



The HARVARD FOUNDATION Journal

FALL 2005

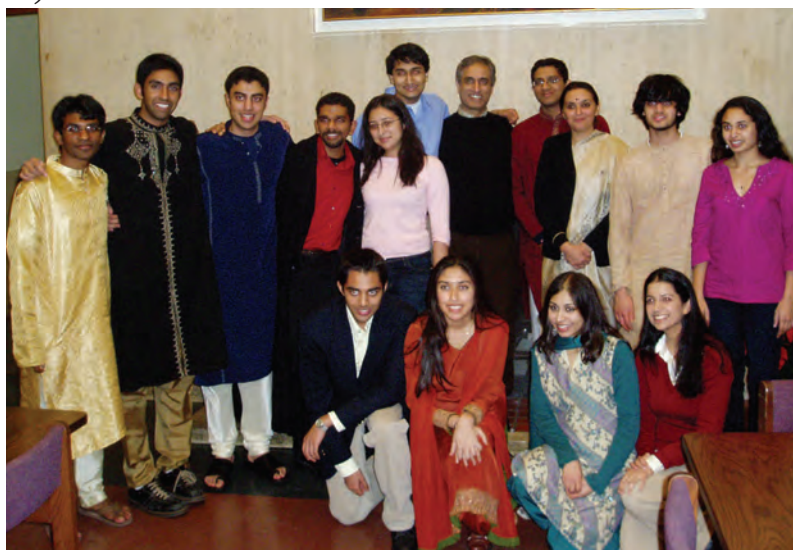
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

VOL. XXV, NO. 1

Harvard Foundation Writers Series Features Actor Blair Underwood, Author Firoozeh Dumas, and Professor Subhash Kak



Actor and author Blair Underwood speaks to Harvard College students.



Harvard students welcome author Dr. Subhash Kak.

Interfaith Holiday Festival



Harvard Foundation intern, Dina Maxwell '06 and Amy Morgenstern '06 peruse a religious display with Asia Bronowicka '09 and Julia Forgie '07 at the Interfaith Holiday Festival.



Author Firoozeh Dumas signed copies of her novel, *Funny in Farsi: A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America*.

The popular 2006 Writer's Series showcased the work of actor and author, Blair Underwood, who participated in a lively question and answer period about his acting career and recent book. Professor Subhash Kak has written extensively on Hinduism. Kak delivered a lecture on the intersection of art, science and spirituality in sacred Hindu texts. Persian author, Firoozeh Dumas had the audience laughing as she recounted scenes from her memoir.

Relief Effort: Student Organizations Respond to Natural Disasters Around the World

Thirty-four student organizations participated in fundraising and relief efforts to assist those affected by hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast of the United States and the devastating earthquake in Pakistan. The Harvard Foundation organized a relief project that included students and faculty from Harvard University.

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Writer's Series: Firoozeh Dumas

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Blair Underwood



Above: Underwood with Harvard Foundation intern, Muriel Payan '08.

R: Tracy Tyrone Moore III '06 served as co-moderator for the Underwood discussion.

L: Dr. Subhash Kak



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Subhash Kak

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Celebrating the Season at the Interfaith Holiday Festival

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Welcomes *Class of 2009*

Harvard Buddhist Group



Harvard Foundation interns, L-R: Erin Garner '07, Ellen Yiadom '06, Layusa Isa-Odidi '09, Xi Wang '06, and Dina Maxwell '06.

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The Harvard Foundation would like to thank Dr. Leo H. Buchanan and Ms. Claudia H. Hill for their contributions to the proofreading of this journal.



Clockwise Above: Candlelight Vigil for the victims of the Pakistan earthquake. The Kalpanam performance. Students at the Townhall discussion.

Firoozeh Dumas, Author of *Funny In Farsi* Kicks off 2005-2006 Writers Series

Stuck somewhere in the sociology section of your local bookstore, between war chronicles and criticisms, sits a hilarious memoir by Iranian humorist, Firoozeh Dumas, author of *Funny in Farsi: a Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America*. On October 22, 2005, The Harvard Foundation and the Harvard Persian Society welcomed Mrs. Dumas as the first guest in the annual Harvard Foundation Complexities of Color Writers Series. Before a crowd of Harvard students, affiliates and members of the local community, Mrs. Dumas shared personal anecdotes about her family and life as an Iranian immigrant in Whittier, California during a time of political conflict between the United States and Iran. In writing her humorous stories about the various culture clashes with modern America, Firoozeh Dumas has come one step closer to the acceptance and popularization of Iranian literature in the virtually unexposed American market.

But, that progress is being thwarted by booksellers who refuse to place *Funny in Farsi* in the humor section of their stores. Though Mrs. Dumas is a finalist for the prestigious Thurber Prize for American Humor--not to mention, the first woman of Middle Eastern descent to ever be nominated to receive this honor--her book is consistently shelved in the sociology or political sections of bookstores along with other pieces dealing with "Iranian affairs" (i.e., has the word "Iranian" in the title).

"There is no Iranian humor section," jokes Dumas, who encouraged the crowd to find *Funny in Farsi* in local bookstores and "move it next to David Sedaris and all the other humorists." With a smile on her face, Firoozeh Dumas has overcome adversity to produce a national best-seller and a genuinely great read.

Erin Garner '07



Above, L-R: Erin Garner '07, intern and Writer's Series student coordinator, Mitra Dowlatshahi '06, President of the Persian Society, Dina Viegutz, Eliot House Designated Race Relations Advisor, and Ellen Yiadom '06, intern and student coordinator for the event present Ms. Dumas with roses.

Right: Students line up for signed copies of *Funny in Farsi* after attending the lecture.



Blair Underwood, Actor and Author, Visits Harvard

During Fall 2005, the Harvard Foundation's Complexities of Color Writers Conference was expanded, in response to student demand, to include a variety of authors during a year-long series. The second writers program in the series took place on Saturday, October 29, 2005. It featured Blair Underwood, the renowned actor and author of the book *Before I Got Here: The Wondrous Things We Hear When We Listen to the Souls of Our Children*.

The event was cosponsored by the Black Men's Forum and the Black Students Association, and attended by a diverse cross-section of the student body. Underwood was an engaging speaker who facilitated a lively discussion about his book and a broad



Ellen Yiadom '06, Harvard Foundation intern, and Tracy T. Moore III '06, President of the Black Men's Forum, moderated the discussion.

range of related topics. He described his book as a compilation of stories, quotes and spiritual insights, which exemplify the wisdom of children and stem from

his experience as a father of three. He specifically quoted his son Paris, who said, "God told me when he made me, but I only had one ear at the time, so I could only hear a little"--after making references to spiritual matters.

When asked about advice for raising children, he emphasized listening to children, while allowing them to maintain the innocence of childhood. During the question and answer period, Underwood talked about his background, as the son of a military colonel, his college experience at Carnegie Mellon and his current endeavors in Hollywood. One such endeavor is the Momentum Experience, a grassroots effort to promote black films that are often neglected by major Hollywood production companies.

Despite Underwood's numerous accolades for his work in television and film, he asserts that he is most proud of his achievements as a husband and father. Certainly, his devotion to his family is reflected in his recent book *Before I Got Here*, and was demonstrated before the Harvard College audience at this writers series event.

Ryshelle McCadney '07

Clockwise, L-R: Members of the audience included families visiting for Junior Parent's Weekend, students and faculty.

Underwood reads passages from Before I Got Here.

Erin Garner '07, Harvard Foundation intern and one of the student coordinators for the Writers Series thanks Underwood with a gift and roses.

L: Members of the Harvard Foundation with Underwood (Ctr).



Harvard Foundation and Dharma Present Third Writers Series Lecture of 2005 by Professor Subhash Kak

Innovative interpretations of ancient texts and traditions are hard to come by these days. Yet, that is what Louisiana State University Professor Subhash Kak promised in his presentation at Harvard University on December 16, 2005, as part of the Harvard Foundation's annual Writers Series, which was co-sponsored by Harvard Dharma, the Hindu student group on campus. A diverse array of students, professors and community members assembled at the Fong Auditorium in Boylston Hall to hear the Delaune Professor of Electric Engineering, who has emerged as one of the well-recognized scholars of Indian History and Tradition from the subcontinent. Kak spoke about his new synthesis of the Vedas and their role in the Hindu religion, stressing the importance of "Recursion" and "Binding" in the texts. The Vedas are considered the cornerstone text for the Hindu religion, though they remain largely inscrutable to the untrained. Philosophers have been writing commentaries on the Vedas for several hundred years, extracting their essence. Kak has contributed his share to the general field of study with works such as, *In Search of the*

Cradle of Civilization, and *Ashwamedha*. In addition to shedding his own light on the meaning of the Vedas, Kak brought attention to examples of early advancements in Indian Civilization present in the texts. From the prevalence of multiples of the number three to the intricate design of religious altars, Kak drew connections between Hindu numerics and spirituality, cosmology, and astronomy, attempting to bridge the gap between science and spirituality. Following the presentation by Dr. Subhash Kak, Dr. Vanita Shastri, Co-Founder of the Meru Education Foundation, which brings programs based on Indian arts and culture to audiences in North America spoke. Dr. Shastri shared some of her own experiences assimilating Indian spirituality in the Western community, adding a personal touch to the discussion.

