

1. 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.)

As a woman of South Asian origin who has grown up in Kenya, the UK, & Canada; and has lived in over 6 countries as an adult (including the US, the UAE, Pakistan, France, Kenya, India, & Qatar) – I value inclusion, acceptance, tolerance, and respect. And I understand how critical diversity is across all spheres of public and private life.

Given this perspective, it is important to underscore that diversity should be integral to Harvard in terms of enabling diversity of ethnicity, race, gender, gender identification, religion and other factors; as well as facilitating diversity of thought. Multiple studies have highlighted the value of interacting and learning from those that are different from one's self as well as providing role models that everyone can identify with. In fact, diversity promotes self-awareness, learning, and collaboration. It is for these reasons, that diversity is indeed critical for Harvard.

Strategies that should be employed including ensuring diversity is accounted for in policies, governance, and communication strategies. A pervasive attitude of inclusion should underscore all that Harvard does as well as no tolerance for discrimination. In addition, Harvard should foster opportunities for inter-cultural/cross-community learning and engagement. Lastly, it would be wonderful to see more celebrations across campus that engage, respect and incorporate diversity.

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

An obvious way to encourage more diversity among Harvard's alumni leaders is by ensuring that there is diversity within the ranks of alumni leaders, i.e. diversity of ethnicity, gender, geography, etc. It is only by ensuring that diversity is represented, can the alumni leaders identify with the increasingly diverse alumni. Another critical practice is to encourage differences of opinions so that all voices can be heard. Moreover, while Harvard has some great alumni activities, encouraging diversity means providing options for activities that are more inclusive and agile.

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

Affirmative action is a great tool to support the rights of disadvantaged individuals. The power of affirmative action is that it makes diversity possible. It is in fact a valuable means to ensure that those who might not get an opportunity to achieve higher education are now taken into consideration. Affirmative action also enables social mobility by taking into account other factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

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

By virtue of what Harvard is and what it stands for – it is a role model for higher education institutions globally. So, Harvard can take a leading role in creating a more equitable, inclusive and just society. Harvard therefore must talk the talk AND walk the walk. It is not enough to just have policies that encourage diversity and equity, Harvard must visibly adopt practices that support these policies and truly embrace agility, inclusion and acceptance.

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?

As President of Harvard Club of the UAE, am fortunate to represent an incredibly diverse membership (over 250 countries are represented in the residents of the UAE). As such, I work diligently to ensure that our policies, practices and programs are inclusive as well as respect and encourage diversity. In addition, as President of Harvard Global Women's Empowerment Shared Interest Group – our focus is on respecting diversity and promoting discussion/awareness on inclusion.

Professionally, as Chief Execution Office of Altamont Group, I have worked hard to ensure that as a company we embrace diversity and inclusion so that becoming part of our team is based on skills and contributions regardless of geography, gender, ethnicity, etc. In addition, our work culture supports different lifestyles including colleagues with young children, single parents, colleagues with special needs, etc. In fact, UN Women has recognized Altamont Group as a member of the Women's Empowerment Principles community of companies committed to make a difference for women in the workplace, marketplace and community.