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THE HARVARD CLUB
of SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

WWW.HARVARDSOCAL.ORG

(310) 546-5252

FEBRUARY 2021

Upcoming Events

Lunar New Year Celebration

SAT, FEB 6 @ 4:00PM

Virtual Event

No charge - RSVP required

Bending the Arc of History Towards Justice

SAT, FEB 13 @ 11:00AM

Virtual Event

No charge - RSVP required

#VoteForAmerica2020: A SoCal Perspective from Your Local Leaders

MON, FEB 22 @ 4:00PM

Virtual Event

No charge - RSVP required

Harvard-Caltech Recent Grad Virtual Movie Night, Featuring *Ponyo* by Studio Ghibli

THU, FEB 25 @ 6:00PM

Virtual Event

No charge - RSVP required

Guggenheim Virtual Private Tour: Hilma af Klint

SUN, FEB 28 @ 11:00AM

Virtual Event

\$20 per device



Bending the Arc of History Towards Justice

Last February trust and estates litigator Terrence M. Franklin JD '89 presented the riveting story of his ancestor Lucy Sutton and her fight in the courts to uphold the last will and testament of her owner, who was also the father of her children, that set her and their children free. He's back again, but this time with a triplet of stories about Lucy's contemporaries, three women who also struggled to protect their rights of emancipation and gifts of property.

Join the Harvard Club of Southern California's Anti-Racism Committee and the Harvard Black Alumni Society LA Chapter for this special Black History Month event!

Date: Saturday, February 13, 2021

Time: 11:00AM

Cost: Free (registration required)

Location: Zoom invitation provided after registration

As a trusts and estates litigator, Franklin is uniquely qualified to tell the tale of how he discovered the legal documents that emancipated his family from slavery in 1846, and how that discovery helped him shape his personal mission, "To Bend the Arc of History Towards Justice." From multiple creative projects that frame the story, to his work to improve diversity, equity, and inclusivity in the trusts and estates field, and through the development of a curriculum for students that cultivates critical thinking skills and helps them develop personal life missions, Franklin bends the arc every day in big and small ways, as he urges others to look inside themselves to see how they, too, can bend the arc.



Admissions: Early Action

On December 17, Harvard College notified 747 students of their acceptance into the Class of 2025, representing 7.4% of the 10,086 students who applied for early admission (EA). In the Southern California region, Harvard admitted 34 students out of 363 applicants, an acceptance rate of 9.4%. The number of EA applicants this year increased by 138, representing a 61.3% increase. This led to a lower rate of acceptance than last year, when 37 students were accepted out of 255 applicants, an acceptance rate of 16%.

“The outstanding students admitted today come from every corner of the United States and the world and have an incredible array of talents and experiences,” said William R. Fitzsimmons, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid. “Given the high number of remarkable applicants to date, Harvard has taken a conservative approach to admitting students in the early admissions process to ensure proper review is given to applicants in the regular admissions cycle.”

So far, the incoming class includes students from a range of ethnic backgrounds. African Americans constitute 16.6 percent of those admitted (12.7 percent last year); Asian Americans 23.4 percent (24 percent last year); Latinx 10.4 percent (11.1 percent last year); and Native Americans and Native Hawaiians 1.3 percent (the same as last year). On January 16, Harry Kim '86, the Club's Vice President of Schools, and his wife Kay Park '87, HAA Regional Director, hosted a Zoom reception for the newest admits, attended by 26 early admits and those previously admitted who took a gap year, where they were able to meet each other in a series of breakout sessions.

Thank you to all the alumni who have volunteered as alumni interviewers. Because of the number of applications Harvard received this year, there is an acute need for interviewers. All interviewing is being conducted online, and the interviewing season will run to mid-March. If you are interested in interviewing, please contact Harry Kim at areachairsfvharvard@gmail.com.

