critical on-the-job experience through co-operative learning options and internships.”

At Philadelphia University, Dr. Nathan has been involved in a wide range of innovative curricular, administrative and strategic initiatives, including recruiting faculty, assisting in accreditation efforts, helping to establish study abroad programs in such countries as Denmark and Australia, and developing curricula enhancements such as Artists in Residence and an Annual Design Guest Speakers Series.

Before coming to Philadelphia University, Dr. Nathan was director of New York Institute of Technology’s Interior Design program, assistant professor of Interior Design at Michigan State University and has taught at the University of Minnesota, the University of Michigan and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech).

In addition to her academic work, Dr. Nathan was a practicing architect in New Delhi and more recently worked as an architect for Walker Group/CNI in New York, a full-service architectural design firm. She was part of the team that worked on the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur City Centre, a design venture in conjunction with noted architect Cesar Pelli, former dean of Yale University’s School of Architecture.

Dr. Nathan has presented at numerous professional conferences and her research interests include chaos theory, design processes and research methods. She is currently researching the relationship between mathematics and architectural canons in traditional and contemporary Indian building designs.

Dr. Nathan received a B.Arch from Anna University in Chennai, India, an M.S. in Interior Design from Virginia Tech and a Ph.D. in Architecture from the University of Michigan. In addition, her credentials include a certificate in Health Care Design from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design and she participated in the Bryn Mawr College HERS Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration.

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In addition to her academic work, Dr. Nathan is a classically trained dancer, a competitive chess player and a self-professed trivia buff.

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,100 full- and part-time students enrolled in more than 50 undergraduate and graduate programs. The University includes Schools of Architecture, Business Administration, Design and Media, Engineering and Textiles, Liberal Arts, and Science and Health.