



The

HARVARD FOUNDATION

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President Drew Faust and the Harvard Foundation Welcome Nobel Prize Committee Chairman Per Wästberg '55



Portrait of Former Dean John Monro '34 Placed in Phillips Brooks House



Writer/Director Fay Ann Lee Screens *Falling for Grace*



Harvard Foundation Unveils Portrait of Professor Stanley Tambiah



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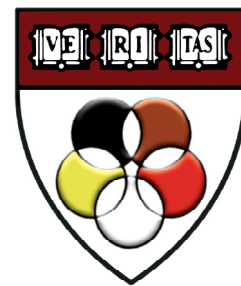
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On the cover, clockwise from Top: Noted author and journalist Per Wästberg (R.) meets with Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust (L.) and Dr. S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation, in Massachusetts Hall during his visit to Harvard; writer, director, and actress Fay Ann Lee discusses with students the difficulties in producing a minority-featured film; Professor Stanley J. Tambiah is honored at a reception commemorating placement of his portrait in the Kirkland Junior Common Room; the portrait of Dean John U. Monroe '34 is unveiled just outside the Monroe Room in Phillips Brooks House.

The Mission of the Harvard Foundation

In 1981, the President and Deans of Harvard University established the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations with the mandate to "improve relations among racial and ethnic groups within the University and to enhance the quality of our common life." In pursuit of this mission, the Foundation seeks to involve students of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds in the ongoing enterprises of the University. The Foundation sponsors annual programs and activities that are designed to promote interracial and intercultural awareness and understanding in the Harvard community, as well as to highlight the cultural contributions of students from all backgrounds.



The insignia of the Harvard Foundation consists of five interconnecting circles in the colors black, brown, red, white and yellow, symbolizing the major recognized ethnic groups of the human race under the Harvard motto veritas ("truth"). The symbol, "the unbroken circle of humanity," was designed by Dr. S. Allen Counter in 1981.

The *Harvard Foundation Journal* has been produced bi-annually since 1982. The publication is designed to inform the Harvard family about the intercultural programs sponsored by the Harvard Foundation throughout the year that address a variety of salient topics related to race, culture, ethnicity, and religion. The *Harvard Foundation Journal* is produced by the Harvard Foundation staff, student interns, and director. For more information, or to be added to the Harvard Foundation mailing list, please contact:

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Harvard Foundation Freshman Intercultural Brunch Welcomes Students to Harvard

On September 7, 2008, three hundred first-year students and their parents were introduced to Harvard's racial and cultural diversity programs at the annual Harvard Foundation Freshman Intercultural Brunch. The event attracted freshmen from a variety of backgrounds, united by their interest in issues surrounding diversity at the College. As attendees mingled casually, Harvard Foundation interns spoke with the new students about their experiences as members of Harvard's diverse community and shared information about opportunities to get involved in intercultural and race relations on campus. As their parents perused copies of the Harvard Foundation Journal, many freshmen took the opportunity to question upperclassmen about their experiences and to learn about the Foundation's myriad programs. Foundation interns also invited freshmen to apply either for internships with the Foundation or for positions in the Harvard Foundation Associates Program, a year-old initiative that brings the mission and work of the Harvard Foundation to life in the College's residential Houses. Associates are undergraduates who work with race relations advisors in their Houses to provide diversity-related programming and increase awareness of race-related issues among smaller subsets of the undergraduate community.

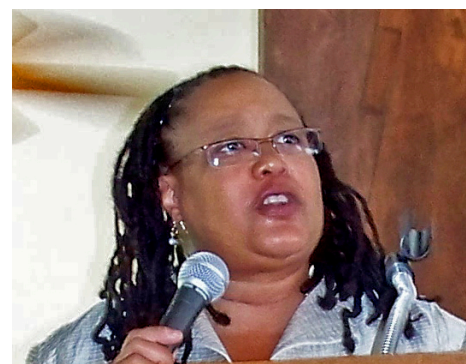
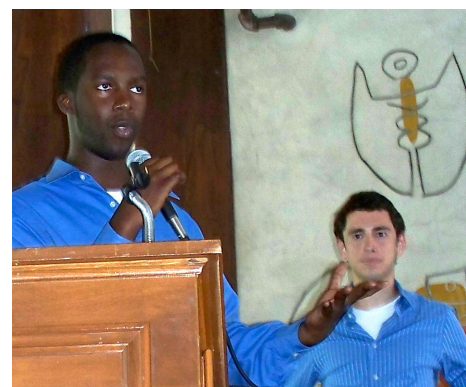
After the students and their parents took their seats, Dr. S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation, extended a warm welcome to the incoming class. Dr. Counter spoke about Harvard's impressive diversity and emphasized the importance of student involvement in celebrating that diversity. He encouraged students to befriend peers from different backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of cross-cultural exchange and understanding. Dr. Counter also invited students to engage with Harvard's diversity through participation in the programs of the Harvard Foundation and of the College's numerous cultural and ethnic groups.

