

Christiana Goh Bardon MD '98 MBA '03  
Candidate for Board of Overseers

1. How important should diversity be at Harvard? What strategies should the University pursue to address diversity? (Please discuss specific programs and policies, including Ethnic Studies and faculty hiring, tenure, and advancement, if you can.)

Diversity is important at Harvard because listening to a variety of backgrounds and experiences leads to wider dialogues and deeper ideas. In selecting and advancing faculty, Harvard should maintain a cognizance of the world whose problems it ultimately aims to address.

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

Harvard's approach to affirmative action has been premised on utilizing race conscious admissions in furtherance of the goal of creating a diverse student body. Courts have repeatedly reaffirmed that this approach to race conscious admissions passes both the legal test of strict scrutiny and serves an important societal purpose. President Bacow has reiterated a commitment to ensure that "everyone admitted to Harvard College has something unique to offer our community" and to evaluating applicants as a "whole person." To me, this bespeaks the deeper truth that molding Harvard into a cosmopolitan community ultimately serves much more repercussive societal ends.

3. What do you think Harvard's role should be in creating a more equitable, inclusive, and just society? For example, please share any thoughts on divestment from fossil fuels and the prison industry and on the role of the Harvard University Police Department, issues of concern to current students.

Harvard's endowment has a high level of visibility and is widely respected both as a representative of the broad Harvard community and within the world of asset management. Concomitantly, Harvard has a responsibility to maximize returns in the widest sense. Positing a distinction or an opposition between investment returns and societal impact artificially severs Harvard's larger mission from its continued flourishing. In my work at the MPM Capital Oncology Impact Fund (OIF), I have seen that this distinction is not only unnecessary, but bad for business. OIF, in partnership with Dana Farber and AACR, has become an incubator of a new approach to Impact Investing. We realized early on that investing in oncology meant investing in the whole ecosystem of scientific innovation, running the gamut from basic science all the way to the clinic. Harvard can take a cue from the world of impact investing and leverage its preexisting, endogenous, rich ecosystem of ideas in managing its endowment and its larger role in society.

My career in investing has encompassed a holistic view of the world around biotechnology. On a given day I might be discussing fundamental biology, researching patient experiences with a new therapy, working with the AACR on new partnerships or communicating about biotechnology to the wider public. Similarly, my investment philosophy is informed by a diversity of perspectives and focused on transformational impact. I want to bring my holistic approach, ability to hear new ideas and insistence on transformational results to Harvard's larger mission within our society.

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?

In my professional life I have been able to enable breakthroughs in diseases that disproportionately effect minorities and people of color. Innovation in diseases like Lupus and Sickle Cell disease often lagged other diseases. We deployed capital in these areas and helped companies with new modalities like gene therapy to begin to tackle these problems. Beyond impactful investing in underserved areas, the OIF has also taken steps to ensure that our firm foregrounds inclusion in everything we do. Our Investment committee reflects this commitment with 3/7 female members and 2/7 members who are minorities. We take diversity of both management and boards into consideration when making investment decisions. Finally, we are committed to building on our commitment to inclusivity and diversity. We have an active recruitment program for women and minorities to build a pipeline of diverse leaders within our industry.

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

Yes