We're here with Jordan Pascucci, Associate Dean in Undergraduate Admissions at the University of Pennsylvania. And we'll be speaking with her today about the University of Pennsylvania and their application process. Jordan, thanks for being with us today. >> Thank you very much. I'm excited to be here. >> To begin, we'd like to get to know you and the University of Pennsylvania a little bit better. So could you tell us a little about your role as an admission officer? >> Sure. It's something that starts from the beginning to end and so it's constantly evolving and we're always looking at the class that we're about to enroll. Then we're looking future years ahead trying to reach out to students that they can start thinking and planning as soon as possible. What we do in our team of admissions officers at, at the University of Pennsylvania, is that we spend part of the year reaching out to students around the world letting them know about the opportunities at Penn and trying to be counselors in the process of applying. It's definitely a complex process when you're talking about selective admissions especially, and so we want to be there as a resource for not just the students and their families, but also for guidance counselors in the school communities around the world. So once we do that we travel the world and we see lots of outreach, then we come back to campus and then it's time to evaluate and select the class for that year for the University of Pennsylvania. >> And just out of curiosity, do you have a favorite part of being in admissions? >> I'm very lucky because in part of my role, I get, I also work with international territory specifically, and so I love the travel and I love meeting new people and the hospitality and being introduced to new cultures through the school systems and meeting the students in their school and home environment. So I'm very lucky in that I get to meet a lot of interesting places and people. That's my favorite. >> Now that we know a little bit more about you can you help us get to know the University of Pennsylvania? >> Absolutely. So the University of Pennsylvania is an Ivy League institution, located in the city of Philadelphia, which is America's fifth largest city. What's great about it is that we're you know two hours from New York two hours from Washington D.C., and have everything that you would need in a world class city right at our finger tips. So the campus is all contiguous. So basically from the center of campus, within five minutes walking, you can get to everything that I named plus more. All the college houses, shops, restaurants. And so students within the course of the day can really create limitless opportunities at Penn. >> Jordan, I always tell students that universities have unique personalities. How would you describe the personality of Penn? >> I would definitely describe it as innovative and inspired. It carries with it, you know, this idea of Ben Franklin being an innovator himself and he was a scientist, inventor, entrepreneur, so many different things at a time in history where that just wasn't the norm. Students of today what I like to tell...
them is that by the time they enter the work force, half of the jobs they will have in their life time haven't been created yet. And so Penn is a place that attracts students that get excited about that idea. Because we have the four undergraduates schools of the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Wharton School of Business, School of Engineering and Applied Science and School of Nursing. Students are constantly collaborating together and so students really enjoy that idea of challenging each other, growing along with each other and taking advantage of the resources that come with a really large and diverse undergraduate population. >> So along those same lines of personality, what kind of student thrives on campus and who might struggle? >> That's a really good question and I think it's one that students have to ask themselves before they apply to schools, is what kind of student am I. At Penn, we, definitely a student that succeeds here is a student that understands. The most successful students are the ones that ask for help. >> Mm. >> I think that everybody thinks that they're talented, they've gotten admitted into a selective institution and they can do it all on their own. But the reality is that the students that you're seeing who aren't really struggling, who've adapted good study habits from the beginning, they're the ones that sought the resources that exist here and use them. I like to say that Penn is looking for students in our applicant pool who display a sense of initiative. The idea that we have wonderful, tremendous opportunities and resources, but they don't mean anything unless a student's going to walk in the front door of the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowship or walk into the Penn Abroad office. So it's all about you having to put some initiative behind, you know, everything that's going to come from that work that you put in, in the beginning. As student who would struggle at the university of Pennsylvania. >> Mm-hm. >> I think would be a student