

How important should diversity be at Harvard? What strategies should the University pursue regarding this? (Please discuss specific programs and policies, including Ethnic Studies and faculty hiring, tenure, and advancement, if you can.)

When my father-in-law entered Harvard Yard in the Class of 1960, there were only a dozen other African Americans among the 946 freshman. There weren't a lot of multicultural clubs supported by the school at that time, so most of their social life was off campus.

While he attends all of his reunions, he says participation by black alumni from those classes before 1972 has been somewhat sluggish, which he suspects indicates a degree of dissatisfaction or failure to bond with the school by some graduates of color.

He says the experience of more recent graduates has been vastly different due to a greater number of students of color, more clubs and affinity groups like Kuumba and the BSA, programs like the Harvard Foundation, and more minority faculty. He says a richer undergraduate experience produces a happier group of alumni.

In my father-in-law's words, "It is in Harvard's self-interest to maintain a diverse class and encourage participation in class activities, with an expected increase in loyalty, reunion participation, fundraising and donations."

There is still much work to be done.

The following quote comes directly from Harvard's website: *"With an enduring dedication to the pursuit of excellence, Harvard University offers unparalleled student experiences across a broad spectrum of academic environments."*

How does Harvard deliver on this promise without ensuring that the university offers a variety of ideas, perspectives, interests, and experiences not only through its student body but also through its faculty? We need to not only attract faculty across a broad spectrum of interests and backgrounds, but also retain them.

Too often talented faculty have left Harvard for better opportunities at rival institutions, and too often talented faculty have been denied tenure. This sends the wrong message to the community about the university's commitment to inclusion.

Diversity has to be of the utmost priority. If not, Harvard University fails to fulfill one of its basic and most sacred tenets.

How can Harvard encourage more diversity among its alumni leaders and activities? (If not discussed above.)

I have already begun this work through my role on the HAA Board. I served on a Diversity & Inclusion subcommittee where we brainstormed on ways to not only get more people of color involved in Harvard alumni activities but also women, members of the LGBTQ community, those with special needs, alumni of various ages and people from all socioeconomic backgrounds and geographic areas.

We discussed the types of events at reunions and through clubs and shared interest groups (SIGs) that might attract greater participation across the board, such as panel discussions that appeal to a broader audience.

We worked on language that we believe should be used across all Harvard communications to connote a sense of inclusiveness and belonging.

We stressed that speakers and award recipients at HAA events should be representative of the diverse community that Harvard serves.

Our subcommittee communicated these recommendations to the larger committees of the HAA Board.

I currently chair a subcommittee on Female Inclusion which focuses on strategies to get more women involved in the HAA.

As an Elected Director, I would gladly continue efforts in these areas.

Please state your views on affirmative action and race-conscious admissions.

Students of color remain underrepresented in U.S. colleges and universities, and in fact, their standing at the most elite schools is worse than it was 35 years ago. Race-conscious admissions is one of the only ways to level the playing field and admit students from a variety of backgrounds.

Studies have shown that diversity in classrooms enriches the university experience for all students, by reducing bias, improving interpersonal skills, fostering leadership, and preparing students to work in an increasingly interconnected world.

I want my own children to be good global citizens, comfortable in an increasingly diverse world, and I want the same for future generations of Harvard students.

What do you think Harvard's role should be in creating a more equitable, inclusive and just society?

Harvard is a paradigm of excellence in education around the world, perhaps above all others. Governments, corporations, religious groups, non-profits, and other universities all look to Harvard for guidance on best practices, especially around issues of equity, diversity, and social justice.

Just as they did with need blind admissions, Harvard must continue to show the world how to foster a diverse and inclusive community and why doing so benefits everyone.

What steps have you taken to bring diversity and inclusion to Harvard, to your workplace, and/or to an organization that you have been involved with?

For the past 20 years, I have worked as an urgent care physician at MGH Chelsea, a health center located in a low-income, predominantly Spanish speaking, largely immigrant community. Not only do we treat twisted ankles, coughs, lacerations, and rashes, we also try to help our

patients secure primary care physicians, health insurance, and other resources at a challenging time when many are afraid to come forward and be seen.

In our multiethnic clinic, we not only teach Harvard Medical School students and MGH residents how to take a patient history and perform a physical exam, but we expose them to cultural differences. Our patients not only come largely from Central and South America but also Somalia, Bosnia, Morocco, Cambodia and other countries from all around the world.

As a television medical reporter for the past 20 years, I have worked so hard to ensure that we report a variety of stories affecting people of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic strata.

I also collaborate with our editors to make sure that the video we show in our news broadcasts is representative of our greater community and is as free of bias as possible. For example, when I report a story about the health effects of poverty or obesity, I make sure we show people of all colors, not just black patients. If I am reporting on the benefits of breastfeeding, I do not want the viewers to see only upper middle-class white women nursing their babies. I ask the editors to include Asian and Latino and African American mothers as well.

I hope that over the years, in my small way, I have provided a counter narrative to the stereotypes and prejudices that many television viewers have about certain groups of people.

I have also mentored several interns of color at CBS Boston, taking them on shoots with me, helping them hone their writing skills and providing career advice.

In recent years, my family and I have served as a Harvard Host Family for three African American undergraduates, providing them local support and encouragement during their four years at Harvard.

As an alumni interviewer for Harvard College, I continue to advocate for applicants from unique backgrounds and experiences in an effort to bring more diversity to the freshman class.

For the past six years, I have served on the board of my kids' private school and have been an outspoken voice on matters of tolerance, diversity, inclusion and greater financial aid.