The lecture closed with a lively question and answer session, in which Harvard academics, local community members, and students all constructively challenged and appreciated Dr. Kak's presentation.

However, the question and answer session was not enough, and the conversations bubbled over into the reception that followed the lecture in Ticknor Lounge.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the event was the discussion that ensued. With samosas on their plates



Foreground: Dr. Kak lectures on the role of the Vedas in the Hindu religion.

Background: Samir Rao '08, Outreach Chair for Harvard Dharma.

and mango milkshakes in their hands, everyone continued to ask questions of Professor Kak and each other, hoping to reach satisfying conclusions about the vast and interesting topic of the Vedas. The evening concluded with a special catered dinner for lecture attendees in the Quincy Dining Hall's Spindell Room giving everyone a final chance to engage in an academic and entertaining dialogue. The discussions from this joint event of Harvard Dharma's Winter Lecture Series and the Harvard Foundation's Writers Series continue to pop-up in community conversations and on mailing lists, a testament to the lingering success achieved with the Harvard Foundation's support.

Samir Rao '08



Dr. Vanita Shastri, Co-Founder of the Meru Education Foundation, joined Dr. Kak in taking questions from the audience.



Harvard Foundation Interfaith Holiday Festival

Recognizing the number and breadth of cultures and religions that celebrate significant holidays during the winter months, the Harvard Foundation and the Interfaith Council explored the possibility of producing a pluralistic event that extended beyond the traditional American focus on Christmas and Hanukkah. The goal was to host an event that would serve as a comfortable venue for various groups on campus to celebrate together as a multifaith, multicultural Harvard community, as well as to share the history, practices, and traditions of their individual cultures.

On December 14th, 2005, the Harvard Foundation joined the Interfaith Council for the first-ever Interfaith Holiday Festival. Taking into consideration the incredible diversity of the Harvard

community and extending a wide initiation, the coordinators of this event, led by Xi Wang '06, an intern at the Harvard Foundation, and Om Lala, the chair of the Interfaith Council, collaborated with other student groups to feature and celebrate eight holiday traditions.

Held in Kirkland Dining Hall, several hundred students came together to take part in this heart-warming event that included booths displaying information, food from many cultures and religious, and winter celebrations. While sampling cultural delicacies, students perused colorful booths and chatted with fellow students of various backgrounds. Each tradition was displayed at a booth featuring a specific holiday – Baisakhi, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, Hanukkah,

Bodhi Day, Ridván, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and Deepavali representing Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, the Baha'i Faith, African-American traditions, Christian traditions, and Hinduism.

The festive feel was enhanced by the lively ethno-cultural music playing throughout the night, featuring songs and music significant to the represented cultures. In the relaxed atmosphere, many were able to ask the kinds of questions they may not otherwise feel comfortable asking. The event raised awareness and opened up discussion about religious differences and similarities, all with a friendly and inviting tone. As the evening wound down, several people took to spontaneous dancing.

Robin Bellows '08

R: Santosh Bhaskarabhatla '09 and Layusa Isa-Odidi '09 sample refreshments from the Kwaanza table. Students enjoyed the cultural cuisine and informative displays.



Harvard Undergraduate Buddhists Create New Presence on Campus

In the fall of 2005, two members of the graduate Harvard Buddhist Community, Alan Wagner and Adam Lobel, held a meeting for undergraduates who were interested in Buddhism in the hope of starting a parallel undergraduate community. Since then, the undergraduate Harvard Buddhist group has held weekly Monday meetings in the Mather Tranquility Room for meditation and discussion, with an average attendance of seven people. In addition to weekly meetings, three trips

have been made to the Cambridge Zen Center near Central Square to join in chanting and Dharma talks. Future plans include holding a large event early in the spring semester to widely publicize the new group as a resource to which students may turn for assistance, and to work towards building a unified Buddhist community. This young organization hopes to become an active part of both the interfaith organizations and the larger Harvard community.

Susan Yao '09



*Lama Migmar Tseten,
Buddhist Chaplain
for the United
Ministry of
Memorial Church.*

Harvard Foundation Hosts Annual Brunch For Freshmen



The Harvard Foundation welcomed first-year students and their families to its annual Intercultural Brunch on Sunday, September 11th. Attendees were able to meet with members of the larger community over a diverse array of Indian food. For the past 22 years, the Harvard Foundation Intercultural Brunch has been a staple event of Freshman Week for many wide-eyed first-year students excited to make their place at Harvard. The brunch, traditionally held in Dudley House, was held in Lowell Dining Hall in order to accommodate the increased attendance. Harvard Foundation Director, Dr. S. Allen Counter, student leaders, and Foundation interns spoke about the opportunities that await first-year students at the College. Dr. Counter emphasized the commitment of the College to promoting interaction across ethnic and cultural lines, and welcomed all first-year students to visit

the Harvard Foundation and to see it as an accessible, student-friendly resource. Foundation interns and student leaders introduced freshmen to the various ways in which they could stay in touch with their cultural roots and share their culture with others. Students spoke of their experiences with the Foundation and affirmed the necessity of energy and initiative in making a great impact on the Harvard campus. The first-year students left the brunch in high spirits as their formal orientation to the Harvard Foundation drew to a close. This ongoing tradition has been instrumental in setting the tone for harmonious interactions in an ethnically and culturally diverse academic community.

Jeremy Chang '06



Top: Class of '09 students and their families gather to enjoy brunch.

Above: Dean of Freshmen, Thomas A. Dingman '67, GSE '73 welcomes freshmen and their families to the Harvard Foundation Intercultural Brunch.

Harvard Students and Faculty Contribute to Relief Efforts Hurricane Katrina and the Pakistan Earthquake

Harvard Foundation Hurricane Katrina Relief Project

As Hurricane Katrina made landfall and tore through the Southern coastline with now-legendary ferocity, millions of Americans sat in front of their TVs with a familiar feeling of helplessness. "What can I do?" Many reached for their wallets; a few took to the road. Dr. S. Allen Counter, who was watching TV in far-away Stockholm, was one of the latter. The director of the Harvard Foundation grabbed the next flight home and started to organize relief efforts.

"I couldn't sit and see those agonizing images and do nothing," Counter said.

Once stateside, Counter, a neurophysiologist at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, called Dr. Leon Tarver, President of Southern University, and Dr. Peter Dawson, head of Southern University's health center, to find out how he could best proceed.

Not surprisingly, health care providers and medical supplies were urgently needed. "They needed medicine - antibiotics, asthma medicine, and antidepressants," Counter said.

Counter called colleagues at institutions around the Boston area, gathering supplies from several sources. The Harvard University Health Services pharmacy, under the direction of Benedict J. DiRusso, Jr., not only donated a large amount of medicine, but also appealed to the Cambridge Health Alliance to

gather even more, Counter said. Boston Children's Hospital donated pediatric medication, and the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary was also generous with much-needed medication.

Counter and his assistant Anthony

Nguyen '08.

On the ground in Baton Rouge, Counter and colleagues met with State Sen. Lydia Jackson '82 and former Louisiana Gov., Buddy Romer '82, who arranged housing for the group. In four days, they provided medical services and supplies to service more than 1,000 people in five different evacuation centers.

"One of the most striking scenes I saw," Counter said, "one you don't see on television, was a sanctuary in a Baton Rouge church housing over 400 Vietnamese who were being cared for by one doctor, who was also the priest. Few realize what a large Vietnamese population there is in New Orleans. "Many of the Vietnamese people we saw could not speak English, so we were very pleased to have Michael Nguyen with us to serve as translator."

The team not only provided these families with medicine and care, they also arranged to have Sean T. Brady '89, HLS '92 (former Harvard Foundation student intern), of Credit Suisse First Boston pay the church's electric bill with a personal gift totaling \$11,245.

*Courtesy of the Harvard Gazette
Robert Mitchell*



L-R: Ms. Carla Kenney, psychologist; Dr. Michael Jenike, psychiatrist; Dr. Jennifer Park, trauma psychiatrist; Dr. Timothy Benson, family psychiatrist; Dr. Bruce Price, '72, head of neurology at McLean Hospital; Mr. Tony Jacobs, research assistant, Harvard Biological Laboratories; Michael Nguyen '08; Nneke Eze '07; Dr. Arnold Kerzner, pediatric psychiatrist; Dr. Peter E. Dawson, head of the Southern University Health Center; Dr. Leon Tarver (KSG '79), President of Southern University; Jennifer Green '07; Ms. Shannon Price, psychologist; Elijah Hutchinson '06; and Dr. S. Allen Counter. Dr. Ernest J. Moore, Northwestern University Medical School, not shown.