Following Dr. Counter's remarks, several students spoke about their experiences with diversity at Harvard. Ben Schwartz '10 spoke about his involvement with Harvard Hillel, while Foundation intern Richard Serna '10 talked about the wide range of countries and backgrounds represented within the Latino community at Harvard. The Harvard Foundation's Student Advisory Committee (SAC) co-chairs, Kevin Liu '11 and Vikas Mouli '09, spoke about the mission and programming of the Harvard Foundation, including Cultural Rhythms, the Albert Einstein Science Conference, and the Harvard Foundation's Portraiture Project.

In addition to the student speakers,

Thomas Dingman, dean of freshmen, and Dr. Evelyn Hammonds, dean of Harvard College, also welcomed freshmen to Harvard, and they shared their thoughts on the history and the significance of the Harvard Foundation. The brunch concluded on a light note, as Dr. Counter explored the crowd to meet the class of 2012.

—Amanda Mangaser '10



Students Introduced to Harvard Foundation at Open House

On Wednesday, September 10, 2008, Harvard Foundation interns participated in the College-wide Activities Fair, where students came to learn about the various extra-curricular opportunities that exist at the College. At the fair, students interested in learning more about the mission of the Foundation and the different ways in which they could get involved with its programming were happy to have their questions answered in person. The sign-up sheets at the table revealed that although many of the students who visited were freshmen learning about the Foundation for the first time, many were also sophomores, juniors, and seniors who wished to increase their understanding of the Foundation's presence on campus. Both demographics were adequately catered to and, overall, the event served to raise the profile of the organization among the students who were present.

Later on Friday, September 12, an open house was held for the purpose of informing participants about the work done at the Foundation. The event was held at the Harvard Foundation office located in the basement of Thayer Hall in Harvard Yard. For three hours, students were invited to pass through the office in order to meet the interns and staff, receive a tour of the workspace, learn about the resources available to student groups, and hear about

opportunities for getting involved. Many of those who attended the open house were pleased to learn that the office is always open to students and to any concerns they may have. Visitors to the office frequently remarked on how comfortable and welcomed they felt.

These events, along with the Freshman Brunch, comprise the major outreach efforts that the Harvard Foundation conducts at the opening of the fall semester. Although these are often geared towards incoming first-year students, who are understandably among the least informed about the Foundation, outreach is ongoing throughout the year and geared toward all students at the College. An important part of the Foundation's mission is serving as a strong presence on campus so that students know that intercultural and race relations issues are constantly acknowledged and addressed. Welcoming visitors to the Harvard Foundation office and involving them in its programming are some of the best ways by which to achieve this mission.

—Layusa Isa-Odidi '09

Top: Harvard Foundation intern Nwora Ayogu '10 (L.) and Ben Schwartz '10 share their Harvard experiences in multicultural activities with the class of 2012 at the Foundation's Freshman Intercultural Brunch. Center: First year students of all backgrounds, many accompanied by family members, are welcomed to the College by Harvard faculty and administrators, as well as Foundation interns and members of Foundation-affiliated student groups. Bottom: Harvard College Dean Evelyn Hammonds greets first-year students and encourages them to become active contributors to Harvard's richly diverse community.

The Nobel for literature: An insider's view

Per Wästberg talks about the art and politics of the globe's most coveted prize

One of Per Wästberg's best times as a college student in the 1950s was the night he got locked in Widener Library.

"I got so enthralled [in the stacks], the library closed and I couldn't get out," Wästberg said with a laugh, noting that the floor of the library was nicer than his room at Adams House.

