

March 2019

Dear Members of the:

[Alumnae-i Network for Harvard Women](#)
[Coalition for a Diverse Harvard](#)
[First Generation Harvard Alumni](#)
Harvard Alumnae of Color
[Harvard Arab Alumni Association](#)
[Harvard Asian American Alumni Alliance](#)
[Harvard Black Alumni Society](#)
[Harvard Gender & Sexuality Caucus](#)
[Harvard Latino Alumni Alliance](#)
[Harvard Progressive Jewish Alumni](#)
[Harvard South Asian Alumni Alliance](#)
Harvard Tamil Sangam Alumni
[Harvard University Muslim Alumni](#)
[Native American Alumni of Harvard University](#)

I am pleased to provide the following answers to your thoughtful questionnaire. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to engage with these important issues.

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.)

Racial, ethnic and gender diversity should be very important at Harvard. I do believe that ideological and geographic diversity is important as well. I applaud students for calling for a comprehensive ethnic studies program and a multicultural center. As an undergraduate, I wrote a bimonthly editorial column for The Crimson on undergraduate life and pointed out often that the university provides neither enough space nor enough structure for students to gather informally.

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

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

I am enthusiastically and fully in support of affirmative action and race-conscious admissions as Harvard practices it.

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

The concept of higher education is under attack at this moment and Harvard should lead as a beacon of justice and an embodiment of excellence in character, inclusion and intellectual rigor. Harvard should be employing best practices in equity, inclusion and justice. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

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 am African-American and Filipino and extremely active in the world of racial and ethnic diversity and inclusion. In 2012 I founded an organization whose mission is to diversify the computer science pipeline, with the goal of diversifying the world of tech startups. I speak regularly on developing diverse talent, inclusive hiring practices, and inequities both in the technology industry and broadly in the private sector in the United States. I bring a deep knowledge of history to my work. My organization's board and full-time staff is majority under-represented people of color. In addition, I actively mentor entrepreneurs of color and other female entrepreneurs aspiring to grow their own organizations.

I have personal experience with the lack of diversity and how it plays out in elite spaces. As an undergraduate at Harvard, I comped the Crimson, and was for one year the only executive (out of about 60) who was African-American. The second year, I was one of two African-American executives. Upon graduation I personally ensured that another black women would comp The Crimson and put herself on a path to become an executive, which she did. Inclusion within the Harvard student body is simply one step in full inclusion. Harvard's venerable student organizations are key elements of the school's culture and must be diverse as well in order for the university to continue to provide ethical and moral leadership.

(P.S. I am proud that The Crimson recently elected its first African-American President. It is a positive example of how inclusive practices can work and I donate regularly to their financial aid fund.

Best,

Christina Lewis AB. '02
2019 Candidate for Elected Director
Harvard Alumni Association