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JUNE 2024

## Upcoming Events

### Radcliffe Event: Raising Our Ambitions for a Just Climate Future

WED, JUN 12 @ 1:00PM

Online via Zoom

No charge

### Harvardwood Lowdown

MON, JUN 17 @ 5:00PM

Online via Zoom

\$10 per person

### Griffith Park Hike: Fern Dell to Griffith Observatory

SAT, JUN 22 @ 8:30AM

Meet at Griffith Park's Trails Cafe

No charge

### 2024 Harvard Club Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner

SUN, JUN 23 @ 5:00PM

Huntington Library (San Marino)

\$125, members; \$155, non-members;

\$165, to join the Club AND attend the Annual Dinner, eligible non-members only;

\$75, recent grads (classes of 2020-2024)



## Harvard Club Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner

The Harvard Club of Southern California's Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner once again will be held at the lovely Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Please join us on Sunday, June 23 as we honor distinguished members of our community.



The 2024 John Harvard Award for Distinguished Community Service will be presented to Rick Chavez Zbur JD '83. Mr. Zbur is a California State Assemblyman serving the 51st District (representing Angelenos from Santa Monica to Glendale). He has served in the California State

Assembly since 2022. He is a former Executive Director of Equality California, the largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization in California. He is a past president of the California League of Conservation Voters.



The 2024 Excellence in Education Award will be presented to Deborah Prothrow-Stith MD '79, a public health educator and dean of the College of Medicine at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in South Los Angeles. Dr. Prothrow-Stith previously served as the Henry Pickering Walcott Professor of Public Health Practice and

Associate Dean at Harvard School of Public Health, where she created the Division of Public Health Practice. She is a former Commissioner of Public Health for Massachusetts.

Event attendees are welcome to tour the Huntington on their own in the hours prior to our event's start at 5:00 p.m. The event price includes a three-course meal with dessert and coffee. There will be a cash bar. Admission to the Huntington Library and Gardens during its operating hours is not included. Parking is available at no charge.



**Date:** Sunday, June 23, 2024

**Location:** Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108

**Time:** 5:00 PM reception. 6:00 PM dinner and awards ceremony.

**Event Pricing:** \$125.00 (Members and their guests); \$155.00 (Non-Members); \$165.00 to join the Club AND attend the Annual Dinner, eligible non-members only; \$75.00 (Recent Graduates, Classes of 2020-2024 from Harvard College and current students)

**Purchase Tickets:** See the Club's website at <https://hcsc.clubs.harvard.edu/>

**Contact:** Gary Barkin, [garybarkin@gmail.com](mailto:garybarkin@gmail.com)



## *Nworah Ayogu '10, MD '15, MBA '15 Elected to the Harvard Board of Overseers*

The Harvard Club of Southern California is pleased to announce that Nworah Ayogu '10, MD '15, MBA '15 of Los Angeles was elected to the Harvard Board of Overseers in the 2024 spring elections. Dr. Ayogu will serve a six year term.

Dr. Ayogu currently works at Thrive Capital in their healthcare group. He recently completed a stint as the CEO of Amazon Clinic. Ayogu was President of his Medical School class, First Marshal of his College class, served as an Adams House tutor, and as co-chair of the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations. He has served as an alumni interviewer and as a volunteer and committee member of the Harvard Alumni Association's Board.

"I am grateful for the support of my friends, and honored to be elected to the Harvard University Board of Overseers," Ayogu said in a statement. "I am excited to bring my perspective and leadership to a place that means so much to so many."

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Gary Barkin '86, JD '93

#### Executive Vice President

Lisa Watanabe-Peagler '02

#### Vice Presidents Communications

Pooja Nair JD '11

Cynthia Torres '80, MBA '84

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John Luna '03

#### Vice Presidents Membership

Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi EdD '81

Matthew Stasior '87

#### Vice Presidents Orange County

German Enciso HMS Research Fellow '07-'09

A. J. Rogers MD '79

#### Vice President Programs

Madeleine Mejia EdM '00

#### Vice Presidents Radcliffe

Elizabeth Gillis '82

Kay Park '87

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Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi EdD '81

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#### CLUB NEWSLETTER/ WEBSITE

Terry Nathan

(310) 546-5252

email: [info@harwardsocal.org](mailto:info@harwardsocal.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@harwardsocal.org](mailto:info@harwardsocal.org).