The chairman of the Nobel Prize for literature said he spent most of his free time as an undergraduate in the library's famed labyrinths, reveling in the works and inspired by the "exciting titles on the spines of books that nobody ever opened."

He called it his "spiritual home."

In addition to enjoying Widener, Wästberg '55, who received his degree in comparative literature, said rubbing elbows with the likes of Isaiah Berlin, T.S. Eliot, e.e. cummings, Henry Kissinger, and John Updike while at Harvard gave him some of "the best years of my life."

Wästberg addressed a crowd of freshmen in Boylston Hall's Fong Auditorium Oct. 23 as part of a discussion organized by the Harvard Foundation and the Freshmen Dean's Office. Two freshmen, Danielle Aykroyd and Kenneth Chenault, served as student moderators for the "Freshman Conversation."

Introduced to the audience by foundation Director S. Allen Counter,

Wästberg engaged in a conversation with members of the Class of 2012 about his time at Harvard, his work on the committee, and his humanitarian efforts. In addition to a career as a writer and editor, and his Nobel committee involvement, Wästberg has been a champion for human rights and he founded the Swedish division of Amnesty International.

Much of the discussion was given over to the literature prize. Students queried Wästberg on all aspects of the award, from how winners are chosen, to the prize's political overtones, to how winners react.

Jean-Paul Sartre refused the award outright but called back asking for the money (he didn't get it). South African author J.M. Coetzee's initial sleepy reaction was "No, no, no!" Later, when more awake, he accepted the prize, said Wästberg.

To select a winner, the committee narrows the field from a pool of approximately 250 names to a final group of five. Committee members then spend months reviewing the finalists' work and write essays on each candidate. And while the prize is never awarded with a political intent, asserted Wästberg, often it becomes political because of the reaction it generates.

"It was nice to hear his perspective on things," said Tengbo Li '12, a chemistry major who asked Wästberg about the controversial

comments of the committee's permanent secretary Horace Engdahl. In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Engdahl claimed Europe is the center of the literary world and that the United States doesn't "participate in the big dialogue of literature."

"Where I think he was right," said Wästberg, "was to say that ... America does not translate [enough foreign literature] and give the American public the experience of reading some wonderful writers from Romania, Poland, Greece, Finland, Sweden, Belgium, whatever."

But he was quick to add that he disagreed with Engdahl's assertion that the United States is "outside the dynamic dialogue of the European countries when it comes to literature. I regret to say that I think he shouldn't have said it; I don't think it's quite true."

Near the end of the discussion, Wästberg encouraged the young crowd to continue to foster their own imaginations by reading and studying literature.

"I think literature for everyone who has that real hunger of opening up worlds of imagination is the best way because ... you create your own images, contrary to when you look at television or moving pictures, which lock you into pictures themselves and prevent you, I think, from having your own interior movie."

—Harvard Gazette: Colleen Walsh



Top Left: Per Wästberg (2nd from R.) accepts the Key to the City from E. Denise Simmons, mayor of Cambridge. The presentation took place at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, after which Dr. Wästberg was invited by Principal Christopher Saheed (far L.) and library teacher Holly Samuels (far R.) to chat with students about literature. Top Right: Dr. Wästberg is invited by Harvard Literature Department chair Professor Susan Suleiman (L., seated) to answer questions from literature concentrators in the Barker Center. Bottom Left: Dr. Wästberg discusses his career in journalism with student staff members of the Harvard Crimson. Bottom Right: Dr. Wästberg chats with Harvard students at a reception held for him in Harvard Yard.

Dr. Per Wästberg '55 Returns to Harvard to Meet with Students

On October 23, 2008, Harvard freshmen and others packed into Fong Auditorium in Boylston Hall to meet one of the world's most learned individuals in the field of modern literature: Dr. Per Wästberg. A member of the Harvard College class of 1955, Dr. Wästberg is a Swedish author, journalist, and anti-apartheid activist currently serving as chairman of the Nobel Prize committee for literature. Director of the Harvard Foundation Dr. Allen Counter, an old friend of Dr. Wästberg, collaborated with the Freshman Dean's Office to bring the Nobel chairman to Harvard to speak.