Jacobs packed up 10 cases of supplies and readied them for shipment to New Orleans. With McLean Hospital's Chief of Neurology, Dr. Bruce Price '72, Counter organized and coordinated a team of six health care providers. He also enlisted the help of four enthusiastic Harvard undergraduates - Nneke Eze '07, Jennifer Green '07, Elijah Hutchinson '06, and Michael

Hurricane Katrina Relief Project

R: Dr. S. Allen Counter (L) and Harvard student Michael Nguyen '08 deliver medicinal supplies to Dr. Tam Pham (R) at a Baton Rouge parish shelter for displaced Vietnamese-American hurricane Katrina victims.

Lower R: Dr. S. Allen Counter with displaced children in a hurricane Katrina evacuation center.

Below: Louisiana State Senator, Lydia Jackson '82, (Ctr) former head of the Harvard Black Students Association (BSA) greets Dr. S. Allen Counter and current President of BSA, Nneke Eze '07 upon arrival at the Baton Rouge Airport.



Student Organizations Raise \$70,000 for Victims of Earthquake in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Parts of South East Asia

Immediately after the occurrence of the devastating earthquake that hit Pakistan and part of northern India on October 8th, 2005, students came together to respond to the dire human tragedy in South Asia. The coalition formed to assist in the relief effort consisted of 34 student groups, ranging from the Harvard-Radcliffe Christian Fellowship to the Black Students Association. It represented a diverse cross section of campus ethnic and religious organizations. The coalition organized a number of charitable events including a charity banquet, a charity art auction, a vigil, a comedy benefit and a concert in Memorial Church. Each event was co-sponsored and spearheaded

by a member of the coalition. In true Harvard Foundation tradition, the Harvard community transcended racial and religious lines to aid victims of the earthquake.

Indeed, many pointed to a sort of "disaster fatigue" as to reasons why efforts by the general community were not more robust. In addition, the charitable efforts were handicapped by a lack of awareness regarding the extent of the disaster. This forced the coalition to launch a preemptive information campaign that consisted of black flags on the Science Center green to represent those who had perished, as well as posters around campus, and class announcements.

The Coalition launched its charity

campaign with a banquet hosted by the Harvard Islamic Society. The keynote speaker, Beena Sarwar, a Nieman fellow, and Alia Iqbal, a PhD candidate in South Asian Studies, spoke about the dire need for aid in the region. Huma Farid '06, one of the main organizers of the banquet, remarked that she felt that the "Harvard Community came together to support earthquake relief. Students were even donating more than the \$10 suggested entry fee – and at one point we even had to turn people away due to capacity issues. Everyone at the dinner really cared about the people suffering in South Asia."

Students also urged the University's

administration to match donations for the victims of the earthquake. The University administration matched donations from each of the charitable events sponsored by the coalition. The largest event hosted by the coalition was "Comedy for a Cause", an event co-hosted with the Harvard Concert Commission (HCC). The program was held in Sanders Theater and attracted nearly 1,000 students. The Coalition, along with the HCC, invited five comedians, Judah Friedlander, Lisa Lampanelli, Kevin Brennan, Todd Barry, and Azhar Usman, who performed in the program without charging a performance fee. Jet Blue also graciously donated the airfare for the comedians to attend the event.

The Coalition initially set out with a goal to raise \$50,000 to aid victims of the earthquake disaster. The final tally from the fundraising efforts exceeded their goal, reaching a sum of \$70,000. All of the proceeds from the relief efforts were donated to the Edhi Foundation, a Pakistani NGO,

which is helping to rebuild homes in the afflicted areas.

Owais Siddiqui '07

Harvard Dharma Hosts Winter Lecture in Conjunction with Charity Art Show

Dharma was truly honored to present the first part of its Charity Art Show and Auction at the Arthur M. Sackler Art Museum. The venue provided the perfect atmosphere for the prelude to the Auction. The event was comprised of speakers, live musical performances, and a poignant slide show and video presentation. After attendees were treated to a special guided tour of the Kashmiri Shawls exhibit by curator Kim Masteller, the presentation began with an invocation by Harvard Sangeet member, Ali Sethi. With several students and the Dean of Harvard College, Dr. Benedict H. Gross, in attendance, the speaker session commenced with remarks by Dr. S. Allen Counter, Director of the Harvard Foundation, who spoke about the ways in which natural disaster and tragedy can unite humanity. After a second

musical performance featuring music from the affected region by Ali Sethi, Dharma presented its keynote speaker, Dr. Iqbal Ahmed. Having recently spent two weeks volunteering his medical services in Kashmir, Dr. Ahmed was able to provide a unique, and stirring look into the face of the tragedy.



L-R: Shaheer Rizvi '08 and Jordan Baehr '08 reflect upon those who died in the earthquake and those who must survive the freezing winter.

He displayed nearly one hundred images of the landscape, volunteers, but most poignantly, the children and other sufferers. The images truly set the tone for the events of the day and instilled in the minds of the audience the scope of the tragedy and the task at hand. After the excellent lecture, several attendees were inspired to move on to the art show, and translate their feelings into financial relief. The assistance of the Foundation was invaluable. Everything from the presence of Dr. Counter, as a powerful speaker, to the funding for the refreshments that greeted attendees, contributed positively to this successful event.

Samir Rao '08



L-R: Shivani Ghoshal '08, Simi Bhat '08, and Utpal Sandesara '08 at the Dharma Art Auction fundraiser.

HarvAID Concert Brings Performers Together in Support of Gulf Coast Residents

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Harvard Community came together for the relief effort. On October 15, 2005, students gathered in Sanders Theatre for HarvAID, a concert benefiting victims of hurricane Katrina. The joint production by the Kuumba Singers of Harvard College and the Office for the Arts at Harvard presented a diverse collection of student performers, all paying tribute to those affected by the hurricane.

After a reading of Louis Armstrong's, "Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans," by Steven Ridgill '06, the Harvard Jazz Quintet took to the stage with "Moment's Notice" by John Coltrane. Then, after opening remarks by Kuumba President Michael Vinson '07, the stage was set for the rest of HarvAID's performers.

The first act continued the reflective tone, with a touching rendition of "Sally Gardens" by the Harvard

Krokodiloes. Among the performances to follow was a reading of a medley of poems by Lucille Clifton, Langston Hughes, and Frances E.W. Harper, performed by Kendra Boothe '09, Michelle Gaffney '09 and Alexandra Jacobs '08. The three performers combined verses from the poems to form a tribute to New Orleans. The HarvAID Steppers, comprised of members of various step teams, brought the first act to a resounding end with a combination of attitude and humor.

Act two brought a similar mix of dance, vocals, poetry, and instrumental music. Members of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, TAPS, Fallen Angels and LowKeys performed to music by artists as diverse as Billy Joel, Michael Jackson, and Dvorak. But the Kuumba singers gave truly memorable performances; a combination of poetry and music. Diane Ghogomu '09 began with Glenis Redmond Sherer's poem, "Our Spirit Stands." Toward the end of

the poem, a woman's voice could be heard humming. The sound turned into the song "Hold On," performed by the entire Kuumba choir with a haunting solo by Paris Woods '06. Kuumba finished the show with the upbeat song "Powers of Love," giving an inspiring end to the show. The performance gave a message of hope in a time of sadness.

Petros Egziabher '09



The Kuumba Singers of Harvard College.



The Asian American Dance Troupe performs "Song of Hope" as their contribution and tribute to the Hurricane Katrina victims and to offer hope for better days for all. Performers: Eva Luo '08, Dina Wang '06, Emily Niu '06, Lisa Pao '08, Fan Liu '07, and Ming Ming Ma '07.



Kalpanam Showcases Array of Indian Dance Styles

“Kalpanam: Classical Imaginations” brought together past and present, traditional and modern inspiration in classical Indian dance. Held in Lowell Lecture Hall on November 5th, 2005, and co-directed by Rohini Rau-Murthy ‘08 and Aditi Mallick ‘08, the evening showcased classical Indian traditions, as well as newly choreographed and fusion dance pieces.

Styles of Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, and Odissi dance originate from different traditions in India. Their unique rhythms, footwork, gestures, and costumes were featured first, as dancers from Harvard and other schools, such as Brandeis University



and Mount Holyoke College, performed both classic and fusion pieces. For the second act, co-director, Rohini Rau-Murthy ‘08, choreographed a traditional style Bharatanatyam dance drama, set to music of Dwaraki Krishnswami,

which was commissioned especially for this event. Using intricate gestures, performers danced the story of three heroines from Hindu mythology.

The fusion pieces combined styles and juxtaposed elements from different dance forms, making exciting combinations that emphasized the beauty of the different forms. Newly created work in the dance drama also showed

these traditional dances in a modern setting. Music, costumes, and movement combined to astonish and delight veteran dancers and awe audience members.