who would try to take it on all themselves. >> Mm-hm. >> Definitely we expect students to reach out to faculty and work closely with them here. Those small classes is for a reason and we want students to be actively part of this living and learning community. So reaching out to their peers, their mentors, their faculty for guidance is essential. >> With just under 10,000 students, the University of Pennsylvania officially fits in kind of that mid sized category. >> Yeah. >> Can you talk a little bit about what is it like to attend a mid-sized school? >> Mm-hm. So the great thing about a mid-sized school and especially the University of Pennsylvania is that it serves as the best of both worlds in a lot of ways. >> Mm-hm. >> You can find those close knit specific communities and connect to them right away. So that everything feels smaller if that's something that you're interested in. But it's also that there's enough students that there's so much diversity and so there's sort of a place for everyone to really belong, but also a place for people to be challenged and meet people with new ideas and new perspectives. So at a mid-sized university Penn being in a city is great because it's, we're also sort of in what I would consider a relatively mid-sized city. From one end of Center City to the other in Philadelphia is really only about five kilometers. >> Mm-hm. >> And so it's a place where students can really build a life, and I feel that the same is true for Penn's campus. >> Mm-hm. >> Everything is so close together that you can really connect with other people and you would never really question the size because I don't think that it ever really feels large to the student going through the experience. >> Mm-hm. >> With that being said, I think that if a student really was into the wilderness or, [LAUGH] some particular geographic element that you would want to research a little bit more because this is a place where there's a lot going on and there's a lot of ways to fit in, but we are also in a city. >> Mm-hm. Of course, many people know Penn for being part of the Ivy League. >> Yes. >> What does it mean to be a part of the Ivy League? >> Sure, so the Ivy League is actually an athletic conference and it's a formation of eight schools that make up some of the oldest,
private institutions in the United States. And, it did definitely start as an athletic conference and continues to this day. So, you know, our most cordial and sometimes fiercely battled athletic rivals exist within this conference. >> Mm-hm. Mm-hm. >> But at the same time, it has definitely evolved to indicate a certain standard of academic excellence and also selectivity in admissions. >> Mm-hm. >> So using Penn as an example, how would the day-to-day life of the student differ at an Ivy League institution from a non-Ivy League institution. >> Sure. So, the, going back to the idea that really students are going to be most successful when they take initiative and they understand that they are going to get out of this experience of higher education what they put into it, that's true at all universities. >> Mm-hm. >> So whatever, over 4,000 colleges and universities a student might attend. >> Mm-hm. It's up to them to really create the opportunities but with that being said I think that a highly selective school or an elite institution a day-to-day occurrence might differ in the first few weeks of adjustment I think especially. I noticed that students who are admitted, obviously we are looking for talented, academically and otherwise students who tend to come from backgrounds where it was easy for them in high school or it was easier for them to stand out or to be among the top students. >> Mm-hm. And now they're coming to a place where all of the students are successful and you have to learn how to adjust. You have to learn how to take your skills and talents to the next level by being a leader among leaders, but understanding that you won’t always get the perfect grade and that’s not what it's about. >> Mm-hm. That it’s definitely about your own journey and your own growth and challenging yourself in new ways. Learning, I think, how to bring out the best in yourself through learning how to bring out the best in others. The idea of, you know, the best results are achieved together. And really appreciating that there’s no greater moment, you know, in your life where your only job for four years is to take advantage of every single opportunity that’s at your fingertips. >> Mm-hm. >> And you can't really go into that the same way that you were in your secondary school. >> Mm-hm. >> A lot of times students are coming from places all over the world where the focus is on a number, an achievement >> Mm-hm. >> You know a grade. Whereas now it’s much more about, you know, an evolution, a thinking of how can you have an impact. And it definitely takes a little bit of adjustment, I think, getting used to being in an environment where everyone is as engaged as you are. >> So among the Ivies, Penn is known as the Social Ivy. >> Yeah. [LAUGH] >> What does that nickname mean, and does it accurately describe Penn? >> I don't really know exactly what it means. I have