

1. How important should diversity, equity and inclusion be at Harvard, and what strategies should the University pursue to address these? If you can, please discuss specific programs and policies (e.g., Ethnic Studies; faculty hiring, tenure and advancement; Harvard's pledge in its 1650 Charter to actively facilitate the education of American Indian youth; Harvard's legacy of slavery; environmental justice).

Diversity, equity, and inclusion should not only be a guiding principle in a pluralistic and democratic society, but also a specific organizational objective for all educational institutions, especially Harvard, one of the leading educational institutions in the world.

From my perspective and experience as a [recognized Harvard alumni-leader](#), the growing divisions within our nation are primarily due to a lack of historical knowledge and understanding, which fuels a lack of empathy and awareness of our shared values and purpose. Educational institutions at all levels play an essential role in expanding the knowledge base of society, allowing individuals and groups to better understand each other's struggles, hopes and dreams. While both public and private institutions share this responsibility, leading educational institutions like Harvard University have a special role to play because "to whom much is given, much is required." Harvard's self-examination and reflection of its legacy of slavery, treatment of Native Americans, and exclusion of religious groups have provided opportunities for growth and leadership.

I believe strategies to achieve a core value and mission of an organization need to be reflected in all the relevant aspects of the organization's policies, programs, and practices. In addition to a thoughtful, compassionate, and values-driven leadership at Harvard, defined goals and objectives are necessary in the following five (5) areas:

1. Student Recruitment and Admission, and Student Life and Enrichment
2. Faculty Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention
3. Academic Curriculum and Research Development
4. Alumni Engagement and Support
5. Procurement (Supplier Diversity) and Investment Strategy

While I have considerable experience in each of these areas, I would like to share my views and ideas regarding: Student Recruitment and Admission, and Student Life and Enrichment; and Alumni Engagement and Support.

With respect to student recruitment and admission, and student life and enrichment, for several years, I served as an alumni-member of the Harvard Kennedy School Admissions Committee for the Master in Public Policy program. I participated in efforts to recruit, examine, and admit qualified diverse candidates from various backgrounds. I believe these efforts should continue, particularly as admission data continue to show a paucity of domestic Black and Latino enrolled students at HKS. In addition to admissions, financial aid and the quality of student and campus life are important to encourage and facilitate diversity meaningfully. An impressive institutional response to address these concerns is reflected in the HKS Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, which "supports, advocates for, and advises the HKS

community, including students, [faculty and staff], to help nurture development, well-being, and success.”

Alumni engagement and support is also an area that is particularly important to me. Since that remarkable day of graduation at the Tercentenary Theatre in 2000, I have been actively involved in alumni affairs and engagement, serving as President, Black Alumni Association; Executive Board Member, Harvard Club of Washington, DC; Member, Harvard Black Alumni Society; former Chair, HKS Alumni Board; former Graduate School Appointed Director, Harvard Alumni Association; former Elected Member, HKS Washington DC Alumni Council, and in numerous other key roles and capacities.

Harvard, particularly the lesser-sourced graduate schools, needs to make a considerable investment in harnessing and organizing the experience and strength of its diverse alumni community. While Unity Weekend: Celebrating Harvard Alumni of Color is a worthy first step, greater moral and financial support for such efforts is needed under the banner of “One Harvard” from the Office of University President. As President of the HKS Black Alumni Association, my fellow Executive Board members and I are currently working with the HKS Alumni Relations Office to organize the first ever HKS Black Alumni Reunion.

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

I support an admissions policy that allows selection committees to consider a full range of factors, including race, gender, ethnic and socio-economic background, religion, hardship, and other circumstances. Based on the history of the United States -- specifically chattel slavery, Jim Crow segregation, discriminatory public and private policies, and persistent racial disparities in wealth, access to capital, education, health, housing, and employment, there is a compelling need for selection committees to ensure that entering classes reflect the United States. Affirmative action rightly seeks to not only redress the historical and enduring injuries of systemic and systematic racism in the United States, but also to promote other important societal benefits, including diversity.

However, admissions policy is only part of the story. The cost of education is crippling and serves as a significant barrier of entry for students of many backgrounds. The graduate schools at Harvard need to redouble their efforts to make Harvard’s world-class, quality education accessible to more diverse students using technology and innovative pedagogical models.