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



## Message from HCSC Club President Gary Barkin

On June 30th, the Harvard Club of Southern California will close its 123rd year! I invite you all to celebrate at our Annual Dinner on June 23rd. This signature event will be held at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, where we will mingle and dine under the stars. Check out the Club's website for more information and to register. Our Annual Dinner provides a wonderful way to connect with our vibrant alumni community, learn more about the Club, and hear from some impressive speakers. Many thanks to our Club's Executive VP Lisa Watanabe-Peagler and Board member Sonia Molina for co-chairing this amazing event.

But the Annual Dinner is just one of more than 60 events hosted or co-hosted by our Club over the past year. With the pandemic behind us, our Club strived to offer a wider array of networking events - 15 since last June - ranging from large annual events such as Welcome to Your City and Global Networking Night to local meet-ups throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Some of our breakfast networking events saw alumni shmoozing for hours, happily punting their morning work schedules.

I am so thankful to Madeleine Mejia, our VP of Programs, who coordinates our jam-packed schedule of events. In other news, our Club's membership is up – at last count, we have over 1200 members thanks to the innovative work of our Membership VPs Matthew Stasior and Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi, who continually find new ways to engage our alumni.

Harvard applications were also at near record numbers this year (including nearly 3,000 applicants to the Class of 2028 from our Southern California region). Our Schools VPs Eva Plaza, Harry Kim, and Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi coordinated interviews for this huge pool of students with the assistance of so many of you who volunteer as alumni interviewers. It's a Herculean task.

Our Club's engagement with students isn't limited to interviewing. Our Board coordinates Harvard's presence at local high school college fairs; we award Harvard Book Prizes to promising high school juniors; and we sponsor summer fellowships to Harvard students who work as interns in our area.

And did you know that this newsletter that you're holding (or reading online) is published every month? Communications VPs Cynthia Torres and Pooja Nair tirelessly solicit articles, edit the entries, layout the newsletter, and get it into your hands each month. And they patiently put up with my often last-minute delivery of the President's Message.

If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to get involved with the Harvard Club of Southern California and learn more. A great first step is attending our Annual Dinner on June 23rd. Hope to see you there!

## A Night of Whiskey Tasting with Friends

On May 2, 2024, 20 alumni enjoyed an amazing night of friendship and exotic whiskeys from Ireland to Japan at Bacchus Bar and Bistro in Irvine. In attendance were HCSC Board Members Matt Stasior '87, VP of Membership; Betsey Gillis '82, VP of Radcliffe; and Paul Bokota '87.



## Breakfast Networking Event in Culver City

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us at Philz Coffee in Culver City on May 9, 2024, for our Breakfast Networking event. Alumni from various Harvard Classes came together to reconnect, share stories, and support each other's professional endeavors. Throughout the event, attendees engaged in lively conversations about AI's impact on storytelling and filmmaking, had insightful discussions about book clubs, and explored potential collaborations across different areas. Madeleine Mejia, Ed.M. '00, said: "It was inspiring to witness the group's strong sense of camaraderie, and the willingness of our alumni to support each other in their personal and professional growth."

These networking events take place monthly at various locations throughout Los Angeles. Please join us at our upcoming networking events.



## Crafting Community: Santa Monica Brew Works Happy Hour Networking Event

The Happy Hour Networking event held at Santa Monica Brew Works on May 10, 2024, offered alumni a perfect blend of professional engagement and casual relaxation. Alumni mingled over refreshing craft beers and shared various pizzas and other delicious food. The atmosphere was lively yet laid-back, fostering meaningful connections and potential collaborations, leaving everyone looking forward to the next gathering.