a feeling that sometimes when students hear it or use it they get images of like American movies showing frat parties. [LAUGH] But it can mean a lot of different things, and I've heard students really articulate it in at Penn it's a place where you work hard and you play hard in the sense that you understand that learning and growth is not just going to come from inside a classroom wall, but come from the entire experience of living and learning on a residential campus like Penn. The other part of it though is Penn is big into networking. Penn has over 300,000 global alumni. And so when students are admitted here, they become immediately part of that family and that network that travels with you through life. >> Mm-hm. It helps with jobs, it helps with social, you know, networking. It helps with all sorts of things, especially if you find yourself in a new city, country environment. >> Mm-hm. The other part of it is, is that, that networking starts very early on campus, so I'll use our assembly of international students as an example. >> Mm-hm. >> The assembly of international students at Penn is a group of current undergraduate international students. >> Mm-hm. >> And not only do they do wonderful things here on campus, and are incredibly active, but they also they also organize an Ivy League Conference for all international students. So two years in a row it's been
hosted on Penn's campus and it just creates this way of networking with peers from other institutions about how to tackle, you know, problems, issues, opportunities, create networks for the future among international students that they can really take back to their home countries and back into the world. >> Mm-hm. So that's sort of, I, in, in my way, you know, one of the things that really reflects that idea of a social, you know, social life or whatever. >> Mm-hm. [LAUGH] Jordan you've touched on this already. >> Mm-hm. >> But the University of Pennsylvania is located in Philadelphia. >> Mm-hm. >> Which is a major U.S. city. >> Mm-hm. >> So because you're in a major U.S. city, the location is of course considered urban. >> Right. >> So what is life like in an urban environment? >> Yeah, so Philadelphia, as somebody who actually didn't grow up in Philadelphia, I've really appreciated about the city. That it's got so many different neighborhoods, it's got so much diversity but yet its so easy to build a life. >> Mm-hm. I remember when I first came to Penn, somebody asked me something, you know, what's something that you're proud of, and I had to reflect on it and really think that it was the life I have been able to build in Philadelphia. >> Mm-hm. >> And that came just because of internship opportunities, >> Mm-hm. >> Job opportunities, opportunities to explore the city. >> Mm-hm. >> And feel comfortable in a place, and have connections to so many different people, and cultures with, all, you know within in everyday experience. >> Mm-hm. >> And so the city of Philadelphia what's nice about it again, it's so walkable. >> Mm-hm. >> You know, from Penn's campus your in Center City in 15 minutes ten minutes. >> Mm-hm. >> And just the role that Penn plays in the city of Philadelphia, is really enormous, and so it's nice that you always feel like you're on the cutting edge of something when you're at Penn. >> [CROSSTALK] Mm-hm, yeah. >> In the city of Philadelphia. It's one of those cities that is, you know, completely up and coming and transformative and one of those, you know, great places to live, hidden gems. But yet has so much character and history and specific personalities and traditions. Food, [LAUGH] you know, the food I think is really quite an amazing scene. And it's so much more than a cheesesteak now. [LAUGH] The food trucks on Penn's campus alone I think really reflect that. >> Yeah. >> So what's nice is that you're in a city but it doesn't ever feel like you're, you're lost. >> Mm-hm. >> It feels like a real nice place where you can build a foundation. >> Geographically. >> Hm. >> Penn and Philadelphia are lor, located in the Northeast portion of the US. >> Yeah. >> What can students expect from life in the Northeast? >> Yeah so today I have my snow boots on so unfortunately that's part of the reality but its beautiful that you do absolutely experience all four seasons and so if you're coming from part of the world where that would be a new thing to you its really beautiful and exciting especially the fall and the spring. And because Penn is in a location in the Northeast that does have all four seasons, a lot of campus traditions fall out of that. >> Mm-hm. And so, everything from fall break, winter break, spring break and then the wonderfully popular spring fling that will happen. A lot of the changing of the seasons brings with it a whole series of traditions and things to look forward to. >> Mm-hm. >> So life in the Northeast, what's great too is that it's a lot of major cities that are all concentrated near each other, so it's very easy to take day trips back and forth to New York City, even Boston and definitely Washington, D.C. >> We'll be right back to hear more from Jordan Pascucci about the University of Pennsylvania. [BLANK_AUDIO]