Robin Bellows ‘09

Harvard Foundation Hosts Townhall Forum on Cultural Sensitivity in Campus Publications

On November 30, 2005, the Harvard Foundation hosted a Student Advisory Committee Townhall discussion on cultural sensitivity in campus publications. Leaders of campus publications, and representatives of ethnic and religious organizations discussed the role that sensitivity should play in newspaper coverage.

The event was prompted by a mock *Salient* advertisement for a type of Muslim “Barbie doll,” which was depicted saying things such as, “Human rights? That’s silly.” The ad caused controversy in the student body as students debated the merits of parody and sensitivity. During the Townhall forum, participants discussed the prevalence of political correctness, and whether newspapers should publish potentially controversial work. Some argued that campus publications should exercise more restraint, while others



Kathleen McKee ‘06 (C), Harvard Foundation intern and Townhall student moderator leads discussion on cultural sensitivity in campus press. (L) Dr. S. Allen Counter, Director of the Harvard Foundation.

believed this would compromise free speech.

Leaders of the *Salient* and the *Crimson* talked about the standards they use to decide if a particular article or caricature should be published. The *Salient* said that its advertisement was meant to provoke

honest discussion in an atmosphere of political correctness. The *Crimson* made known its efforts at keeping news and editorial content separate in order to remain objective.

Representatives of the student groups reacted strongly to the *Salient*’s position. Some felt that the newspaper had gone too far, and offended many students. There were also complaints of inadequate or biased content regarding minorities in the *Crimson*.

The Townhall forum gave all sides a chance to share their thoughts regarding this important issue on campus. It was a rare opportunity to engage all parties in what was a fruitful discussion on the subject of responsibility and cultural sensitivity in student publications.

Petros Egziabher ‘09

Association of Black Harvard Women 30th Anniversary Alumnae Reunion

The Association of Black Harvard Women's (ABHW) 30th Anniversary Celebration was a smashing success! On October 7th-9th, 2005, over 125 people gathered to celebrate the rich history and legacy of ABHW (formerly known as ABRW: The Association of Black Radcliffe Women) on Harvard University's Campus. The celebration kicked off on Friday with a Welcome Reception in the Winthrop House Junior Common Room. Women gathered to taste desserts and wine as they chatted and enjoyed live music. After a welcome from the anniversary's coordinators, Jennifer Green '07 and Natasha Alford '08, Senior Admissions Officer, Mr. David L. Evans (renowned for his role in increasing the number of black students at Harvard over the past 35 years), offered words of praise to ABRW/ABHW and the women who worked so hard to maintain the organization and raise money for scholarships to give back to the community. Noting the role black women have always had in shaping the community, he said jokingly, "My grandmother always said, 'Every time you hear the word forefathers, say five mothers'." Also present was Dr. S. Allen Counter, avid and long-time supporter of ABHW, and former Dean of Radcliffe College, Phillipa Bovet, who was responsible for helping revitalize ABRW back in the 1980s after a few years of inactivity. Both offered their views on the necessity for an organization such as ABHW and its important contribution to Harvard and they encouraged the organization to remain active as a student organization for as many years as possible.

The celebration continued the following day in Pound Hall at the Harvard Law School. After breakfast



Current members of the Association of Black Harvard Women and alumnae from the Association of Black Radcliffe Women.

and a moving video documentary on ABHW's history, Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity and Professor of African-American Studies, Evelyn M. Hammonds delivered an address on the Future of Women and Minorities at Harvard. As the highest ranking African-American in Harvard history, Hammonds challenged the audience to hold Harvard accountable for increasing the representation of women in upper level positions. She challenged black women to decide to enter the academic arena. The annual ABHW tradition known as the "Road to Success Panel," was created as a forum for dialogue between accomplished black female professionals and black female undergraduates. The panel was taken to the next level this academic year with the participation of ABHW alumnae and sponsors who came out in full force to offer their wisdom and insight. Panelists included: orthopedic surgeon, Erica Rowe Urquhart '93, Sheridan Gospel Network President, Susan D. Austin '89, author, television writer and producer, Susan Fales-Hill '85, and Dateline NBC senior editorial producer, Aretha Marshall '77. Addressing everything from sexism in

the job setting to knowing the most appropriate time to change one's career path, the panelists were lively, thought provoking, and inspiring. ABHW alumna, Danice Woodley '00, served as moderator for the panel. The Road to Success Panel also included a keynote address by ABHW alumna, Sharon Jones '77. Jones gave a speech on "Conquering the Glass Ceiling." With a ten rule plan that included defining your own success, renewing your spirit, and developing your core values, Jones concluded

by challenging the audience to do all they could to improve society. "We the Black Women's Lawyers Association of Chicago decided to file a brief in support of Affirmative Action. We knew it was an uphill legal battle...And yet we won. We probably have another 25 years if we are lucky. The point of the story is that we did what we couldn't despite the odds in order to increase our representation in the future."

Prior to Hammonds' address, Harvard University President, Lawrence H. Summers, also addressed the audience, saying that Harvard has come a long way from the days when it sought to keep minorities out of dormitories, but it still has a long way to go. He spoke to the university's commitment to diversity, citing the class of 2009 that enrolled the highest percentage of African-Americans ever (8%). After the addresses by Summers and Hammonds, anniversary attendees participated in workshop sessions that included RAD (Rape Aggression Defense), sex and sexual health, and a workshop on finance run by one of ABRW/ABHW's own alumnae, Allysun Walker-Williams '86. The afternoon session began with

(continued on page 26)

Portrait of Former Dean, Archie C. Epps, Unveiled in Permanent Home

The official portrait of beloved former Dean of Students, Archie C. Epps III (1937-2003), was unveiled recently in its permanent home in University Hall. The framed, oil-on-canvas portrait was painted by Stephen Coit '72. Valerie Epps, Professor of Law at Suffolk University, spoke at the unveiling of her late husband's portrait. Archie Epps, who received a degree from Harvard Divinity School in 1961, became Assistant Dean of Students at Harvard College in 1964. Six years later, he became the Dean of Students and remained in the position for more than 30 years. He retired in 2001.

Courtesy of the Harvard Gazette



Mrs. Valerie Epps, Esq. (left), the widow of Archie Epps III, and her son, Josiah Epps '98, watch the unveiling. (Photo courtesy Kris Snibbel/Harvard News Office)

R: Harvard College Dean Benedict H. Gross and Epps Fellow in Memorial Church, Reverend Mark Edington listens as Valerie Epps, a law professor at Suffolk University, speaks.



Día de Los Muertos Celebration

On Friday, October 28, 2005, the Winthrop Tonkens Room filled with students and festivities as Harvard Raza celebrated Día de los Muertos.

This centuries-old Mexican holiday commemorates those who have passed away by celebrating their lives. The dead are celebrated with an altar decorated with photos, flowers, personal effects, as well as an offering of food and drink. The Winthrop Tonkens room was transformed with papel picado, streamer-like decorations in which pieces of paper that have designs cut into them are strung together. Like many Mexican holidays, food is an integral part of the festivities. Guests were treated

to a "make your own taco" concession as well as *pan dulce*, or sweet bread. Both Mariachi Veritas de Harvard and Ballet Folklórico de Aztlan performed. Both being traditional Mexican expressions of

music and dance, they provided excellent entertainment for the celebration.

Traditional Nahuatl poetry reflecting the significance of Día de los Muertos,



was read in Nahuatl, as well as in Spanish and English translations. Nahuatl is the language of the Aztec people of Mexico. The significance of this poetry is that Día de los Muertos is a Mexican

tradition steeped in the transculturation of Catholicism and indigenous religious practices in Mexico. As such, this holiday is a testament to the richness and duality

of Mexican culture. The level of student participation was extraordinary—with people filling the room and the hallway outside. Because the celebration fell on the Friday of Freshman Parents' Weekend, many parents attended the event and were able to get a glimpse into the diversity and richness of cultures at Harvard. The program was a veritable showcase of Mexican culture: through traditional music, food, dance, and an important holiday.

Muriel Payan '08

Harvard Foundation Awards 155 Grants During Fall Semester

A discussion on the implications of race in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, an interfaith dinner commemorating the end of Ramadan, a celebration of the Mexican holiday La Posada--these are but a few of the student-initiated projects funded by the Harvard Foundation in the fall 2005 semester. In all, the Foundation awarded 155 grants totaling approximately \$25,000 to some 57 undergraduate student organizations for cultural projects.

Some of the other programs include the Armenian Society forum on the Tobacco Crisis in Armenia, the Association of Black Harvard Women's 30th Anniversary Celebration, a cooking demonstration sponsored by the Half Asian People's Alliance, the Native Americans at Harvard College's celebration of the Harvard Indian College, a Latino Poetry Night sponsored by Fuerza Latina, the first magazine on Philippine issues at Harvard published by the Philippine Forum, and a discussion of minorities in the media sponsored by Diversity and Distinction. Also receiving grants this semester were Holoimua o Hawaii, the Harvard Hong Kong Society, the Caribbean Club, the Kuumba Singers of Harvard College, the South Asian Association, and Mariachi Veritas de Harvard, among many others.

