There is strong support among Harvard students and alumni for the school’s use of holistic admissions to foster diversity on campus. That’s why twenty-six Harvard student and alumni organizations, comprised of thousands of Asian American, Black, Latinx, Native American, and white students and alumni have joined together to submit “friend of the court” briefs condemning the Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) lawsuit that seeks to eliminate the consideration of race in admissions, thereby threatening diversity at colleges nationwide. The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) . . . represent[s] these organizations in their quest to protect holistic admissions. Other allied organizations involved in the litigation include The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Asian
Americans Advancing Justice, Lawyers for Civil Rights, and their pro bono counsel Arnold & Porter LLP.

SFFA, an organization led by well-known anti-civil rights activist Edward Blum, filed this lawsuit in 2014 as a part of his relentless crusade to ban the consideration of race in admissions. Blum’s coordinated campaign against holistic admissions includes the landmark case *Fisher v. University of Texas* – in which the court upheld the University of Texas’s race-conscious admissions practices – and current litigation against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Texas at Austin. Blum has orchestrated attacks on civil rights from the classroom to the ballot box and was also the architect behind *Shelby County v. Holder*, in which the Supreme Court gutted the seminal Voting Rights Act.

The 26 Harvard organizations that are fighting to uphold holistic admissions as amici in the *Students For Fair Admissions v. Harvard* case:

21 Colorful Crimson
Association of Black Harvard Women
Coalition for a Diverse Harvard
First Generation Harvard Alumni
Fuerza Latina of Harvard
Harvard Asian American Alumni Alliance
Harvard Asian American Brotherhood
Harvard Black Alumni Society
Harvard Islamic Society
Harvard Japan Society
Harvard Korean Association
Harvard Latino Alumni Alliance
Harvard Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students
Harvard Phillips Brooks House Association
Harvard Progressive Jewish Alumni
Harvard South Asian Association
Harvard University Muslim Alumni
Harvard Vietnamese Association
Harvard-Radcliffe Asian American Association
Harvard-Radcliffe Asian American Women’s Association
Harvard-Radcliffe Black Students Association
Harvard-Radcliffe Chinese Students Association
Kuumba Singers of Harvard College
Native American Alumni of Harvard University
Native Americans at Harvard College
Task Force on Asian and Pacific American Studies at Harvard College
Harvard Admissions Lawsuit

This comprehensive website maintained by Harvard includes court filings and decisions, key points, and press coverage.

ScotusBlog

SFFA's petition for certiorari and all the related papers as well as Harvard’s opposition are here. Supreme Court will consider taking up major challenge to affirmative action | The Hill

Selected News Coverage

Why Conservatives want the Supreme Court to take up Affirmative Action Case | MSNBC (June 5, 2021)
Dr. Claire Jean Kim and Professor Hasan Kwame Jeffries discuss a challenge to Harvard’s admission policy involving Asian American students.

Where Does the Bizarre Hysteria About ‘Critical Race Theory’ Come From? Follow the Money! | Inside Higher Ed (June 3, 2021)

Yale student groups may act as intervenors in affirmative action case | Yale Daily News (May 11, 2021)

Prominent affirmative action opponent targets Coca-Cola's law firm diversity policy | Reuters (April 28, 2021)
A conservative opponent of affirmative action policies who has backed major court cases challenging the consideration of race in college admissions has a new target for potential litigation: Coca-Cola Co's law firm diversity policy.

Republicans leverage attention on anti-Asian hate incidents in bid to overturn affirmative action | Washington Post (April 6, 2021)

Activism for profit: America’s ‘anti-affirmative action’ industry | Al Jazeera (February 28, 2021)
How heavily funded non-profits working to unveil ‘problems’ with policies that increase diversity obstruct equal opportunities and racial equity in the United States.

Affirmative action and the diversity dilemma | CBS News
"I used to wonder whether affirmative action was a preference," said OiYan Poon, associate professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Illinois. “Through my research, I found that it’s not. In college admissions, in particular, it's really about seeing a person for who they are and where they came from and what that story brings to understanding their talents." “There’s talent that goes way beyond test scores and grades.”

Texas and SFFA: Right Problems, Wrong Solutions | Harvard Crimson editorial board
SFFA's use of "Asian American students as a token minority to advance the claim that race-conscious admissions are not only unnecessary but harmful perpetuates the model minority myth — a societal fabrication that not only characterizes other minority racial groups as less
capable than Asian Americans but also blatantly paints the Asian American community as inherently successful and devoid of struggle. This myth has contributed to the time-tested, troubling silence on anti-Asian racism that continues to pervade our society."

**A Case For Truly Fair Admissions | Harvard Crimson editorial**

“What is perhaps most pernicious about this lawsuit is SFFA's exploitation of the genuine racism that Asian Americans endure. . . . We also take particular offense to Blum’s tacit insinuation that Harvard’s Black, Latinx, and Native American students are in some way less deserving of their place at Harvard than their white and Asian peers. . . . Blum’s race-neutral alternatives to Harvard’s admissions process almost guarantee that Black and Latinx groups will see drops in representation to the tune of more than 1,000 fewer students after four years.”

Margaret M. Chin, Jennifer Davis Carey, and John B. King, Jr. *Attack resumes on racial diversity in higher ed* | CommonWealth Magazine (September 12, 2020)

This case against Harvard’s use of holistic admissions – including race as one of many factors considered – is a poorly-cloaked attack on racial diversity in higher education.

