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JULY/AUGUST 2025

Upcoming Events

Alumni Book Talk with Elizabeth R. Ricker '16

SUN, JUL 27 @ 4:00PM

LUV Systems, Inc. (Gardena)

Members: \$0; Non-Members: \$10

All-Ivy LA's Big Summer Bash

WED, JUL 30 @ 6:30PM

Sorry Not Sorry (Los Angeles)

Members Only: \$30

HarvardSpeak LA: How Genes Affect Our Height, Weight, and Other Things We Care About

TUE, AUG 12 @ 4:30PM

Virtual event via Zoom

No charge

The Marciano Art Foundation: A Self-Guided Visit

THU, AUG 14 @ 11:30AM

Marciano Art Foundation (Los Angeles)

No charge

Resilient Grieving: A Community Book Talk & Healing Conversation

TUE, AUG 19 @ 4:00PM

Virtual Event on Zoom

No charge



Community Service and Education Leaders Lauded at Harvard Club Annual Dinner

The Harvard Club of Southern California's Annual Dinner on Sunday, June 29 attracted a large audience, with a sell-out crowd filling the glass dome-covered Garden Court at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens.

The Club bestowed the 2025 John Harvard Award for Distinguished Community Service on California State Senator Ben Allen '00. Senator Allen spoke about growing up in Southern California, attending Harvard, Cambridge, and Berkeley Law, and his 11 years in the California State Senate, where he represents the Westside, Hollywood, and South Bay communities of Los Angeles County. Mr. Allen discussed his commitment to education and the environment and shared reflections on his career in politics.

Immediate Past President Joan Chu Reese '85, who introduced the Senator, said "Given the vast amount of good for Californians that Senator Allen does on a daily basis by making quality education, our beautiful environment, economic opportunity, and the arts more accessible to

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all, this award was so well deserved.”

Former Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent and Vision to Learn founder Austin Beutner **presented the Harvard Club’s 2025 Excellence in Education Award to Mike Romero**, a senior executive in the Los Angeles Unified School District, and described Mr. Romero’s significant contributions to LAUSD. Mr. Romero served in LAUSD for 36 years as an educator, local school district superintendent, and chief of transition programs including early education, adult and career education, education options, and the Virtual Academy.

HCSC Club President Gary Barkin ’86, JD ’93 discussed the robust state of the Club and the current challenges facing Harvard University by the federal government. “The current administration’s attacks on our alma mater are unprecedented. By opposing the federal government’s efforts to curtail Harvard’s academic independence, Harvard is standing up for higher education across the nation,” Mr. Barkin said.

Mr. Barkin suggested that club members stay informed about Harvard’s lawsuit against the federal government and continue to advocate for the university’s academic freedom. Mr. Barkin also welcomed several new members to the Club’s board and thanked outgoing members for their service to the alumni community.



Photos clockwise from top left: Harvard Club President Gary Barkin addresses the crowd; Senator Ben Allen accepts the John Harvard Award from Joan Chu Reese; Board Members Madeleine Mejia and Harry Kim enjoying the grounds; 2025 Harvard Club Summer Fellow Wyeth Renwick; Mike Romero accepts the 2025 Excellence in Education Award; Board members and eventgoers enjoy a moment with Senator Allen; Former LAUSD Superintendent Austin Beutner presents the Excellence in Education Award.



After the L.A. Fires: Understanding and Coping with Grief and Emotional Recovery

On June 11, the club hosted a webinar which brought together a community of experts and listeners to reflect and begin healing for those grieving the loss of homes and stability following the devastating LA wildfires. Organized in collaboration with Kimia Grigoriev ALB '23, ALM '25, and moderated by Madeleine Mejia Ed.M.'00, the session offered over 180 attendees strategies, resources, and a space at a time when many are seeking comfort and clarity in the aftermath of disaster.

Dr. David Mischoulon, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, opened the conversation by guiding listeners through the difference between grief and clinical depression. He reminded the audience that feelings of sadness, exhaustion, and withdrawal are natural parts of mourning. He encouraged attendees to reach out early and often, whether for themselves or for loved ones.

Rev. Mel Kawakami M.Div '74, Th.M. '87, offered deeply grounding words on spiritual resilience. He spoke of the power of community rituals, shared storytelling, and being present for one another as ways to begin rebuilding a sense of hope and connection.