One of the most popular Harvard Foundation-sponsored projects this fall was Apollo Night, a cultural extravaganza featuring performances



Above: Members of the Harvard Romanian Association with author, Jill Culiner (event summary, page 19).



by Candela Hip Hop and Salsa, Harvard Bhangra, and the '09 steppers, to name a few participants. The South Asian Association also received a grant for their showcase of traditional cultural dance, Kalpanam. The Foundation also supported the Bi, Gay, Lesbian, Transgendered, and Supporters Alliance in their efforts to bring students together to talk about the intersection of race, poverty, and sexuality.

The Harvard Foundation's next round of grants will be awarded in February 2006. The Foundation encourages students of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds to apply for financial support of projects that seek to promote

interracial and intercultural awareness and understanding in the Harvard community.

Simi Bhat '08

Harvard Aikido Club

Fall Seminar

The Aikido Intercollegiate Joint Seminar took place on December 10, 2005 at the basketball court of the QRAC. The purpose of the seminar was to encourage intercollegiate practice on the East Coast and to introduce our new members to the Aikido organizations outside of Harvard. The Harvard Aikido Club felt it necessary to see how Aikido is practiced in the area and to establish a recognized position with other area clubs for the purpose of increasing our status. The seminar promoted Japanese culture through the practice of Aikido among people of different backgrounds. About forty students participated, including Harvard undergraduate and graduate students, students from other universities

(such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, Boston College, and Brown University), as well as community members, such as our *sensei* (or "teacher") and the *sensei*'s two adorable children. This was the first ever fall seminar and the Aikido club had three *sensei* teach the classes (Robert Whelan, Carl Fasano, and Sioux Hall). The seminar was followed by a dinner to celebrate the success of the program and to build stronger ties among the participants.

Maciej Godlewski '07

Native Americans at Harvard College & Black Students Association

Red, White, and Black

NAHC and the BSA co-sponsored this event in the Lowell House Junior Common Room on November 9, 2005. Professor Malinda Maynor Lowery '95 presented two short documentaries for the undergraduate groups regarding the issue of American Indian and African-American identity within a black/white racial binary society. Professor Maynor Lowery is a member of the Lumbee Nation of North Carolina, and she is a graduate of Harvard College. Her doctoral dissertation was on the topic of the documentaries. The documentaries placed identity within the racial context for Indians, blacks, and whites. The program included a barbecue dinner that was served, while students watched the documentaries. After the screening, Professor Maynor Lowery facilitated a discussion among the undergraduates present based on the issues that were raised by the films. The conversation among the students was moderated by Professor Lowery, and many students chose to participate in the discussion. Issues of ethnic identity, as well as racial identity, were addressed during the discussion. Conceptions of American Indian tribal diversity and sovereignty were also discussed, and many questions were raised and examined regarding various misconceptions. Although most attendees were members of the co-sponsoring groups, a number of non-NAHC and BSA students attended. About sixty undergraduates attended the event.

Leah Lussier '07

Harvard Society of Arab Students

Breaking the Silence

Breaking the Silence was our most highly attended event of the fall semester. Starr Auditorium of the Kennedy School of Government was filled with a mix of

undergraduates and graduate students. Two Israeli soldiers, now resigned, touched on their experiences in the army, "breaking the silence," that surrounds Israel and its military forces by showing horrific images and telling graphic stories to highlight their disapproval of the Israeli campaign. The two were not by any means anti-Israel, but did want to point out their grievances with the direction of their country.

The question and answer session that followed became fairly heated, as an Israeli student in the army strongly challenged their accuracy and purpose, while many applauded their candor.

Nadia Gaber '09

Harvard-Radcliffe Asian American Association

Harvard Asian American Review

The Harvard Asian American Review is slated to be an official publication of the Harvard Asian American Association. Its mission is to foster a greater appreciation and understanding on Asian American issues on the campus and at the national level. The journal will also serve as an outreach program, of sorts, with other Asian American groups on campus. The journal will have an academic professional tone, appealing to Harvard administration, professors, staff and students alike. In regards to circulation, the journal, will ideally be published quarterly. However, for its first year of release, biannual publication will be more likely. Each issue will have a central symposium theme that will comprise the Features section. These themes will be explored in depth by a limited number of articles (around four or five) and will include pieces such as, "Immigration and Asian Pacific Americans (APAs)," "Remembering Roots: The Rise of China and APAs," "APAs and Christianity," "APAs and Healthcare," "The Future of APA Studies in Academia," and "Taxation and APAs." The publication will also feature interviews with prominent figures in the Asian American community, surveys on

various issues facing the community, and arts reviews of Asian American works.

Mei Yi Pen '07



A Harvard College student practices calligraphy at the Chinese Students Association Festival Day program.

Harvard-Radcliffe Chinese Students Association

Festival Day

Our goal on Festival Day was to exhibit the numerous holidays that take place in China. We saw this as an ideal supplement to our Chinese New Year's banquet, because there are many celebrations that take place in China that are as important as the New Year, but are not celebrated in the Harvard community. Our layout had four sections--a games and calligraphy section, Dragonboat festival, Mid-Autumn festival, and the Death festival section. The festival sections included posters with historical information and descriptions of modern celebratory practices, workshops and food. We hoped that students would gain insight into Chinese traditions and historical culture through the displays and interactive activities, beyond just superficial knowledge. We had far more attendees than we had anticipated, so we ordered more food during the event.

For the Dragonboat festival, we had a *zongzi*-making station (a type of

rice dish). For the Death festival, we had people fold a paper boat and write something on it and put it into a long bin. For the Mid-Autumn festival, we had lantern painting and mooncake.

Ren Zhao '08

Harvard College Sangeet

Maestro Event

Sangeet was honored to present the Mozart of South Asian music, the great virtuoso, N. Ravikiran, on his first visit to Harvard, in an event devoted to South Asian musical performance, discussion and scholarship. As the winner of the Millennium Festival Award for his collaboration with the BBC Philharmonic, author of the Best Contemporary World Album (New Age Voice Records, USA) and father of the world-acclaimed fusion concept, melharmony, Ravikiran is, without doubt, one of the brightest stars in world music. The University Marshal's Office assisted Sangeet in greeting and welcoming Ravikiran for this event.

This unprecedented program was also graced by the presence of professors, and afficianados from Harvard, MIT and other area schools. During the first half

of this program, attendees had the rare opportunity to participate in two forum discussions led by Ravikiran to discuss areas of academic and performance interest, explore potential research

gift to Harvard and the surrounding community; one that will surely remain in our collective memory for a long time to come.

Vasanthi Sridhar '07



Fortune telling at the Ancestor's Day booth at the Chinese Students Association's Festival Day program. L-R: Chibo Tang '07, Ying Wang '08, David Yao '07, Yangda Ou '08, and Chen Li '09.

topics and share musical anecdotes. This scholarly portion of the event was followed by dinner with the artist, during which guests were able to interact with Ravikiran and each other. During this time, the maestro encouraged the audience to ask questions and participate, establishing the warm and genial atmosphere that is his trademark. Overall, this event was an invaluable

American members of the Harvard community. In the fall, we held three monthly discussions about American Indian issues and topics.

The first of our discussions took place on October 11, 2005 in the Harvard University Native American Program (HUNAP) lounge. Food was served, and the approximately thirty attendees discussed several major ideas about

Native Americans at Harvard College

Monthly Political Discussions

Many people throughout the world, the country, and unfortunately also within Harvard University, are very ill-informed and unaware of many issues and ideas about American Indian peoples--the first nations of this continent. Based on our mission statement, NAHC is committed to educating and involving non-Native



L: N. Ravikiran, guest of Harvard Sangeet, signs the official Harvard University guest registry in the Office of the University Marshal. R: Ravikiran led two forum discussions during his visit to Harvard University and talked with students about music, performance, and academics.

American Indians and historical, as well as modern, political issues. Tribal sovereignty was discussed as a basis for understanding our unique political status within the United States.

The second discussion took place on November 17, 2005 in the Eliot House Junior Common Room. Again, a group of approximately thirty attendees discussed American Indian identity from the level of a government relationship to an individual level.

The third discussion took place on December 5, 2005 in the Kirkland House Junior Common Room. The attendees discussed the issue of Harvard's lack of American Indian studies courses, especially because of Harvard's history of commitment to "the education of English and Indian youth" in the Charter of 1650.

The refreshments for each discussion were funded by the Harvard Foundation. There were approximately thirty attendees for each discussion, and many participants were not members of Native Americans at Harvard College, or American Indians. The discussions served to educate and share ideas on American Indian issues, both historic and current.