# Upcoming Events

## Virtual Event (Radcliffe): Raising Our Ambitions for a Just Climate Future

Join us for an interdisciplinary panel of Harvard Radcliffe Institute fellows—experts in environmental law, policy, and planning—who will explore how collaboration among researchers and policymakers can raise ambitions for climate action and climate justice while effecting change.

**WED, JUN 12 @ 1:00PM**

Online via Zoom

No charge



## Harvardwood Lowdown

You are invited to attend a virtual Harvardwood Lowdown event! This informal conversation features members of Harvardwood's leadership team, including co-founders Mia Riverton Alpert and Adam Fratto; Allison Kiessling; and special guest appearances from new board leadership – Harvardwood President Diane Nabatoff and Vice President Kenneth Williams, who is a former president of the Harvard Club of Southern California.



**MON, JUN 12 @ 5:00PM**

Online via Zoom

\$10 per person

## Griffith Park Hike: Fern Dell to Griffith Observatory

Grab a morning coffee at Griffith Park's Trails Cafe and join Harvard Club members for a stroll through Fern Dell on your way up to Griffith Observatory. This 2.6-mile loop trail in Griffith Park takes an average of 1h 30 min to complete.



**SAT, JUN 22 @ 8:30AM**

Meet at Griffith Park's Trails Cafe (Los Angeles)

No charge

## 2024 Harvard Club Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner

Spend an evening with the Harvard Club at our Annual Awards Dinner. All club members and their guests are invited to attend the club's Annual Dinner on Sunday, June 23, at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens.

**SUN, JUN 23 @ 5:00PM**

Huntington Library, Art Collection, & Botanical Gardens (San Marino)

\$125 club members; \$155 non-members; \$165, to join the Club AND attend the event; \$75 recent grads ('20 -'24)



Q & A from 02138:

## David Arkow '24



David Arkow '24, a concentrator in Economics with a secondary in Statistics, graduated from Harvard-Westlake High School where he was captain of the tennis team which won the CIF championship twice. He is a graduating senior residing in Cabot House.

At Harvard, Arkow was president of the Harvard Sports Analysis Collective and Vice President and Director of Consulting of TAMID Group Consulting. He was a tutor in the Economics Department and a course assistant for Sports Economics. Since freshman year, he played on the Harvard Men's Tennis Team which won the Ivy League championships for each of the past three years, and achieved the program's highest national ranking at No. 6 in 2024. His senior thesis, "Serving Sweet Spot" is a statistical and strategic analysis of the risk-reward trade-off of shot selection in professional tennis.

He was recognized as an ITA Scholar Athlete and a John Harvard Scholar. In his summer after junior year he worked at Deloitte Consulting in New York as a Summer Strategy Scholar, and he will be returning full-time after graduation. The prior summer, he worked at a sports betting start-up in New York. His brother, Andrew Arkow '27, will reside in Pforzheimer House.

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

DA: I was surprised by the very friendly nature of all the students. When I entered, I was expecting that Harvard would be a lot more cutthroat with people being very competitive. My peers are still very driven, but everyone is rooting for each other and is very supportive.

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

DA: The first time I recall visiting Harvard was in fifth grade on my elementary school's trip to Boston. I don't remember much from that trip, but I have a photo of the John Harvard statue. I visited again my junior year of high school, and I remember it being gloomy, cold, and rainy (and in March). But that time I remember walking around the campus with all of the historic buildings and lively students, and I felt a real energy to the campus. Even if the weather wasn't great (and it definitely got worse), the fact that I was still enjoying my visit that much was a good sign.

