



## Upcoming Events

### HAA Event: A Conversation with President Garber AB '77, PhD '82

**FRI, DEC 5 @ 8:30AM**

Virtual Event via Zoom

No charge, alumni only

### Tuesday Breakfast Club

**TUE, DEC 9 @ 8:15AM**

First of All (West Hollywood)

No charge, cash coffee bar

### Annual Harvard-Yale Holiday Salon

**SAT, DEC 13 @ 6:00PM**

Home of a Club Member near Larchmont Village

\$30 per person

### Book Talk: *Every Other Weekend* by Anthony J. Mohr

**MON, DEC 15 @ 12:00PM**

Ervin Cohen & Jessup (Beverly Hills)

\$0, members; \$20, nonmembers

### The Harvard Din & Tonics Return to Los Angeles

**SAT, JAN 10 @ 3:00PM**

The Moss Theater at New Roads School at The Herb Alpert Educational Village (Santa Monica)

\$30, members; \$40, nonmembers

### Ivy+ Toast to 2026

**THU, JAN 15 @ 5:00PM**

Tirebiter Brewery (Los Angeles)

No charge, cash bar



## HCSC Schools Committee In Full Swing As Early Action Wraps Up

The Harvard Club of Southern California's 350-member Schools Committee is wrapping up its hectic Early Action round of alumni interviews and preparing for another busy season of Regular Decision application interviews, anticipating that approximately 2,500 students will apply to Harvard College during 2025-26 from the greater Southern California region.

Procedurally, once the Harvard Admissions Office lists an applicant on the interview portal for Schools Committee Area Chairs to assign, the Area Chair assigns the applicant to an interviewer in their area. The applicant and the interviewer each receive a system-generated e-mail that an assignment has been made. The interviewer and the applicant then mutually agree on a date and time for the interview, and whether the interview will be online or in person, according to Harry Kim '86, HCSC Vice President, Schools.

Kim said that in 2024-2025, Southern California had 108 admitted students, an admission rate of 4.3%, compared to the overall Harvard admission rate of 4.2%. This compares favorably with the prior year, where our area had approximately 3,000 applicants, of whom 105 were admitted, for an admissions rate of 3.5%. Students were admitted from approximately 71 Southern California high schools.

Some interviewers go to exceptional lengths to arrange their conversations with applicants. Area Chair Steven Arkow '84 recalled that an interviewer, when assigned a home-schooled student who was traveling with her family on a ship in international waters when the interview deadline was approaching, coordinated time zones, GPS positions, and internet connections to arrange a mutually convenient virtual interview.

HCSC area chairs said that they found their Schools Committee involvement to be a rewarding activity. “Many of these applicants are truly extraordinary,” said Northern Orange County Area Chair Neil Morganbesser ’86. “The interview is an opportunity for them to talk and reflect more intensively about themselves — their achievements, their character, their hopes and aspirations — in a framework that ultimately feels supportive and validating.”

Area Chair Joanna Chan MD ’02 agreed, saying, “It’s inspiring to meet young adults who are so creative, driven, and dedicated to helping their communities.” She added that the alumni interviewers “are ambassadors of Harvard and are crucial in helping the best students in our country to gain admission.”

The Club hosts receptions for admittees, in January for Early Action admittees and in April for all admittees. In addition, the Club hosts a send-off party in August for the freshman students who are heading off to Cambridge. Kim would like to give a shout out to Sonia Molina DMD ’89, MPH ’89, who has hosted the events at her home for many years.

Alumni who are interested in becoming an alumni interviewer should contact Harry Kim by e-mail at [areachairsfvarvard@gmail.com](mailto:areachairsfvarvard@gmail.com).



## President’s Letter December 2025

I recently returned from the HAA Alumni Leadership Conference, a 2-day annual event in Cambridge bringing together Harvard Alumni Association members and Harvard Club and SIG leaders from around the world to discuss topics ranging from event planning to alumni engagement. At this year’s conference, it was heartening to meet so many alumni who are unified and galvanized in response to the US government’s attacks on Harvard and higher education.

As many of you know, in September a U.S. District Court in Boston struck down the federal government’s cancellation of \$2.2 billion in research funding to the University, rejecting as unconstitutional the government’s attempt to force campus changes that Harvard argued would violate its First Amendment rights and academic freedom. But while Harvard won this legal battle, a larger war with the White House rages on as the federal government appeals this decision and launches additional attacks against our alma mater. (Who could have imagined that

Tom Lehrer’s satirical college fight song would become words to live by in 2025?... “*Fight fiercely, Harvard! Fight, fight, fight...*”) As I’ve mentioned in previous communications, I encourage you all to stay abreast of the legal proceedings as Harvard defends its academic freedom from unprecedented government attack. We each have the opportunity to present facts and reason in the face of so much disinformation that often swirls around Harvard these days. Knowledge is power.