Leah Lussier '07

Harvard Taiwanese Cultural Society

Taiwan Fair: A Chronological Tour of Pop Culture

Suppose one had decided to visit Ticknor Lounge on Saturday, December 10, 2005. One would have been greeted with smiles and a treasure hunt quiz with promised prizes. As one entered Ticknor Lounge, a buzz of excited chatter would have met their ears. Indeed, this was the atmosphere of Taiwan Fair: A Chronological Tour of Pop Culture. We liked to call our event, "the science fair without science," since many of the topics were presented by visuals and 3-panel display boards. Things presented at the fair included: Taiwanese



Li-Wen Huang '07 and Yi-An Ko '07 sport their Taiwanese Cultural Society T-shirts as they teach attendees about children's music at the Taiwan Fair.

technology, music and television shows spanning three generations, and delicious snacks. Attendees had the opportunity to experience samples of music popular in Taiwan today, as well as music of our parents' generation. The participants tasted sweetened tofu and bubble tea, as well as learned about the great impact Taiwan has had on the technology industry today.

Aside from the sixty undergraduates browsing the pop culture booths, we also had special guests from the *World Journal*, which featured an article about the event. Also present was the Director of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office of Boston. At the end of the day, the Taiwanese Cultural Society board members and the attendees had a better understanding of Taiwanese pop culture, as a result of the displays and from talking with the presenters. Of course, without the kind support of the Harvard Foundation and the Harvard Undergraduate Council, we would not have had this opportunity to bring the Harvard community a visual experience of contemporary Taiwan.

Madelyn Ho '08

Fuerza Latina

Latinos and Politics Discussion Series

In an effort to expand the political endeavors of an organization mostly known for its social and cultural activities, Fuerza Latina created the three part Latinos and Politics Discussion Series this semester. Each of the three discussions was student moderated and afforded students the opportunity to discuss issues affecting both Latin America and Latinos in the United States. The first discussion, held on October 26, 2005 in the Kirkland Junior Common Room, covered the issue of immigration and was moderated by leaders of the Institute of Politics policy group on immigration. Although the discussions were largely student run, the Vice-Consul of Bolivia in Boston made a surprise appearance at the first discussion and offered particular insight.

Also held in the Kirkland Junior Common Room on December 7, 2005, the second discussion covered education, particularly disparities in education, and was moderated by leaders of HACIA democracy.



William Lin '06, Katherine Chau '09, and Kevin Zhang '09 prepare food and booths as attendees arrive at the Taiwan Fair.

The final discussion, concerning human rights, followed a Harvard Friends of Amnesty International film screening of a movie about the “women who disappeared” in Ciudad Juarez on December 15, 2005 in the Fong Auditorium of Boylston Hall. Each of the three discussions was well attended and largely successful. Funding from the Harvard Foundation and the Undergraduate Council made this endeavor possible.

Christina Anderson '08

Harvard Romanian Association

Jill Culiner Author Program

Jill Culiner is the author of a recent book on the Romanian *fussgeyers*, Jews that walked all across Europe, from Romania, to finally end up in North America and settle there. Mrs. Culiner gave a very interesting talk, describing both the background of the *fussgeyers*, as well as her own experience researching the book (which included sleeping in Romanian corn fields). The audience was of mixed backgrounds, including both Romanians and non-Romanians. The questions and debates that ensued

reflected this variety of participants.

The Romanian Association's grant money from the Harvard Foundation provided accommodations for the author, transportation in the Cambridge area, drinks and light refreshments for the program.

Silvia Suteu '07

Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Supporters Association (BGLTSA)

Race, Sexuality, and Pop Culture

The BGLTSA held “Race, Sexuality, and Pop Culture” on November 22, 2005

in the Mather House Junior Common Room. The event was a community discussion, and was advertised on the Harvard Democrats Talk e-mail list, the House lists, the BGLTSA list, the FUP list, the Girlspot list, the Radcliffe Union of Students list, and the Harvard Foundation list, among others. We solicited co-sponsors, but due to the timing of the event, other groups were unable to help plan/execute the program.

The program lasted from 7:00-9:00 P.M., and about fifteen students came together to talk about the ways that race and sexuality are portrayed in the media--specifically, how media portrayals of queerness are almost overwhelmingly white and upper-class--though new characters in the upcoming television season challenge this dominant paradigm. One topic that we explored was the additive identities for many characters (i.e., the man on “Commander in Chief” who plays a gay, HIV-positive, Palestinian staffer), but we also discussed whether or not the media has a responsibility to convey political agendas, and what a conscious multiculturalism might entail.

The program's participants might have been more diverse, except for the conflicting schedules of co-sponsors who also had events scheduled that evening. This is something to keep in mind for future programs.

Ryan Thoreson '07

Harvard Foundation interns meet to discuss program ideas for the 2005-2006 year. L-R: Harvard Foundation interns Teddy Styles '07, Jeremy Chang '06, and Ryshelle McCadney '07, Student



Harvard South Asian Association & Harvard Islamic Society

Ramadan Iftaars

For the holy Islamic month of Ramadan, Muslims eat only when the sun is not shining in the sky and they fast throughout the day. The Harvard Islamic Society co-sponsors catered meals called Iftaars for all those who are observing the holiday, and these catered meals are open (and free of charge) to the entire community. The South Asian Association co-sponsored the Ramadan Iftaar with the Islamic Society on October 11-12, 2005, in Ticknor Lounge. This co-sponsorship allowed Muslims and non-Muslims alike to take part in the traditional observances of Ramadan.

The evenings began around 5:30 P.M. when those observing the fast gathered to eat dates before prayers. A little while later, the formal prayer ceremony began and was followed by a few remarks from members of HIS about the significance of the holiday and ways to incorporate the teachings of Islam into one's daily life. This was followed by the full meal from a local South Asian restaurant. With an informal setting, in which roughly fifty people attended, all could eat and enjoy the company of friends and peers. The program exuded a warmth and welcoming atmosphere for all in attendance, regardless of whether or not an individual had kept fast. The program no doubt owes its success to the selfless service of those involved in organizing it. From making arrangements for the room and leading prayers, to ordering and serving the food, the Ramadan Iftaars were a testament to the cultural strength and diversity of Harvard's undergraduate population.

Aditi Mallick '08



Top: Avi Kaplan '08 and Hebah Ismail '06 partake in a discussion during a joint fast-breaking between the Harvard Islamic Society and Harvard Hillel for Yom Kippur, which coincided with Ramadan. Above: Many students gather for the Harvard Islamic Society's annual Interfaith Iftaar, where people of all faiths are invited to help Muslim students break their fast, and learn more about Islam.

Harvard College Interfaith Council

Interfaith Social

The Interfaith Social Kick-Off was a great success. The Interfaith Council had a large turn-out for this program. Dean of Harvard College, Dr. Benedict Gross and Dean of Harvard Divinity School, Dr. William Graham spoke to the gathering. Also in attendance were faculty members like Dr. Diana Eck, Master of Lowell House, and Fredric Wertham Professor of Law and Psychiatry in Society, and members of the United Ministry. Everyone

expressed an interest in the Interfaith Council, and we received a lot of feedback about the kinds of events our members would like to see. The people who attended were delighted to have had the opportunity to interact in an informal setting with people of faiths other than their own. We would like to thank the Harvard Foundation for its generous funding of the event.

Nira Gautam '08

Harvard Philippine Forum Dance Troupe Performance

The Harvard Philippine Forum dance troupe is learning and performing the *carinosa*, a folk dance that requires Filipino costumes that are unavailable in the United States. In particular, *barongs*, *baro't sayas*, and accessories, for ten people are going to be bought in the Philippines by a member of the organization during the winter break. The *barong tagalog* and the *terno* are Philippine interpretations of Spanish dress designed to accommodate the humid climate of the Philippines. Aside from creating their own versions of European fashion, Philippine aristocrats created Filipino adaptations of European dance as well, including *jotas*, *fandanggos*, *mazurkas* and *waltzes*.
Angela Makabali '06

Harvard Bulgarian Club December 8th Celebration

The most recent event of the Harvard Bulgarian Club--the celebration of December 8, 2005--was funded by the Harvard Foundation. The Bulgarian Club organized a reception on December 10th. It took place in the Junior Common Room of Winthrop House. Approximately sixty people attended our reception, which lasted about two hours. We used the Harvard Foundation grant mainly for groceries, which the members of the club used to prepare the traditional *banitza*--a delicious cheese and egg pie. We used the kitchen at the House Master's residence and spent most of the day cooking, but the final results were worth it! The pies were very tasty. We were happy that a lot of people got to sample them. We had plenty of yogurt to drink with the food. As an addition to the food, we played Bulgarian folk music and taught our guests traditional dance steps. Some people saw our ensemble for the first time, but enjoyed the evening and expressed interest in joining the Bulgarian Club.