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

Harvard can and should play the leading role in creating a more equitable, inclusive, and just society, like it has in a myriad of areas and issues. The university continues to produce top notch students that perform in various roles in society to ensure equity, inclusivity and a just society, including notable contemporary progressive and conservative alumni.

Recently, Harvard made strides to ensure the same within its community in big and small – but meaningful and impactful - ways. For example, the University recently set aside \$100 million for an endowment fund and other measures to close the educational, social and economic gaps that are legacies of slavery and racism; it elected its first Black female University President; it

launched the “We are all Human” campaign, originating from a student task force, to foster a culture that prioritizes mental health; and it sponsored the Classes of 2020 and 2021 to return to campus after COVID which allowed international students from various backgrounds to participate in commencement, in person. These initiatives not only tackle academic, social, and institutional issues of equity and inclusion, but also set an example of best practices to address systematic societal issues.

The University can further advocate as well as act, create and expand on certain initiatives. For instance, “HKS on the Road” is an existing initiative that brings alumni together in different parts of the world. This could be further explored as an opportunity to create a platform for professional exchange by highlighting diverse local alumni leaders of the areas visited. Overseas, Harvard could encourage more leaders and researchers from impoverished countries in the Caribbean, Latin American, Africa, and Asia to visit and learn the College, the graduate school, and centers, such as the Center for African Studies at FAS. At home, Harvard could strengthen and expand its partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs); pioneer resource sharing and faculty exchange initiatives; and share best practices to help struggling historically underprivileged institutions.

4. 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? Are you a member of any of the signing organizations below?

A significant part of my life’s work has been dedicated to promoting diversity, inclusion, and justice. For example,

- In the mid-1990s, I worked for Karl Racine, the first elected Attorney General of Washington, DC, at Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, representing juveniles in criminal cases.
- As a student at the HKS in 1999, I was Editor-in-Chief of *The Harvard Journal of African Public Policy*, where we provided a platform for diverse thinkers of issues that impact various communities, and we honored the life and legacy of the late Judge A. Leon Higginbotham.
- As Counsel to the Washington Bureau of the National Association for the Advanced of Colored People (NAACP), I advocated for federal and state legislation to address inequalities in criminal justice and sentencing, redlining, and predatory lending practices.
- I have been a member of [corporate teams](#) that have developed and pursued diversity goals, including minority hiring and promotion, and supplier diversity.
- For over a decade, I have served on the [Advisory Committee on Diversity for Communications in the Digital Age at the Federal Communications Committee](#), focused on lowering barriers to entry to communications and related industries for historically disadvantaged men and women, exploring ways in which to ensure universal access to and [adoption of broadband in historically disadvantaged communities](#), and creating an

environment that enables employment of a diverse workforce within the communications and related industries.

- I have created two programs -- the Federal Communications Bar Association's [Diversity Pipeline Internship Program](#) and the [TMT Law and Policy Law Certificate Program](#) -- to attract, develop, train, and support diverse, first-year law students from historically underrepresented and disadvantaged groups interested in pursuing legal careers in TMT (Telecommunications, Media and Technology) law and policy.
- I am the current President of the [HKS Black Alumni Association](#), where our Board approved priorities include coordinating with HKS Administration on ongoing efforts to advance inclusion (i.e., student admissions and faculty hiring and retention) and anti-racism at HKS; participating in HKS Alumni Reunion Planning Committee to organize/incorporate programming directly relevant to Black HKS Alumni; and developing closer working relationships with the Black Student Union to align efforts and organize the Black Policy Conference.
- I am the current [Chairman of the Board of Directors of Roots of Development](#), a non-profit organization that supports and advocates for a more sustainable approach to development around the world, particularly Haiti. We have spearheaded charitable efforts in Haiti, including developing programs that support Haitian women to combat the legacy and effects of racial and economic disparities and injustices.

I hope these activities, and my membership in the Harvard Black Alumni Society, demonstrate my genuine personal and professional commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice.

5. If elected, would you be willing to meet occasionally with the leaders and/or memberships of the groups below during your tenure?

Of course. I have spent the past 20 years as an alumni-volunteer and leader, working with fellow HKS and Harvard alumni to engage in open and constructive dialogue with senior administrators, leading faculty, engaged staff, and student leaders. I believe open, respectful engagement, transparency, and accountability foster meaningful collaboration and real partnership, which are essential for progress in a pluralistic, democratic society.