But on to a more fun topic... The coming weeks bring some of the Harvard Club of Southern California’s most popular events. The annual Harvard–Yale Holiday Salon returns on December 13 and will showcase local Harvard and Yale alumni performers. The Din & Tonics return to Los Angeles on January 10 for a rousing a capella concert that always sells out. And on January 16, join us for a Members Only night at Crypto Arena, where the Los Angeles Kings — led by Harvard standout Alex Laferriere — take on the Anaheim Ducks. Details for these and other upcoming Club events can be found in the pages of this newsletter and on our website ([www.harvardsocal.org](http://www.harvardsocal.org)). Our Club offers over 75 educational, cultural, and social events each year. If you would like to plan an event for our alumni community, we’d love to hear from you.

Whatever holiday you’re celebrating this season, the Harvard Club of Southern California wishes you much happiness shared with family and friends.

Gary Barkin ’86, JD ’93  
President, Harvard Club of Southern California

## Recent Events

### Sold-Out November 5 Harvard-Stanford Angelo Winery Social Event Attracts a Crowd

Approximately 50 Harvard and Stanford alumni congregated at the sold-out Angeleno Wine Company event on November 5th. Charcuterie, gourmet pizzas and light bites were enjoyed during a private event in the heart of Los Angeles. Several alumni had dual degrees from Harvard and Stanford across various disciplines. All guests enjoyed forming new connections and engaged with friends, amidst delightful conversations during the open bar-style event with flights of organically grown local wines.



### November Ivy+ Mixer Makes a Splash

On November 15th, Aaron Blumenthal '15 and Jade Le '10 held an Ivy+ Mixer at Cham Gastropub in Koreatown. Over 100 alumni across all the Ivies and schools including MIT braved the unexpected rain to flood the bar and mingle over drinks and appetizers. Attendees discussed everything from real estate to the best place to grab Persian food. Even with the large turnout, there was ample space in the large venue for tables, couches, bar seating, and even games. "This was the largest event I've ever been involved with organizing, and I feel proud that people came up to shake my hand and thank me for creating this opportunity to meet new people," said Blumenthal. The next Ivy+ mixer in January is already open for registration!



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Eric Witt '95

#### CLUB NEWSLETTER/ WEBSITE

Terry Nathan  
(310) 546-5252  
email: [info@harvardsocal.org](mailto:info@harvardsocal.org)

This newsletter accepts items for publication. Materials must be submitted by the 12th of the prior month to appear in the following newsletter. Please include a phone number or email address with all submissions. Email submissions to: [info@harvardsocal.org](mailto:info@harvardsocal.org).

Harvard Club of Southern California  
1020 Manhattan Beach Blvd, Suite 204  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

# Upcoming Events

## HAA Event: A Conversation with President Garber '77, PhD '82

Join us for an off-the-record conversation with President Alan M. Garber '77, PhD '82 about the University's priorities, progress on campus, and his vision for Harvard's future.

**FRI, DEC 5 @ 8:30AM**

Virtual Event via Zoom

No charge, alumni only



## Tuesday Breakfast Club

Join us in West Hollywood for a morning of casual networking and socializing. Please feel free to bring a friend or colleague.

**TUE, DEC 9 @ 8:15AM**

First of All, (West Hollywood)

No charge, cash coffee bar



## Annual Harvard-Yale Holiday Salon

Join us for the liveliest Holiday Performance Party and Mixer in LA. Do you sing? Play? Perform? Dance? Or have another unique talent that would entertain others? This is your chance for fame, if not fortune!

**SAT, DEC 13 @ 6:00PM**

The Home of a Club Member near Larchmont Village

\$30 per person



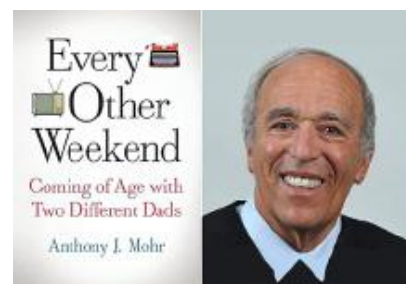
## Book Talk: *Every Other Weekend* by Anthony J. Mohr

Join us for a book talk with author Anthony J. Mohr in Beverly Hills. A light lunch will be provided, hosted by Ervin Cohen & Jessup. Lunch will be served from 12-12:30, and the talk will begin promptly at 12:30.