Sonia Todorova '07

Black Students Association Students Taking on Poverty (STOP) Campaign

The Students Taking on Poverty Campaign is a major initiative started by the BSA Political Action Chairperson. Composed of a coalition of over a dozen student and alumni organizations across five college campuses, the STOP campaign is a student-led anti-poverty initiative. Ranging from relief for the victims of hurricane Katrina, to assisting people in the developing world, our campaign dedicates itself to the assistance of the impoverished. Fighting poverty at the local, national, and international levels, the STOP campaign is founded upon three principles--information, motivation, and action. In addition to starting a Policy Group in the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, and participating in numerous service projects, the STOP campaign raised over \$20,000 at Harvard University alone for both hurricane Katrina relief and for anti-poverty organizations world-wide. Because the campaign started within the Black Students Association, the BSA has taken on a majority of the costs of the campaign, including its website. The STOP campaign website is the major publication of the campaign. The site states the mission and the history of the campaign and generally helps to disseminate information about the campaign to the Harvard community and beyond. The Students Taking on Poverty Campaign website may be viewed at <http://www.stop2005.org>.

Nneka Eze '07

South Asian Association, South Asian Women's Collective, & South Asian Men's Collective

Fall Dinner

Fall Dinner, an annual SAA event, is meant to introduce the freshman class (and their families) to the SAA organization. The event is usually held in Leverett Dining Hall on the last Friday of October. This year's event was held on Friday, October 28, 2005, and co-sponsored by the South Asian Men's Collective and the South Asian Women's Collective, which organized a charity auction to accompany the dinner. All proceeds of the auction went to the charity Room to Read. Traditionally, SAA serves a catered Indian meal during Fall Dinner, and this year was no exception. The food was served by members of the SAA board. The tables were covered with tablecloths and centerpieces to make the atmosphere more formal. Traditional Indian music was playing as guests entered the dining hall. The guests were mainly undergraduates, about a quarter of them were freshmen, and about half in attendance had brought their parents, who were in town for Freshman Parent's weekend. Members of the SAA board made an effort to meet each set of parents and introduce themselves.

Alka Tandon '07



The logo for the Students Taking on Poverty campaign.

Harvard Armenian Society Intercollegiate Summit on Development in Armenia

Organized by the Harvard Armenian Society, and also funded by Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), the conference brought together members of various Armenian Student Associations (ASAs) from the East Coast to propose ideas and concrete projects that ASAs and young professionals can implement to help rebuild Armenia. The conference had two components: lectures in the morning and a brainstorming sessions in five key areas in the afternoon. The conference featured five speakers: Noubar Afeyan (Armenian 2020), Jason Sohigian (Armenian Tree Project), Carol Aslanian (AGBU), Bryan Ardouny (Armenian Assembly of America), and Tom Samuelian (Dean of the Law Department at the American University of Armenia and Founder Arlex International Ltd.).

After the lectures, the participants broke up into smaller groups and explored five areas where ASAs can make a difference: Economic Development, Diasporan Politics, Health and Environment, Culture and Society, and Education. The discussions were moderated by students, and the goal of the sessions was to produce innovative and practical ideas that could be implemented by Armenian students and student groups.

The inspiration for the planning of this event originated with Tamar Hayrikyan. A junior at Harvard College and a government concentrator, Tamar felt strongly about the need to provide a foundation upon which interested Armenian students could begin to formulate and base their ideas. Public Relations Director of the summit, Nina Kouyoumdjian, a sophomore at Harvard, also recommended that it was due time for the Armenians of her generation to work together in the interest of Armenia. Arie Zakryan, a junior at Harvard, described the conference as, "challenging to coordinate," but an event which, "proved to us what a great

need the Armenian community has for programs that deal with the future of Armenia."

The projects proposed by the participants included taking an active role in legislative measures here in the United States, helping Armenian students become better connected with young professionals, increasing media awareness of Armenia and Armenian issues, and further marketing Armenian tourism to the rest of the world. The ideas were recorded, and are being put into a project proposal booklet for further discussion and implementation.

Nina Kouyoumdjian '08

Harvard Caribbean Club Caribbean Novelist Book Reading

On October 11, 2005, the Harvard Caribbean Club hosted the Caribbean Novelist Book Reading. Members of the Caribbean Club and Harvard community

in general had the opportunity to hear Jamaican novelist, Thomas Glave, speak about his work, *Words to Our Now*, at the Harvard Book Store. This author promoted cultural awareness by giving amazingly innovative insights on Caribbean culture. After the book reading, HCC led a discussion on the work and its relevance to Caribbean society. Caribbean food was served at the event.

Students heard the Jamaican novelist, Thomas Glave, share his experiences as a gay man within the Caribbean. After the reading, we held a discussion on his works and Caribbean culture. The event was very successful; students enjoyed the discussion, as well as the food, very much.

Samantha Lucy Pierre '08



Members of the Harvard Armenian Society with one of the presenters at the Intercollegiate Summit on Development in Armenia. L-R: Arie Zakaryan '07, Christine Megerdichian '07, Nina Kouyoumdjian '08, Bryan Ardouny, of the Armenian Assembly of America, Armen Yerevanian '08, and Tamar Hayrkian '07.



Emily Owens '09 and Daisy Ginsberg work on constructing the set. Cast photo, first row, L-R: Jon Gentry '07, Shawna Strayhorn '07, Kia Alexander '08, Faith Imafidon '07, Gabriella Tantillo '08, Bryan Barnhill II '08. Second row, L-R: Regina Bediako '08, James Hairston '07, Emily Owens '09, Chiazotam Ekekezie '08, Natasha Alford '08, Devin Smith '09, Nicklette Iuegbu '08, Christian Strong '09, and Jon-Mark Overvold '09. An energetic scene from the play featuring, L-R: Shawna Strayhorn '07, Natasha Alford '08, Bryan Barnhill '08, and Gabriella Tantillo '08. R: The promotional poster for The Colored Museum.

BlackC.A.S.T.

The Colored Museum

From November 3rd, 2005 through the 5th, BlackC.A.S.T. presented George C. Wolfe's *The Colored Museum* in the Agassiz Theater. The play, featured a cast of fifteen undergraduates: Natasha Alford, Bryan Barnhill II, Regina Bediako, Chiazotam Ekekezie, Christina Elmore, Jon Gentry, James Hairston, Faith Imafidon, Juliette McClendon, Jon-Mark Overvold, Emily Owens, Devin Smith, Shawna Strayhorn, Christian Strong, and Gabriella Tantillo. The show was attended by over four hundred members of the Harvard community. The play was produced and directed by Faith Imafidon, Nicklette Izuegbu, and Kia Alexander. *The Colored Museum* is an energetic, hilarious, poignant, and brutally satirical view of what it means to be an African-American in the United States. The drama unfolded in the form of a series of vignettes--museum exhibits that came to life--and gave the audience a remarkably comprehensive view of Black American experiences and stereotypes. The wide spectrum of performances included everything from a pert black flight attendant aboard *Celebrity Slaveship* to a country girl who bizarrely laid an egg. Creative and bold, the play simultaneously merged humor, discomfort, and drama to create what was an undeniably rich theater experience. This production would not have been possible without the kind funding and support of the Harvard Undergraduate Council, the Office of the Arts, and the Harvard Foundation.

Shanai Watson '07



Harvard-Radcliffe Chinese Students Association, Taiwanese Cultural Society, RAZA, Fuerza Latina *Iron Chef*

Based on the Japanese cult sensation, the CSA's second annual Iron Chef competition pitted four campus organizations head-to-head in an intense battle of great culinary proportions. Teams included RAZA, Fuerza Latina, Taiwanese Cultural Society, and the CSA. The secret ingredient was peppers. We enlisted three guest judges (the Executive Chef of Annenberg Dining Hall, Mr. Larry Kessel, Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Dr. David Liu, and Dean of Harvard College, Dr. Benedict H. Gross) and a student judge. RAZA won the competition. CSA reimbursed each group up to \$50, and purchased food and drinks for the audience. About 100 students came to view the tasting. The event took place on November 12, 2005 in the Lowell House Junior Common room. The cooking took place in various student

kitchens in 20 DeWolfe.
Ren Zhao '08

Harvard-Radcliffe Catholic Student Association

Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast

December 12th is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, commemorating the day when the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, a humble Mexican fieldworker, in 1531. This feast day is an extraordinarily important day for Mexican Catholics. Every year, the Catholic Student Association has a Mass and dinner in honor of this Feast. Each year, St. Paul Parish and the Harvard Catholic Student Center invite a Spanish choir from our sister parish in Cambridge to perform. This year that choir again led us in joyful song throughout the Mass. After the Mass, all were invited to DiGiovanni Hall for a Mexican Feast with catered food from a local Mexican restaurant. The student turnout was extraordinary. The event featured a

performance by Mariachi Veritas de Harvard, who provided festive music and entertainment.

For the first time in recent memory, the Feast was featured in news coverage of *The Harvard Crimson* (December 12, 2005 issue). We would like to thank the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations and the Harvard Undergraduate Council for their support of our celebration of diversity within the Harvard Catholic community. The continued generosity of these organizations is greatly appreciated.
Michael V. Brewer '07

RAZA, Fuerza Latina, and the Taiwanese Cultural Society joined the Iron Chef competition hosted by the Chinese Students Association in a rigorous competition of culinary skill. R: Chinese Students Association Board Members for 2005 with Guest judges. The secret ingredient of the night was peppers.