Kimia Grigoriev ALB '23, ALM '25, spoke about how children, especially those who think and learn differently, experience grief. She shared developmentally supportive strategies including the use of visual aids, predictable routines, and creative outlets for expression.

Dr. Cynthia Meyersburg PhD '10, a clinical psychologist and Harvard lecturer, provided insight into the wide range of emotional responses that can follow trauma such as shock, anger, guilt, and numbness. She encouraged self-care practices including journaling, honest conversations, and the slow re-establishment of everyday routines to help individuals restore balance and well-being over time.

To continue this journey of healing and connection, a virtual book talk and discussion group centered on Resilient Grieving by Lucy Hone is currently scheduled for August 19. This gathering will offer another meaningful opportunity for those affected by the fires to come together, share, and explore paths forward in community.

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CLUB NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE

Terry Nathan

(310) 546-5252

email: 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.

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

Upcoming Events

Alumni Book Talk with Elizabeth R. Ricker '16 - *BRAIN: An Owner's Guide*

Join us for a fascinating and interactive evening with Elizabeth Ricker, (EdM '16) award-winning author, neuroscientist, and expert in cognitive enhancement.



SUN, JUL 27 @ 4:00PM

LUV Systems, Inc. (Gardena)

Members: \$0; Non-Members: \$10

Members Only! All-Ivy LA's Big Summer Bash

Whether you're looking to make new friends, have great conversations with interesting folks, raise funds, invest in a venture, find a new gig, or hire someone qualified, the All-Ivy LA network is a great place to start. Magic happens when a bunch of bright, ambitious, and kind people come together.

WED, JUL 30 @ 6:30PM

Sorry Not Sorry (Los Angeles)

Members: \$30



HarvardSpeak LA: How Genes Affect Our Height, Weight, and Other Things We Care About

Dr. Joel Hirschhorn will discuss how genetic variants can be used to predict future diseases or traits like height and weight. He will also discuss the opportunities and challenges for these genetic discoveries to open up avenues of future research.

**HARVARD
SPEAK
LA**



TUE, AUG 12 @ 4:30PM

Virtual Event via Zoom

No charge

The Marciano Art Foundation: A Self-Guided Visit

Join us for a visit to the Marciano Art Foundation, a contemporary art space in Hancock Park dedicated to fostering a spirit of collaborative creative freedom by making the unique spaces of their historic building available to artists, arts organizations, and other creative groups to realize innovative projects and public programs on an ongoing basis.

THU, AUG 14 @ 11:30AM

Marciano Art Foundation (Los Angeles)

No charge, but space is limited.

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Upcoming Events

Sold Out!

Chocolate Crawl - Beverly Hills

Experience Beverly Hills through the lens of gourmet chocolate. As we walk, we'll learn about chocolate and its origins, and take pics at landmarks along the way on our 1.5-mile journey. You'll enjoy curated tastings, storytelling, and much more!

SAT, AUG 16 @ 10:00AM

Meet at Edelweiss Chocolates (Beverly Hills)

Members: \$48; Non-Members: \$58



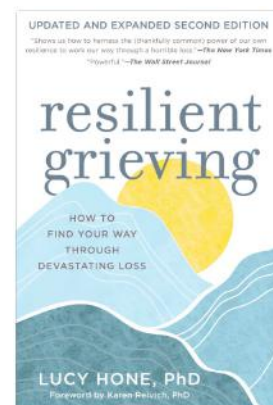
Resilient Grieving: A Community Book Talk & Healing Conversation

Please join us for a reflective and supportive virtual book talk centered on *Resilient Grieving* by Dr. Lucy Hone who offers a compelling blend of research, lived experience, and practical wisdom on navigating loss and cultivating resilience.

TUE, AUG 19 @ 4:00PM

Virtual Event via Zoom

No charge



Members Only: Curator-Led Tour of Hauser & Wirth's Downtown Gallery

Join the Harvard Club for an exclusive tour of Hauser & Wirth's Downtown gallery. A Hauser & Wirth curator will take us through the works of Luchita Hurtado, James Jarvaise, and Henry Taylor. This event is open to Harvard Club members and their guests.

FRI, AUG 22 @ 11:30AM

Hauser & Wirth (Los Angeles)

No charge, but space is limited.