Recent [Virtual] Event

Harvard Speakers Bureau: Professor Martha Schwartz Discusses Sustainable Cities

On January 10, the HCSC, together with the Harvard Clubs of San Diego, Santa Barbara, Hawaii, and Maui, co-hosted a Harvard Speakers Bureau event with Graduate School of Design Professor Martha Schwartz that was attended by over 120 people from around the world. Professor Schwartz discussed reasons for the urgent need to create sustainable cities, touched upon the situations in Los Angeles and Hawaii, described a study model of redesigning streets in Boston neighborhoods, and discussed methods for mitigation of (and adaptation to) the increasingly accelerating effects of climate change, including geo-engineering strategies such as stratospheric aerosol injection. Afterwards, she graciously held a Q&A session for an additional hour.



Upcoming [Virtual] Events

Lunar New Year [Virtual] Celebration

Please join us for a virtual Lunar New Year Celebration and Potluck. Traditional Asian recipes will be shared, and we will highlight a lychee cocktail-making tutorial during the event to toast in the Year of the Ox. Learn about Lunar New Year traditions and engage in a fun trivia challenge to learn about customs, superstitions, and Feng Shui to usher in luck for 2021!

SAT, FEB 6 @ 4:00PM

No charge, registration required

Kay Park, kayparkmd@yahoo.com



#VoteforAmerica2020: A SoCal Perspective from Your Local Leaders

Join a conversation moderated by Jacki Chou '07 with Nithya Raman '02, Ben Allen '00, and Jay Chen '00, three of your local Southern California elected officials for their perspective on this recent election cycle. We will discuss local election dynamics, COVID's influence, and what Southern Californians can look forward to in the coming years.

MON, FEB 22 @ 4:00PM

No charge, registration required

Jacki Chou, jacki.chou@gmail.com



Harvard-Caltech Recent Grad Virtual Movie Night, Featuring *Ponyo* by Studio Ghibli

Hosted by the Harvard Club of Southern California's Recent Graduate Committee and the Caltech Alumni Association, Recent Grad Movie night will feature Studio Ghibli's animated hit movie, *Ponyo*, friendly virtual conversations, and a Postmates discount code.

THU, FEB 25 @ 6:00PM

No charge, registration required

Brittany Wang, brittlynnwang@gmail.com



Guggenheim Virtual Private Tour: Hilma af Klint

Join HCSC for a virtual private tour of the Guggenheim's "Hilma af Klint: Paintings for the Future" exhibit. The tour will be given to our group using the inquiry-based method, which creates a rich exchange between the viewer and the Gallery Educator through interaction.

SUN, FEB 28 @ 11:00AM

\$20 per device

Pooja Nair, pnair@ecjlaw.com



Q&A from 02138:

Evelyn Wong '21



Evelyn Wong '21, a concentrator in Neuroscience, Romance Languages, and Literature, was born in East Los Angeles and graduated from Schurr High School, where she was a tri-sport varsity athlete in cross country, basketball, and track. She was the president of the National Honor Society and editor-in-chief of the *Spartan Scroll*, a National Scholastic Press Association Hall of Fame member publication, earning state and national awards for feature and sports writing. Evelyn is a senior residing in Quincy House. At Harvard, she serves as a co-director of Camp Kesem, senior director of the Crimson Care Collaborative, and shooting guard for the women's club basketball team. She conducts research at the Synthetic Neurobiology Group as a Herchel Smith Research Fellow and is the founder and CEO of CovEducation, a non-profit that provides academic support to low-income K-12 communities. Last summer, Evelyn was a David Rockefeller Center Summer Internship Fellow working with Fundacion Nuestros Hijos, an NGO based in Santiago, Chile that serves childhood cancer patients from under-resourced regions of South America. Most recently, Evelyn was named a 2021 Marshall Scholar and will pursue neurotechnology research at University College London after graduation.

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

Growing up entirely in East Los Angeles, California, I always thought the whole world, the people, and their personalities were similar to those in my hometown. However, I had a huge culture shock coming to Harvard -- meeting so many people from different walks of life made me realize the extent to which our experiences shape our perspectives on the world around us.

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

EW: The first time I visited Harvard was my senior year of high school, during Visitas [Harvard's admitted students weekend]. My first impression was that this had a very rich history -- seeing the remnants of colonial culture made me feel like I was walking into the pages of my AP U.S. History or American Literature textbook. It was a surreal experience -- but what was most meaningful was the people I met there, who had so many different passions and experiences that shaped who they were.

