

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

One of my favourite quotes on Inclusion and Diversity is “Diversity is being invited to the party; Inclusion is being asked to dance.” Within the Harvard context, I believe that there are clear examples of progress on both fronts; yet, there is still more to do. There will always be more to do.

On diversity, I believe that the College has long-recognized the value of a diverse student body in terms of creating a more engaging and enriching student experience. Classroom discussions, the range of extra-curricular activities, roommate interactions, as well as misunderstandings and healthy debate – and the life-long learnings these generate – are all better for the interaction of different experiences and perspectives, be they based upon race, geography, socio-economics, gender or sexual orientation, for example. As an alumna of Harvard Business School, I believe that the admission officers at the graduate schools share this view.

The value of Inclusion and Diversity extends to the faculty and administrators at Harvard as well. Historically, the push for a more multi-cultural workforce was probably more of a moral imperative than a business one. However, we know now from research that we have published on the topic (discussed below) that multi-cultural workforces outperform their more homogenous peers across every dimension. The same holds true for world-class educational establishments. Put bluntly, the link between staff diversity and global pre-eminence is clear: Harvard cannot have one without the other.

The above notwithstanding, getting diverse candidates to apply, to matriculate, and to flourish at Harvard, is only half the battle. Once there, they have to feel like they belong. And, equally important, the burden of creating that sense of belonging should not rest solely with the newcomer to the party.

It is important to have a portfolio of policies and initiatives in place to capture the full benefits of Inclusion & Diversity, even among the well-intentioned. Host family programs for international undergraduate students, first generation programming, diverse alumni speakers programs, peer review of recruiting and hiring, for example, all exist and all continue to have a role to play. These policies and initiatives should be measured, reviewed, evaluated, and shared regularly within the Harvard community, because you can’t manage what you can’t measure.

At Harvard, I believe that diversity, broadly defined and well managed, should be a factor in admissions and hiring. I believe that diversity should be a factor in faculty and staff development plans and progression planning. And, equally important, I believe that debate around Inclusion & Diversity is both healthy and part of preparing future leaders to be informed members of community-at-large. This is a global topic, that is cross-cultural in nature, so having individuals who mirror that diversity at the table where it is being discussed is also helpful. It would be a privilege to serve on the Board of Overseers so that I can support the University on this topic.

Lastly, with specific regard to Ethnic Studies, I do not know all of the many facets of the current discussion. However, I do remember the many discussions among fellow students, faculty, and alumni surrounding the elevation of the Department of African and African-American Studies. There are parallels and lessons to be learned, I'm sure. In hindsight, I believe that one of the most important is that with focus, resources, great hiring, and faculty development, Ethnic Studies, too, could be a stand-out department both on campus and globally.

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

It is very difficult to aspire to be something or someone that you have never seen before. What we see or experience can profoundly shape our frame of reference. That's why programming is so important in terms of shaping experiences and setting expectations.

If we think about this from a life-long learning approach, I believe that if the College can make an appreciation of Inclusion & Diversity part of the undergraduate experience, those undergraduates will continue to value those aims in their post-college life. Similarly, if the University makes Inclusion & Diversity part of its alumni programming, we can extend those values throughout the alumni experience.

In practice, there are easy University-generated wins that exist. For example, asking diverse alumni to recommend alumni leaders for University-wide recognition, funding a Computer Science professor to tour Harvard Clubs to talk about unconscious bias in Artificial Intelligence, or making discussions about diverse teams mandatory in all executive education courses at HBS. These are just three examples of what could be done.

The point here is that the University can and should make a coordinated effort to provide access to talent and content that sparks debate about diversity, however broadly defined, among its alumni. Inclusion & Diversity are two of the biggest issues on the table at the moment, whether you are talking about building a wall in the US or knife crime among teens in the UK. Harvard and Harvard alumni should lead the way in bringing world-class scholarship and a willingness to learn to those kinds of problems and the policy solutions they require.

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

I support strategic and proactive affirmative action and race-conscious admissions because I believe that the College and broader University are better for it. I do not believe they devalue minority candidates – the students and faculty members are qualified. This diversity adds to the University's cognitive and cultural breadth and improves the University's performance and competitive position. At an individual level, we train and deliver better leaders in a global and complex world.

I believe that affirmative action and race-conscious admissions play important roles in creating the "classroom outside of the classroom" where students learn to live together and navigate the real world. Given the calibre of students admitted to Harvard, as well as their range of interests and life experiences, this second classroom is pretty special. This is as much a part of the Harvard education as the lectures students attend; and, I believe that it should be protected at all costs, for the University and society, generally.