*HCSC: What has been your funniest moment at Harvard?*

DA: My funniest moment at Harvard was meeting my multivariable calculus professor, Noam Elkies, for the first time in-person after having had a class with him on Zoom. He was a national chess master and a chess composer (I still don't know what that is), and he was the youngest tenured professor in modern Harvard history at age 26. He was a math prodigy so I had no idea what he was doing teaching a relatively intro course. Nevertheless, I was eating with some friends in the Lowell House Dining Hall, and he asked to sit next to our group. I could tell he did not recognize me and waited until the end of the conversation to ask if he remembered. He said, "Oh yes of course I remember, you just look much different than on your tiny Zoom screen." He definitely did not remember!

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

DA: An interesting idea my friends and I discuss is having all sophomores live in the Quad. Having lived in the Quad all 4 years, including as a freshman, I have really enjoyed the experience and while most first-years dread being Quaded, if everyone in your class lived there for one year I think people would really appreciate the Quad and it would lose its stigma. If they liked the Quad, they could stay for their next two years but if they wanted to live in a River House, they could leave after one year. And, I would make EC 10 (Introductory Economics) a mandatory class.

Continued on next page

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

DA: I miss the suburban sprawl. A term I have come to use when describing SoCal to friends at Harvard is the city's "micro-pockets." You can drive 10-15 minutes and be in a completely different area, whether you drive from Santa Monica to Beverly Hills, or West Hollywood to Downtown -- each is its own destination, and each has a unique feel. Or you can drive 60-90 minutes (depending on traffic) and be in a whole new city, whether it be Santa Barbara, Orange County, or San Diego.

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

DA: Although I am going to NYC after graduation, as a lot of other Harvard undergrads do, I am confident that I will likely find my way back to SoCal later in life. Talking with my other SoCal friends at Harvard, I'd say a substantial majority want to move back long-term, which seems pretty high if you compare it to other major cities. While I grew up in West LA, I'd be open to exploring other parts of SoCal as there is so much to offer. Can't beat the warm weather for year-round outdoor tennis!

## Welcome to New Members...

The Harvard Club of Southern California welcomes the following new members:

Heidi Alhannat '29

Nathaly Andrade EdM '24

Michael Astourian JD '26

Nworah Ayogu '10, MD '14,  
MBA '15

Aaron Blumenthal '15

Lauren Causey EdM '09

Marc Guinez '12

Tam Hulusi SMP '91

Victor Hwang '93

Nehama Jacobs '74

Desiree Juarez ALM '24

Lisa Kurzweil MBA '86

Cianna Leatherwood MPH '18

M. Melissa Lukowski MBA '97

Allison Park '25

Joshua Parker '25

Catalina Saenz EdM '05

Laszlo Sandor '11, PhD '15

Emad Salman Shaikh MPH '24

Nathaniel Shin '27

Maxwell Simeon MBA '24

Wanda Stakley EdM '97

Nicole Torres '11

Jianlin Xu MPA '11



## Got a Great Idea for an HCSC Event? Share It With Us!

We're always looking for new fun and educational events to give our members opportunities to get together and enjoy what Southern California has to offer!

If you have an idea for an event, please email Madeleine Mejia, EdM '00 at [madeleine\\_mejia@post.harvard.edu](mailto:madeleine_mejia@post.harvard.edu).

You can review the current Harvard Club of Southern California policies for events document, on our website at <https://hcsc.clubs.harvard.edu/article.html?aid=106>.



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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](http://www.harvardsocal.org).

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	COST
Wed, Jun 12 1:00PM	<b>Radcliffe Event: Raising Our Ambitions for a Just Climate Future</b>	Online via Zoom	No charge
Mon, Jun 17 5:00PM	<b>Harvardwood Lowdown</b>	Online via Zoom	\$10 per person
Sat, Jun 22 8:30AM	<b>Griffith Park Hike: Fern Dell to Griffith Observatory</b>	Griffith Park's Trails Cafe Los Angeles, CA	No charge
Sun, Jun 23 5:00PM	<b>2024 Harvard Club Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner</b>	Huntington Library, Art Museum, & Botanical Gardens San Marino, CA	\$125, members \$150, nonmembers \$160, membership plus event ticket \$75, recent grads