**The Rising Trump Lawyer Battling to Reshape the Electorate | New York Times (June 15, 2020)**

Consovoy and his firm have argued against affirmative action at Harvard and for virtually outlawing abortion in Georgia. They fought against extending the deadline for mail-in voting in Wisconsin, sought to thwart felons from being re-enfranchised in Florida and sued to block California’s plan to send absentee ballots to all registered voters.


The lesson of the recent case at Harvard University is that colleges and universities must do more to fully recognize their students as whole people, writes Margaret M. Chin.

Jeannie Park, *Asian Americans are rightly angry about racism. Making colleges less diverse isn’t the answer*. | Washington Post (October 3, 2019)

Margaret M. Chin, OiYan Poon, Janelle Wong, and Jerry Park, *Here are TEN reasons NOT to fall for the “Asian American Penalty” trap in admissions!* | medium.com (February 23, 2019)

Anti-Asian-American bias is real, but don’t be fooled by Ed Blum’s case against Harvard.

Renee Tajima Pena, *Will Harvard continue to fail Asian Americans — or will it learn from the past?* | Washington Post (February 12, 2019)

We reject Blum’s argument that race is irrelevant in our society, knowing that is another kind of lie. We also know that Blum’s preferred admissions process would leave Harvard far less diverse, with fewer students from under-resourced segments of the Asian American community. But while Harvard gets the need for holistic admissions right, it is failing in ethnic studies.

Daniel Lu, *Asian-Americans still need affirmative action if they wish to succeed*, South China Morning Post (January 5, 2019)

Of course race should matter in college admissions — as explained by students of color at Harvard trial, The Washington Post (October 30, 2018). The transcripts of the testimony of several student witnesses (Cecelia Nunez, Thang Diep, Sally Chen, and Madison Trice) are attached.


Hasan Minhaj, Patriot Act episode on Affirmative Action (October 28, 2018)

Hasan Minhaj breaks down the history of affirmative action, its impact on his experience with the modern education system, and how a recent lawsuit against Harvard that could go to the Supreme Court could change it forever.

“Affirmative action as we know it is about to die. And guess what, Asian Americans? We could be the ones who kill it.”

OiYan Poon, How do colleges use affirmative action? Even some activists don’t understand, The Conversation.com (October 26, 2018)


Thang Diep, Harvard Student Defends Affirmative Action, YR Media (October 16, 2018)

Daniel Lobo, My unlikely journey to Harvard sheds light on race lawsuit, CNN (October 15, 2018)

Jerome Karabel, ”No, Affirmative Action Has Not Made Asian-Americans The ’New Jews’”, Huffington Post (October 13, 2018)

Elise C. Boddie, A Damaging Bid to Censor Applications at Harvard | New York Times (October 10, 2018)

If a lawsuit over affirmative action is successful, would-be college students may have to hide their race.

Janelle Wong, Actually, Race-Conscious Admissions Are Good for Asian-Americans | The Chronicle (October 4, 2018)

I am Asian-American, received two degrees from Yale, and I have conducted research on Asian-Americans for more than 20 years as a professor of Asian-American studies. I am also the parent of an Asian-American high-school-aged son who will soon be applying to college. It is for these very reasons that I oppose the investigation and support the current policy of race-conscious admission.
Susan Dynarski, At Elite Colleges, Racial Diversity Requires Affirmative Action, New York Times (September 28, 2018)

Ivy Yan, I’m Asian American. I Go to Harvard. I Don’t Want Affirmative Action to Go Away, Teen Vogue (September 26, 2018)

David Gura, Jeannie Park and Victoria Defrancesco, DOJ Sides With Student Lawsuit Which Claims Harvard Racially Discriminates, MSNBC (September 1, 2018)

Michael Martin, Yukong Zhao, Jeannie Park and Jane Mayer, Barbershop: The Racial Discrimination Lawsuit Against Harvard University, NPR (September 1, 2018)


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advancingjustice-la.org/what-we-do/policy-and-research/educational-opportunity-and-empowerment/affirmative-action

Affirmative Action

Asian Americans and Affirmative Action: We Will Not Be Your Wedge

Here's why...

Race-Conscious > Race-Blind

What is Merit?
Numbers Alone Cannot Measure Merit

Competition is Fierce
Highly selective universities have too many qualified applicants to choose from.

Holistic Review: A Better Way to Measure Merit
Holistic review considers each person in their entirety to determine their potential to provide unique contributions to the world.

Holistic Review Cannot Be Holistic Without Race
Eliminating race from consideration in holistic review erases a core component of students' identities.

What About Class Instead Of Race?

Other Minorities Are Not "Taking" Asian American Seats
Getting rid of affirmative action at Harvard won't result in more Asian American students getting in.

Affirmative Action Actually Benefits Asian Americans

A Legacy of White Advantage

Asian Americans Need Affirmative Action

Beyond College: The Bamboo Ceiling
Diverse Harvard

Ask your Harvard friends to join Diverse Harvard by signing up on our homepage. Members
receive a couple emails per month and invitations to webinars and special events.

Join our “Coalition for a Diverse Harvard” Facebook Discussion Group and like our public Facebook page.

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

Email HarvardCoalition@gmail.com to join Diverse Harvard’s Ethnic Studies action group.

Donate to the Coalition at diverseharvard.org/donate. Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Click here to make an Ethnic Studies Now t-shirt donation or order a shirt. For $25, we’ll send one shirt (or button) to you and give one to a student.