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

Academic institutions, in particular, play an important role in building high-quality, ethical leaders who understand both their role in society and their potential for impact. I believe that this is true for the College, as well as the graduate schools, and it should be a part of the mission statement of each.

Specifically, across all of the schools, Harvard has a clear role in creating a more equitable, inclusive, and just society, informed by world-class scholarship and well-intentioned debate. The University needs to be clear and intentional on this front: What Harvard chooses to teach; how it chooses to teach it; and to whom it selects to teach, matter. The things that matter to Harvard, matter.

Building a more equitable, inclusive, and just society on campus is where this work begins. The “classroom outside of the classroom” mentioned earlier is part of the story. So, too, is contributing intellectually to bringing about that vision of society by engaging in public debate on race-consciousness in Harvard admissions, for example. The outcome of this debate, in particular, is not only about the society we create on campus, but also about the society we want to see across the United States.

The vision of a more equitable, inclusive, and just society is under attack on many fronts, and requires a vigorous defense on campus and from campus, in the Harvard case. In a very real sense, so goes Harvard, so goes the nation.

When Barbara Jordan spoke at Harvard many decades ago, she said, “The stakes are too high for government to be a spectator sport.” On this issue, in the current environment, never a truer word was spoken.

5. 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?

I have built my career at McKinsey & Company in the Pharmaceuticals industry serving a range of clients across Europe, Middle East, and Africa, and for the past five years as the Managing Partner for the UK & Ireland Office, the largest and most diverse single office on many, many dimensions. That said, throughout my 24-years with McKinsey & Company, Inclusion & Diversity have featured prominently.

At Harvard, for example, I led McKinsey & Company’s diversity recruiting program at the College and Harvard Business School, in conjunction with my role as the head of the McKinsey’s Global Black Network (MBN) within the firm. MBN was charged with the recruitment, development, and retention of African, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean talent across the firm.

Similarly, across Europe, I have taken a lead role in the recruitment and retention of Black, Asian, and Middle Eastern (BAME) candidates and women. Within London, I have also served as the formal Senior Partner sponsor for Gay & Lesbian at McKinsey (GLAM) both to support its efforts on recruitment through retention and to raise the profile for this group within our office.

For a number of years, I also served as the Chair of the Power List Selection Committee here in London. The Power List publishes an annual magazine that showcases the 100 most influential BAME professionals in the country. This work was special for me because it brought to the forefront the accomplishments of so many BAME professionals across a wide range of industries and segments of British society. In terms of promoting Inclusion & Diversity, this magazine plays an important role in raising awareness among majority culture. However, for me, the magazine had a more important role in aspiring BAME youth. That is the reason I volunteered to chair the committee.

More recently, I have led research and published three seminal pieces of work on Inclusion & Diversity. "Diversity Matters" (2015) looks at the relationship between diversity and company financial performance – highlighting a statistically significant relationship between a more diverse leadership team and better financial performance. This was followed by "The Power of Parity" (2018) which showed how advancing women's equality in 95 countries could add \$12 trillion to global growth. Most recently, "Delivering through Diversity" (2018) reflects on the pace of progress since the first report in 2015 and provides perspectives on how to take action on I&D to improve growth and business performance. Together, these reports highlight that diversity in the workplace is not only a moral choice, but also a business imperative. They have become touch-stones for the field and widely credited with shifting the debate on diversity in the corporate suite. I speak frequently on these topics, and several of my talks and commentary in The Financial Times, CNBC, Davos, amongst others, are easily available on-line.

Most recently, we launched McKinsey and Company's first-ever US Black Economic Development research that was presented at a leadership forum in summer 2018. The forum was attended by over 200 black executives, and the research gave these leaders a new, unifying, evidence-based narrative unpacking wealth creation and distribution within the Black community, particularly in the US. Many attendees noted that while they had seen fragments of the research before, viewing all of the findings together shed new light on the disparities in wealth and philanthropy.

Outside of work, my husband and I have endowed a scholarship at the College, with the expressed interest that it supports minority students. We were both beneficiaries of financial aid while at the College, and felt that it was important that we contribute in this way.

Lastly, as a Dame Commander of the British Empire (DBE), I have been invited to participate on many high-level committees here in the UK. This ranges from my membership on the UK Fullbright Commission, to the Prime Minister's Industrial Strategy Council. I have also accepted positions on the boards of some of the country's leading cultural institutions. While women, generally, have made progress in terms of gaining access to these committees, BAME representation remains low. I have used my seat at the table both to widen perspectives, as well as to ensure that more diverse candidates were also considered for roles, consultation, and recognition from across the business community in the UK, US and beyond.