**MON, DEC 15 @ 12:00PM**

Ervin Cohen & Jessup (Beverly Hills)

\$0, members; \$20, nonmembers





# Upcoming Events

## The Harvard Din & Tonics Return to Los Angeles

Join the Harvard Club of Southern California in welcoming one of Harvard's most prestigious a cappella groups, The Harvard Din & Tonics, as they return to Los Angeles. This year they will be performing on Saturday, January 10th at The Moss Theater at New Roads School at The Herb Alpert Educational Village.

**SAT, JAN 10 @ 3:00PM**

The Moss Theater at New Roads School (Santa Monica)

\$30, members; \$40, nonmembers



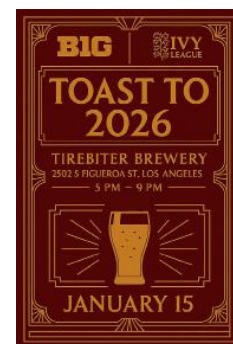
## Ivy+ Toast to 2026

Kick off 2026 in style with this Ivy + Big 10 mixer at Tirebiter Brewery in LA!

**THU, JAN 15 @ 5:00PM**

Tirebiter Brewery (Los Angeles)

No charge, cash bar



## Members Only: Harvard Club Night at the L.A. Kings

Please join your fellow club members, their families, and guests for an evening at the Crypto Arena. Watch the Los Angeles Kings — led by Harvard standout Alex Laferriere — take on crosstown archrivals the Anaheim Ducks.

**FRI, JUN 16 @ 7:30PM**

Crypto Arena (Los Angeles)

\$95 per ticket (regular price \$168) - Premium Seats



## Waitlist Available!

## Romantic Titans: Tchaikovsky and Brahms with Nathan Le '21, Shunta Morimoto + Reception

Come hear cellist Nathan Le '21 as he joins pianist Shunta Morimoto, conductor Scott Dunn, and the Four Seasons Orchestra for Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rococo Theme and Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1, a program that captures the full sweep of romantic expression.

**SAT, NOV 22 @ 8:45AM**

Elks Lodge #1767 on the Waterfront (Newport Beach)

Members: \$10; Non-Members: \$20



*Q & A from 02138:*

## Oliver Price '27



Oliver Price '27, a concentrator in Mechanical Engineering, graduated from The Bishop's School where he captained the water polo team to multiple San Diego CIF championships. He is currently a junior residing in Quincy House. At Harvard, he plays on the Varsity Water Polo team, captains the Harvard Shooting Club, and is a member of WHRB Radio and Crimson Motorsports (FSAE). Last summer, Oliver returned home to work as a Mechanical Engineering Intern at Power Device Corporation in San Diego, designing satellite computers. He hopes to pursue a career in aerospace engineering and is actively seeking opportunities to work in the industry next summer. In his free time, he enjoys skiing, hiking, and almost anything outdoors. This past summer, he hiked Mt. Harvard in Colorado, which is the fourth highest peak in the US (higher than Mt. Princeton, Mt. Yale, and Mt. Columbia!).

*HCSC: What surprised you about being a student at Harvard?*

OP: The biggest surprise was the cultural shift moving from California to New England. When I decided to move out east for college, I was excited to finally experience the seasons, see the leaves turn in the fall, and maybe even get a few snow days off from school. What I didn't expect was the difference in peoples' attitudes and values. It seemed like everyone at Harvard was always rushing around, trying to do everything at once, and never seeming satisfied or taking the time to appreciate life. Since then, I've been able to strike a happy medium for myself between the East Coast rush and a more California approach.

*HCSC: When was the first time you visited Harvard, and what were your impressions at that time?*

OP: The first time I visited was for the Harvard Water Polo junior recruiting weekend. I was just a high school junior and I had barely even started to think about college, much less where I wanted to go. The first thing that struck me was how beautiful the campus was. From Lowell to Annenberg, all the brick and stone facades captured my attention and drew me to the school. It made me feel like this was a place with a deep history of education, elegance, and excellence and all I knew was that I wanted to be a part of it.

*HCSC: What was your funniest moment at Harvard?*

OP: By the spring of my freshman year, tan skin had become just a fading memory. Since most of my teammates are also from Southern California, it was only natural that as soon as the UV index hit five, we were laying shirtless in the Yard, soaking up every bit of sunshine that we could. We didn't stop to think that tanning, a standard weekend activity back home, would be a spectacle in New England. I was shocked at the number of students who stopped to blatantly take pictures of us laying around like lizards in the sun. Soon, we became known around campus as "the shirtless Californians," but I wore the title proudly.