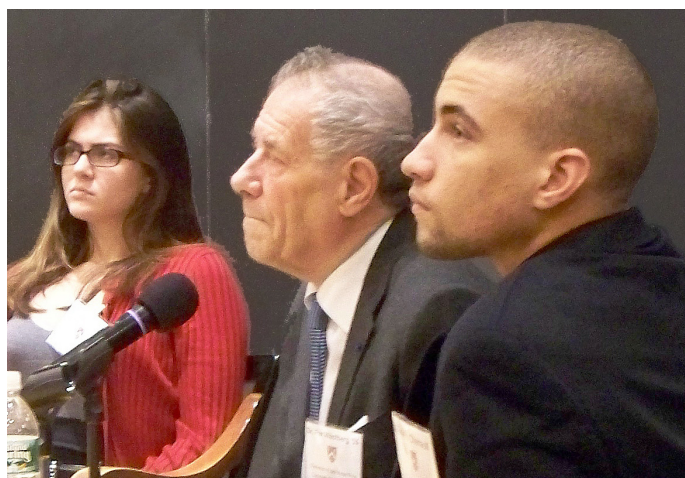
Dr. Counter introduced Dr. Wästberg, astounding the audience with information about the speaker's professional background, which included fifty years of work as a journalist, earning a doctorate from Uppsala University (the oldest university in Sweden), and authoring over sixty books. Two members of the class of 2012, Danielle Aykroyd and Kenneth Chenault, acted as facilitators for the program.

The Nobel chairman shared his experiences as an international student from Sweden at Harvard in the 1950s. At the time, he explained, there was an "enormous number of people coming to and fro" including the noted Henry Kissinger and e. e. cummings. Dr. Wästberg remembered his awe and excitement upon meeting John Updike as well as T.S. Eliot, who "was here [at Harvard] reading and lecturing." One tale of his Harvard adventures that fetched a hearty laugh from the audience stemmed from Dr. Wästberg's fascination with Widener Library. He said that he spent hours "in the Widener library in some dark corner" amazed by the "exciting titles on the binding of books" and even claimed that he "spent more time there [in libraries] than

in the lecture halls." One evening, Dr. Wästberg explained, "I got so enthralled and the library closed and I couldn't get out of it." After he missed the night-watch patrolmen, the current Nobel Prize chairman "had to spend the night there [in the library]." Students broke out in laughter as Dr. Wästberg humorously remarked that, in contrast to his uncomfortable room in Adams House, he "was quite happy to lie on the floor" of Widener for the night.

Upon returning to Sweden, Dr. Wästberg said that he felt a "cultural shock" since he was used to writing so many papers at Harvard. "I had never worked in my whole life as much and as joyfully as [during] these two years," remarked Dr. Wästberg, "I will not do it again." The literature expert said that he received a "parallel education here, which is what I carry with me" from reading and gaining a general knowledge of the world. The discussion then turned towards Dr. Wästberg's career after graduating from Harvard, specifically his work on the Nobel literature committee. The chairman outlined the multi-year process of choosing laureates and the eventual winner of the Nobel Prize for literature. He also commented on the committee's attempts to include authors from around the world and the difficulty of attracting foreign authors whose works need to be translated or recognizing posthumous works ineligible for the prize.

Students asked Dr. Wästberg many



Per Wästberg '55 (C.), chair of the Nobel Prize Committee for Literature, meets with Harvard freshmen in Fong Auditorium, accompanied by student moderators Danielle Aykroyd '12 (L.) and Kenneth Chenault '12. Dr. Wästberg answered a variety of questions about the Nobel Prize and literature, as well as his own personal experiences as a writer and activist and his undergraduate years as an Adams House resident.

insightful questions ranging from who his favorite authors are (Thomas Mann and Halldor Laxness, the only Icelandic Nobel Prize winner) to what exactly he considers a mark of "lasting literary genius." In responding to students, the chairman talked about the impact of historical events on the tone of literature. For example, after the Berlin wall was torn down he encountered more "lively" literature from Eastern Europe. Though it was agreed that modern technology and the internet are decreasing the global population of book readers, Dr. Wästberg urged students that we "must be

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Foundation Film Series *Reel Culture* Hosts Viewing of *Freedom Writers*

On Friday, November 7th, 2008, the Harvard Foundation presented a screening of the 2007 film *Freedom Writers* to a group of students from the Harvard community. *Freedom Writers* takes its story from the real-life experiences of Erin Gruwell who, in the fall of 1994, embarked upon a teaching career at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California.

