Philadelphia University faculty, students and staff volunteer 4,700 service hours to launch President Spinelli’s Inauguration

Stephen Spinelli Jr., Ph.D., installed as University’s eleventh president Oct. 5

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 9, 2008 – More than 1,400 Philadelphia University faculty, staff and students participated in a campus-wide Day of Service Oct. 1, volunteering more than 4,700 community service hours. The service activities kicked off a five-day Inauguration celebration of Stephen Spinelli Jr., Ph.D., as the University’s 11\textsuperscript{th} president.

Projects during the Day of Service included city beautification projects in Mt. Airy, Germantown, Roxborough, Fairmount Park, East Falls and at the Philadelphia Zoo; tutoring school children; packaging food items at Philabundance; “greening” the East Falls SEPTA train station; knitting and crocheting items for babies being treated at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia; registering voters in the community; and sorting career clothing for women entering the workforce, among many others.

“Day of Service was an inspiring and rewarding day for all involved,” Dr. Spinelli said. “A campus-wide Day of Service with faculty, staff, and student involvement is a shining example of the collaborative nature of the University and truly exemplifies the many ways Philadelphia University students understand the power and importance of service and giving.”

Some projects drew on expertise students gained in their academic programs. For instance, Interior Design students designed special rooms for three sick children in collaboration with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Industrial Design students built an interior ramp in the home of a wheelchair-bound man, and Architecture and Industrial Design students built a trench at the Weavers Way Farm.

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“The commitment and dedication from the faculty, staff and students was exceptional,” said Mark Govoni, dean of students and chair of the Day of Service committee. “The range of projects, the variety of locations and the diversity of people served all made the day a remarkable success for Philadelphia University.”

In other Inauguration activities, award-winning author and journalist Stephen Dubner, who wrote the popular book *Freakonomics*, presented the keynote lecture at an academic symposium Oct. 2, and former President James P. Gallagher and former trustee Harold Ronson were installed, respectively, as President Emeritus and Trustee Emeritus. An Inauguration gala, homecoming and family day also were part of the five-day celebration.

At the Oct. 5 installation ceremony, Dr. Spinelli outlined the University’s new strategic plan which he said builds upon the achievements of its past while emphasizing innovations of the future. “We will be the best there is,” he said. “This is the model professional university of the 21st century.”

“Dr. Spinelli’s achievements in both the business world and in academia put him at the forefront of a new kind of college president – one with the experience, background, vision and in-depth understanding of diverse, complex organizations that will benefit our students and help advance Philadelphia University,” said Elizabeth Gemmill, chair of the Board of Trustees. “His leadership and boundless energy are nothing less than extraordinary, and qualities we have come to respect and admire.”

Dr. Spinelli, a highly respected expert on entrepreneurship and an experienced university administrator, assumed the presidency Sept. 1, 2007, succeeding Dr. Gallagher, who served in the office for 23 years.

“I am honored to be formally installed as president of this great university,” Spinelli said. “In the past year, I have been impressed by the spirit of innovation and creativity on this campus, the openness to collaboration between disciplines and the strong focus on educating future leaders in their fields. I am excited by what we can achieve together in the future.”

The installation ceremony included a procession of faculty, staff, students and alumni from Philadelphia University, as well as presidents and dignitaries from a broad range of colleges and universities. Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and U.S. Senator Arlen Specter gave remarks on behalf of the city and the commonwealth.

Spinelli’s background both as an entrepreneur and an academic makes him a perfect fit for Philadelphia University and its mission as the model professional university for the 21st century. Since its start as a small textiles school in 1884, the University has grown into a diverse institution offering more than 50 undergraduate and graduate programs, many of them professionally oriented majors with a strong grounding in the liberal arts. More than half the students are in design-related programs.

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Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,300 full- and part-time students enrolled in more than 50 undergraduate and graduate programs. As part of its core mission, the University focuses on professionally oriented programs that prepare students for successful careers, with a strong foundation in the liberal arts and an orientation toward interdisciplinary cooperation. Philadelphia University includes Schools of Architecture, Business Administration, Design and Media, Engineering and Textiles, Liberal Arts, and Science and Health.

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