*HCSC: What were your favorite classes or professors?*

OP: Two classes stand out, both from the fall semester, one from my first year and one from sophomore year. My Intro to Mechanical Engineering course cemented my interest in pursuing a Bachelor of Science in an

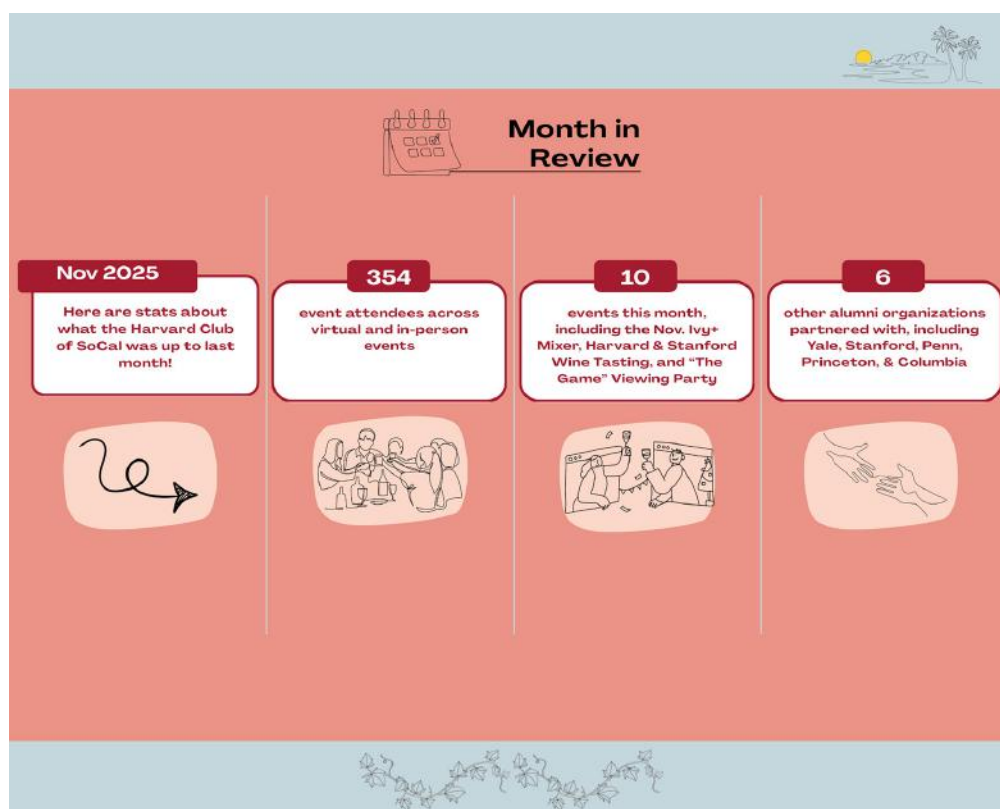
engineering discipline. The highlight was the final project, where we designed, fabricated, and built robots from scratch to compete against the rest of the class. It was an incredible hands-on experience that sparked my excitement for my senior-year Capstone Design Project. My other favorite was a Gen Ed called Happiness. As an engineering major, I don't usually lean toward liberal arts, but this class was fascinating. We spent the semester exploring philosophical ideas of a good life, from Plato and Aristotle to modern thinkers. It pushed me to reflect on my own values and what fulfillment means.

*HCSC: What do you miss most about Southern California (other than the weather, food and family)?*

OP: I miss the easy access to outdoor sports. For one, I grew up playing water polo in outdoor pools. As nice as Blodgett is for an indoor pool, it just can't compare to playing in the sunshine back home. But more than that, I miss the ease of access to things like surfing, hiking, skiing, and other outdoor activities. I am a very active and adventurous person and hiking and skiing are two of my life's greatest pleasures. I know that all those things are available in the Northeast as well, but not having a car on campus and the variability of the seasons makes pursuing adventure sports in Boston much harder. Still, I'm hoping to explore all the opportunities that the East Coast has to offer as well.

*HCSC: How do you think Southern California will figure into your future after Harvard?*

OP: There's a good chance that I will return to Southern California after graduation. Obviously graduation is a long time from now, and plans always change, but I'm very passionate about working in the aerospace industry, which Southern California is a hotbed for. Although I'm not tied to the idea of returning immediately, as there are many other places I'd love to experience, I'd like to eventually move back to Southern California to have a family and raise my children.





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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## *Calendar of Upcoming Events*

For more information on events and general club news, visit the club website at [www.harvardsocal.org](http://www.harvardsocal.org).

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