In the film, the idealistic Gruwell soon realizes that her students would not be as cooperative as she had expected; racial tension divides her classroom and the violence that plagues her students' lives outside the classroom threatens to distract them from their schoolwork. The tipping point arrives when Gruwell intercepts a racial caricature of one of her students drawn by a classmate; enraged by the cartoon, Gruwell compares its racism to the Nazi depictions of Jews during the Holocaust but is shocked

to find that none of her students understand the reference. She introduces her students to *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* and *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*, thinking that within the diaries of these other young people—who had grown up in war zones and faced immense prejudices—her students would find something to which they could relate. Gruwell then gives her students the assignment of writing in their own journals about their personal experiences. The story of the transformative power which this journal-writing has on the teens' lives as well as excerpts from some of their journal entries became part of Gruwell's non-fiction book *The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*, upon which the film *Freedom Writers* is based.

The movie proved especially moving

to many of the audience-members, many of whom were in tears when the lights were brought back up for a discussion that followed the screening. This discussion, led by Harvard Foundation interns Kevin Liu '11, Sara Zaidi '11, and Teach for America representative Liz Cabrera '09, focused on the challenging intersection of race, class, and education in the U.S. public school system. Audience members discussed the ways in which the events represented in the film compared to their own high school experiences and evaluated Gruwell's method of dealing with the issue of racism in the classroom. Highlighting the central role education can play in fostering a respectful and safe community, the story of the *Freedom Writers* certainly struck a chord with those in attendance.

—Bromwen O'Herin '12

Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project

Portrait of Harvard College Dean John Monroe '34 Placed in Phillips Brooks House

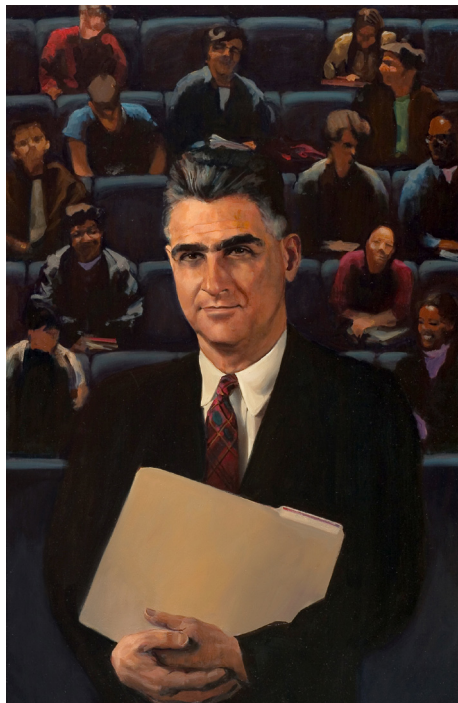
On October 16, 2008, along the main staircase of the Phillips Brooks House, a group of students, faculty and friends gathered to unveil the portrait of Mr. John Monroe '34. The portrait, painted by Stephen E. Coit '71, depicts Dean Monroe in a context of which he was most comfortable: a classroom full of students.

A former dean of the College, John Monroe spearheaded Harvard's efforts to open its doors to lower-income and minority students in the 1960s. He considered ethnic and economic diversity to be just as important as the College's long history of athletic diversity.

Working through Harvard, though, was not enough for Mr. Monroe. He wanted to affect educational opportunities in a more immediate way and on behalf of students who may never have conceived of the opportunity to attend Harvard. So, in 1967, John Monroe left Harvard in order to serve as a teacher and administrator at the historically black Miles College in Alabama. After 30 years at Miles, he worked at Tougaloo College, also a historically black college located in Mississippi. At the age of 80, Mr. Monroe was voted as the best teacher of Tougaloo College by the school's students.

Dr. S. Allen Counter opened the portraiture unveiling with remarks about

the inception of the Portraiture Project, its aim and the importance of honoring an individual as distinguished as Mr. Monroe. Dr. Counter placed great emphasis on the remarkable influence and commitment of



Mr. Monroe towards minority education.

Harvard students assisted Dr. Counter in pulling the velvet covering from the portrait to reveal it to an audience of students, faculty, and friends gathered on the stairwell. As onlookers admired Mr. Coit's work, Gene Corbin, the executive director of the Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA), spoke about the importance of Monroe's legacy of service. He also noted the significance of the placement of the portrait, which hangs along a wall adjacent to a room named for Mr. Monroe.