Black Students Association *Apollo Night*

Part of the statement of purpose of the Black Students Association is to “endeavor to establish and promote interaction among black students at Harvard College. In addition, the BSA shall endeavor to promote interaction among all members of the Harvard community.” Apollo Night is a multicultural talent show that is held in memory of two BSA members from the Class of 1999. The proceeds of Apollo Night traditionally go to a charity. This year, the proceeds went to the Students Taking on Poverty Campaign (STOP). The event brings together a number of acts from across campus, including Expressions Dance Company, Harvard Bhangra, Candela Salsa and Hip-hop, the ‘09 Steppers, and individual students competing for the first place prize.

Apollo Night is meant to serve not only as a forum of expression for black students at Harvard, but also for groups from many diverse backgrounds. A mixture between a talent showcase and a competition (in which only half of the acts compete for a prize), Apollo Night offers a glimpse of the diversity of talents that Harvard students and performance groups possess.

This year, Apollo Night took place before a full house in Lowell Lecture Hall on Saturday, October 29, 2005. A diverse crowd of 352 undergraduates, tutors, and parents filled the hall with laughter, applause (and occasionally drumming or booing). The tenth annual Apollo Night was hosted by two former BSA Board Members, Lauren Westbrook ‘07 and Lawrence Adjah ‘06.

Nneka Eze ‘07

Radcliffe Union of Students & Latinas Unidas *Roundtable Discussion on Race and Feminism*

The Latinas Unidas/Radcliffe Union of Students Roundtable on Race and Feminism was a reprise of an event held years earlier and attended by some of the seniors who organized the event this year. Having a similar conversation with new faces and different approaches was quite constructive. The event took place in the Leverett House Small Dining Room and was moderated by LU President, Yomari Chavez ‘07, and RUS Co-chair, Giselle Schuetz ‘06. The discussion quickly took its own course, with vibrant participation by everyone present.

The size of the venue was conducive to our small group discussion and we enjoyed the excellent food. Although most participants were from either LU or RUS, perhaps one third came from other student groups and their immediate friends—with an unusually strong showing from freshmen and sophomores, which was encouraging. Further, the discussion was truly one of race and feminism rather than exclusively about Hispanic culture and feminism, with dialogue from participants of Indian and African ethnic cultures, in addition to the Latina and White/European views brought to the table. The conclusions drawn from the discussion were twofold: first, feminism is a term which requires a broader definition so as to encompass the women of cultures, including and beyond America, who are both strong and family-centric. Second, American feminists need to be receptive to burgeoning forms of feminism elsewhere in the world as something unique rather than simply applauding the spread of what they consider to be the European-American ideal form of feminism.

Josh Bolian ‘07

Korean Association *Considering Paths: Korean/ Asian American Experiences on Stereotypical Career Paths*

For the first time, the Korean Association held a seminar series on career paths considered stereotypical for Korean/Asian Americans. The discussions were in an informal setting and covered a broad range of topics. Much of the discussion was driven by questions from the audience.

For the first seminar, the Korean Association invited four Korean Americans in business-related career paths: a business school student, a consultant for Bain, an analyst for a Boston-area investment bank, and a former JP Morgan investment banker who quit his job and is now doing a pre-dental program. The panelists gave students concrete advice about various factors to consider when choosing a career in business, and spoke of their personal choices and experiences. The panelists agreed that there is a disproportionate number of Asian and Korean Americans in business, and especially in banking, while there aren’t as many on the management level. They spoke of social and familial pressures they encountered in making their choices. Both students interested in pursuing business careers and students skeptical about them asked many questions, resulting in a dynamic discussion.

The second seminar on legal careers was in a smaller, more personal setting with two panelists; one a lawyer for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Boston office, and the other a first-year student at Harvard Law School, with plans of going into corporate law. They explained to students what the atmosphere at law schools is like, and the choices that exist within the field of law. Students solicited advice from the speakers about admissions, the law school experience, and career choices.

Victoria Kim ‘07



Above L, R: Logos from the Harvard Polish Society and Harvard Dharma, the Hindu Student Organization.

Harvard Polish Society *An Evening of Polish Poetry*

The “Evening of Polish Poetry” took place on October 24th in the small dining room of Dunster House. Mr. Marcin Jagodzinski, a rising star of Polish modern poetry, was in attendance. He gave readings of some of his poetry, after which the event was opened up to a question and answer type forum to learn more about the contemporary literary climate in Poland. The evening was a very relaxed, casual affair, and the attendees were members of the Polish society and their friends, as well as those simply interested in Polish literature. The grant funding was put to good use in supplying snacks and drinks to the group. Though there had been no precedent for such an event before in the Polish Society, we can happily say that the event was a success. Our literary guest enjoyed the visit and felt very exuberant reciting his poetry and talking about his experiences. It was both an enlightening and entertaining event.

Michael Swita '07

Harvard Dharma *Diwali*

Diwali is the most important and most widely celebrated festival in the Hindu calendar. There are many myths associated with Diwali, but the most agreed upon reason for celebrating Diwali is the homecoming of Rama, a Hindu king who was exiled into the forest for fourteen years. It is a festival that celebrates the victory of good

over evil and is primarily dedicated to Laxmi, the goddess of wealth. This festival is also known as the festival of lights, since on this day every Hindu house is decorated with candles and oil lamps that are placed not only around the house, but also on the roofs and in the courtyards. Diwali is the festival that brings together whole families, including distant relatives that might not otherwise meet during the year.

Diwali is Dharma's most anticipated annual event, and this year just like last year, we held it in the Lowell House Master's residence. The residence was decorated with tea-lights, candles and lots of flowers. We tried to recreate an atmosphere as similar to home as possible. Before starting the actual *puja*, or worship, everyone shared Diwali stories, whether from home or from previous experiences at Harvard, and many people became teary-eyed as they recalled many fond memories. After sharing stories, everyone sang *bhajnas* or devotional songs. The bhajan session was led by Sangeet. This was followed by an *arati*, a hymn that is sung while everyone offers individual prayers to the goddess, and the distribution of *prasad*, or food blessed by the divine. The *prasad* was cooked by several Dharma members.

This year's Diwali celebration was not only a truly amazing event that was appreciated by everyone who attended, but was also a very strong bonding experience for Dharma members. Photos of the event are available online at <http://www.photos.harvarddharma.org>.

The *Crimson* article on Diwali can be found at <http://www.thecrimson.com>.

Nira Gautam '08

(ABHW 30th Anniversary Alumnae Reunion, continued from page 13)

a luncheon and wrapped-up with picture-taking and great conversation. The anniversary celebration resumed Saturday evening with the 30th Anniversary Dinner Banquet as alumnae were escorted into the room by members of the BMF (Harvard Black Men's Forum) and met by applause. Complete with dance, vocal, spoken word, and musical performances by groups such as Expressions Dance Company and BlackC.A.S.T., the program for the dinner banquet aimed to take the audience on a trip through time to celebrate black women at Harvard and their achievements. Alumnae, Renee Richardson '96, and Heather Johnston '86, also added a special touch as they took the crowd back to their college years and experiences as black women at Harvard and in the greater Boston black community. Next, Bonnie St. John '86 took the stage to deliver a heartfelt address on how her ability to dream big helped her overcome poverty and a physical disability and go on to become a Rhodes Scholar and Olympic medalist. “When you dream big, reality is not going to go along quietly. Reality will fight like hell...Be scared but do it anyway,” she challenged.

The anniversary program ended on Sunday with a lovely brunch and rededication ceremony. The acclaimed Kuumba Singers performed and wowed the audience, as alumnae and undergraduates enjoyed their final time together. The rededication ceremony proved an emotional one for all involved, as the women present stood in a circle and lit candles one by one stating how the weekend affected or enlightened them in some way. The participants were moved to tears by the experience of learning more about their

past and the women who came before them, as well as being reminded of all they had done in the past to contribute to ABHW's present-day status. Every alumna present observed that one could never have envisioned that ABHW would develop to its present level and position of significance on the Harvard campus. Undergraduate, Trenae Simpson '07 said, "I now truly feel that there is an inherent sisterhood among the Harvard black women, and have faith that I can and will go on to accomplish great feats after graduation. I believe that I am part of a force greater than myself, a legacy that began 30 years ago."

Courtesy of the Association of Black Harvard Women

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Special Recognition

Honoring Dr. Tom C. Conley and Dr. Verena A. Conley

Kirkland House Masters, Dr. Tom C. Conley, Abbott Lawrence Lowell Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, and Dr. Verena A. Conley, Visiting Professor of Comparative Literature and of Romance Languages and Literatures, received the Harvard Foundation Distinguished Faculty Award at the Spring 2005 David Aloian Student/Faculty Awards Dinner at Quincy House.

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