HCSC: What was your favorite class (or professor) and why?

EW: Professor Kay Merseth - Dilemmas of Equity and Excellence in American K-12 Education. As a first generation, low income college student, I really struggled my freshman and sophomore years to adapt to life at Harvard, from this foreign concept of "networking" to speaking up in class, and the politics of office hours. It felt like I was staying up until 2 or 4 a.m. trying to learn the language of a world I had been denied entrance to, as I had never read Nietzsche or listened to opera. This class really changed my perspective of myself by showing me how our early educational experiences shape our identities -- and how inequities in the K-12 education system can affect students' college careers. This was life-changing not only personally, but also academically and professionally -- as I was inspired to take on a larger role in changing that playing field for other students in my community.

HCSC: What has been your funniest moment at Harvard?

EW: I don't have a single "funniest" moment, but what immediately comes to mind is all the late-night conversations, pranks, and other impromptu shenanigans in the Quincy dining hall. My friends and I would study there, and we would play pranks on each other: from taking selfies on each other's phones, to turning one's backpack inside out, etc.

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

EW: I would definitely change the way that the administration views and supports first generation or low-income students, especially in the realm of mental health.

Continued on next page

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

EW: I miss my friends and, aside from the warm weather, the warm personalities. I miss going back each winter break and volunteering as an assistant basketball coach with my best friend Renejia at the local high school.

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

EW: In the future, I'm hoping to pursue a career at the intersection of neuroscience, technology, and refugee health to improve the care of individuals who are displaced from their home countries. At the end of last year, there were around 79.6 million people displaced around the world because of conflict and human rights violations and, given recent trends, this number will only get higher in the next few decades. As these refugees settle in places like Southern California and especially Los Angeles, we need to have a "how" and a "why" to treat them, especially as they experience things like trauma, PTSD, and depression. The **how** is something I will address as a scientist, because I think to start to understand these diseases we need to really get at the root of understanding cognition and behavior and developing the technologies that will help us answer these questions. The **why** is knowledge I can only gain by really getting to know the community, both personally and professionally as a physician. I am grateful to have grown up in a diverse environment, because the stark differences in the worlds I've learned to navigate from East L.A. to Harvard has shown me the extent of inequality that exists in our society--and that motivates me every day to give back to the community that raised me.

HCSC: How did you manage the transition to virtual class?

EW: Logistically, I think I've been able to settle down and transition into online education. I was originally worried about limited Wi-Fi access, as well as my parents' health (both are still working full-time), but we ended up getting at least the Wi-Fi issue (and navigating time zone differences) sorted out. I think the transition to an Emergency SAT/UNSAT system [an alternative grading system introduced in the Spring of 2020] has definitely relieved a lot of that stress (although I still stress about getting work in on time). It's encouraged me to take more risks by pursuing more learning opportunities outside of my classes. As a research fellow in the Ed Boyden Lab, the undergrads in my project and our two grad student mentors are both learning computational modeling of molecular dynamics together - and it's so cool to have something where both parties are stumbling together, catching each other's falls, and learning from each other. Even within my classes, this Emergency SAT/UNSAT has allowed me to take risks in the sense of writing papers that compel me to wrestle with perspectives that I never would have taken if I just wanted to provide the strongest viewpoint possible. Despite the Zoom and the lack of human connection (which I think is irreplaceable), this has been one of the most intellectually liberating experiences I have had in college.

HCSC: How did you spend fall semester?

EW: During the fall semester, I moved back onto campus and was balancing classes with working in my lab full time towards completion of my honors thesis in Neuroscience. I continued working on a few non-profits I have been involved in, including Camp Kesem and CovEducation, writing grants and managing a team of student leaders in their respective operations. In my free time, I played guitar and went on runs along the Charles River. I also served as a Pedagogical Fellow in Kay Merseeth's class at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, GENED1076: American Equity and Excellence in K-12 Education.

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CLUB NEWSLETTER/ WEBSITE

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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: HarvardSoCal@gmail.com.

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

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