Two students, Timothy Turner '09, president of the Black Students Association, and Frances Tompkins '09, president of Phillips Brooks House, also spoke beneath the newly-unveiled portrait. While Tompkins recounted the need for individual service and sacrifice that she found meaningfully embodied in Mr. Monroe's legacy, Turner described the significance of the portrait to Harvard's black community. Closing his remarks, Turner stated, "It is comforting to me to know that when any one of us walks into this building, we can look to John Monroe's likeness and be reminded of the principles of equality and justice that must guide our decisions if we are able to truly affect the world."

—Matthew Clair '09

John U. Monroe Portrait is Unveiled at PBH



Dr. S. Allen Counter (R.), director of the Harvard Foundation, invites Dustin Burke '52 (L.) to speak about John Monroe '34 before the College dean's unveiled portrait in the Phillips Brooks House entry hall. A long-time friend of the family, Mr. Burke had many fond memories and anecdotes to share with the assembled audience of Harvard students, faculty, and alumni.

The Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations has unveiled a ninth portrait in its Minority Portraiture Project.

The latest honoree on canvas is John U. Monroe, former dean of Harvard College. Monroe's portrait, painted by Stephen Coit '71, was unveiled last week (Oct. 16) in Phillips Brooks House.

John Usher Monroe was born in 1912 in North Andover, Mass. He attended Phillips Academy on scholarship while working as a part-time grocery delivery boy. He attended Harvard, also on a scholarship, receiving an A.B. degree in 1934. After graduation, Monroe worked in the Harvard News Office, and later joined the U.S. Navy. He later developed a program for college-bound veterans and became director of financial aid at Harvard. He was the founder and first chairman of the College Scholarship Service, through which colleges share financial data on student applicants for aid.

Monroe also spearheaded a nationwide effort to recruit talented poor and minority students who might otherwise never aspire to college. He made the point that if colleges could make an effort to seek out and support gifted athletes, they could surely do the same for students who

were intellectually gifted.

Because of his convictions and support for civil rights, he left Harvard in 1967 to become a teacher and administrator at the all-black Miles College in Alabama, where he remained for 30 years before transferring to Tougaloo College, an all-black college in Mississippi. At age 80, he was voted the best teacher at Tougaloo College. Monroe died in 2002.

"It was with great honor and pride that I commissioned the portrait of John Usher Monroe, a distinguished educator who dedicated much of his adult life to making educational opportunity available to Americans of different ethnic groups and classes," said S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation. "John Monroe is my hero, and I am certain that I express the sentiments of many African Americans and others when I say, 'Thank you, John, for your invaluable contributions to advancing education among the disadvantaged and underprivileged of our nation. Your service has been exemplary.'"

—Harvard Gazette

Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project

Portrait of Harvard Professor Stanley J. Tambiah Unveiled in Kirkland House



On Friday, January 23rd, 2009, in the Kirkland Junior Common Room, The Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project unveiled a portrait of Professor Stanley Tambiah, the Esther and Sidney Rabb Research Professor of Anthropology, Emeritus, in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and scholar of religion, society, and ethnic conflict. The Portraiture Project aims to reflect the diversity of Harvard's faculty and administrators by adding to the panoply of portraits at Harvard minority men and women who have served the University with distinction for twenty-five years or more by commissioning portraits that include (but are not limited to) persons of African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic/Latino-American and Native American backgrounds who deserve special recognition. The Portraiture Project is coordinated by Dr. S. Allen Counter and chaired by the Reverend Prof. Peter J. Gomes. The portraiture committee consists of Harvard College students and faculty.

Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah grew up in Sri Lanka, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Ceylon. He then attended Cornell University, where he received his doctoral degree in 1954. From 1960–1963, he worked as a UNESCO technical assistance expert in Thailand before joining the faculty at the University of Cambridge until 1972. After teaching at the University of Chicago in the Department of Anthropology, Professor Tambiah joined the faculty of Harvard University in 1976. He retired from active teaching in 2001, but he continues to research to this day. His written works encompass topics such as monastic complexes and temples in Bangkok, political violence in South Asia, and transnational movements of people and diaspora communities in an age of “globalization.”