Pasadena Brunch Event

Join fellow Harvard alumni for Sunday brunch in Old Town Pasadena. Meet old friends and make new ones! All alumni welcome. We will pay for our own meals and split the check. Space is limited so please cancel if you cannot attend.

SUN, SEP 21 @ 10:00AM

True Food Kitchen (Pasadena)

Members: \$0; Non-Members: \$5 (pay for your own meal)



Recent Events

Recent Grads Happy Hour at All Season Brewing

To kick-off summer 2025, ~30 recent grads met for happy hour at All Seasons Brewery on Thursday May 29. Alumni joined from across Harvard College, Law School, Business School, School of Design, Dental School and more! Stay tuned for additional happy hours throughout the summer.



Lunch and Book Talk: *The Einstein of Sex*

On June 27, the Harvard Club and Ervin Cohen & Jessup hosted a book talk with author Daniel Brook. Daniel's new book, *The Einstein of Sex: Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, Visionary of Weimar Berlin*, is a fascinating look at Hirschfeld's theory of sexual relativity, life in Weimar Berlin, and the effort to bury him in history. Over twenty attendees enjoyed lunch and a lively presentation on a forgotten chapter of history, followed by a Q&A with the author.



Salsa Night Under the LA Stars Brings Alumni Together Through Dance

On Friday, July 11, Harvard alumni and friends gathered at The Music Center for an unforgettable evening of salsa dancing. The event began with a lively, beginner-friendly lesson led by professional instructors, creating a welcoming atmosphere for dancers of all experience levels. As the evening progressed, guests took to the open-air dance floor, enjoying vibrant music curated by live DJs under the stars. The night was filled with energy, connection, and community. This was an event that truly brought people together through the joy of movement and music.



Event Summary: 626 Summer Bites - Lunch at Happy Buddha Kitchen

The Harvard Club of Southern California hosted a summer lunch at Happy Buddha Kitchen, a popular vegetarian restaurant in the San Gabriel Valley, on July 13. Nineteen alumni and friends of alumni gathered to enjoy a delicious vegetarian meal in a relaxed and welcoming setting. The event provided a great opportunity for attendees to connect over flavorful food and engaging conversation. Whether vegetarian or simply curious, guests came for the cuisine and stayed for the sense of community.



Q & A from 02138:

Ariana Figueroa '26



Ariana Figueroa '26, a concentrator in Government and Education Studies, was born in Santa Ana and graduated from Santa Ana High School, where she ran Cross Country and Track and Field. She was involved in mentorship and tutoring programs in her city, helping elementary and middle school children with academics and leadership development. She also served as president of her school's Red Cross Club and Key Club.

She is a rising senior residing in Kirkland House. At Harvard, she is the Co-Director of the Wellness Educators initiative, which promotes physical and mental well-being on campus. She is also a mentor with Harvard Radcliffe's Emerging Leaders Program, where she guides a group of high school students from the Watertown community in exploring their research interests. Since her first year of college, she has worked as an intern at ReVista: Harvard's Review of Latin America.

Ariana is actively involved in cultural organizations on campus, including Raza, the Mexican-American organization on campus; and Fuerza Latina. During the summers, she has gained experience in various roles, including as an Education Policy Intern with PBS Kids SoCal, as a Development Intern with Thrive Scholars, and, most recently, an Intern Paralegal with the U.S. Department of Justice's United States Trustee Program.

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

AF: I was surprised by the accessibility of knowledge and the willingness of professors to help students with their research goals and professional aspirations.

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

AF: The first time I visited Harvard was during Visitas as a senior in high school, and I thought that Cambridge in April was excruciatingly cold and very beautiful.

HCSC: What was your funniest moment at Harvard?

AF: My roommates and I had a snowball fight the very first time we saw snow. We stayed outside for hours playing in the snow.

HCSC: If you were President of Harvard, what would change?

AF: I would build an affinity space on campus for first-generation, low-income students that is not in the basement of a first-year dorm.

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

AF: I miss the culture and the familiarity of feeling at home all the time. Although I've found my people in Cambridge, I miss the warmth of being around people who've known me my whole life.

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

AF: I want to go back to SoCal and work there post-grad!



THE HARVARD CLUB
of SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

1020 Manhattan Beach Blvd., #204
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

For more information on events and general club news, visit the club website at www.harvardsocal.org.

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	COST
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