Professor Tambiah has made many contributions to the field of social anthropology. He is well known for his incisive and erudite study of Buddhism, which began from his earliest work, an ethno-historical study of modern and medieval Thailand. Turning his focus towards more classical concepts, Professor Tambiah used his background as a social-anthropologist of Southeast Asia to evaluate whether the Western conceptions of magic, science, and religion are valid analytical categories for comparative studies. In 1983, he returned to Sri Lanka, drawn by the conflict that had broken out between the Tamils and the Sinhalese, a topic on which he has written many books. Professor Tambiah has received a number of awards recognizing him for his contribution of developing a new social-anthropological approach to the dynamics of different civilizations through his study of the problems of ethnic violence in the

region of Southeast Asia and on Buddhism.

The unveiling of Professor Stanley Tambiah's portrait in Kirkland Junior Common Room began with a warm welcome from House Masters and Professors Tom and Verena Conley. Upon greeting the crowd of about thirty friends and supporters, Dr. Allen Counter introduced the portrait artist Mr. Stephen Coit '71 and two student speakers, Alexa Rahman '12 and Vijay Yanamadala '07. Mr. Coit, who is the official artist of the Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project, described how he worked extensively with Mr. Tambiah as a live model, carefully choosing particular shades of blue and orange to capture the Professor's intellectual spirit on his canvas. The artist regaled the gathering with a story of how Professor Tambiah wished to be depicted holding a book while sitting in his chair. Alexa Rahman, an intern at the Harvard Foundation, spoke next about the importance of South Asian studies in understanding world conflicts and how Professor Tambiah's work is thus useful to students today. Former Foundation intern Vijay Yanamadala '07 gave a poignant speech about the significance Southeast Asian professors such as Professor Tambiah represent to South Asian student groups and communities on Harvard's campus. He thanked Professor Tambiah for his academic and extracurricular support as well as for his positive personal qualities.

—Alexandra Rahman '12

Above: Harvard Foundation director Dr. S. Allen Counter (C.) and Foundation intern Alexa Rahman '12 (R.) unveil the portrait of Dr. Stanley Tambiah, professor of anthropology. Below: Professor Tambiah (C.) is joined at the unveiling ceremony by his sons Jonathan Tambiah (L.) and Matthew Tambiah '98, at Kirkland House. Professor Tambiah's portrait now hangs in the Kirkland Junior Common Room.



Director and Screenwriter Fay Ann Lee Screens *Falling for Grace*



On December 11, 2008, more than 100 members of the Harvard community gathered in Fong Auditorium to join Asian-American actress and filmmaker Fay Ann Lee for a preview screening of her film *Falling for Grace*. The film screening, followed by a student luncheon and discussion the next day, was jointly sponsored by the Harvard Foundation, Harvard College Women's Center, Chinese Students Association, Organization of Asian-American Sisters in Service, and Asian-American Women's Association.

Harvard students—both female and male—listened with interest as Ms. Lee discussed her professional experiences and challenges in navigating the film

industry as an Asian-American woman and independent film producer. Ms. Lee wrote and produced this romantic comedy that deals with issues of cultural, racial, and gender identity. She plays the lead character, Grace Tang, an ambitious young woman on Wall Street trying to trade in her Chinatown roots and climb the socialite ladder in New York's Upper East Side. The film, which enjoyed a sold-out, standing-room-only debut at the 2006 Tribeca Film Festival, was enthusiastically received by Harvard audience members of all ethnicities.

The subsequent discussion revealed that this was the first time most students had recalled seeing an Asian-American actress in a lead role that did not entail martial arts. Indeed, Ms. Lee addressed the biases and obstacles that she continues to encounter as a double minority in the movie industry (as a female director and as an Asian-American performer) including the repeated suggestion that she change the lead character's ethnicity to one more "marketable," such as Caucasian or Latina. Despite these challenges, however, Ms. Lee refused to compromise her heritage for the sake of an industry's close-minded definitions of success and went on to film, promote, and distribute the film independently. Pointing to her own efforts'

recent success in building a mainstream audience for her film, she urged students never to compromise on their own principles or identities.

—Amaka Uzoh '11



Above Left and Right: Writer/director Fay Ann Lee discusses her film, *Falling for Grace*, and the challenges that she has faced in marketing and distributing a romantic comedy that features an Asian-American lead character.

Foundation Joins in Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

Since 1994, the Corporation for National and Community Service has been encouraging Americans to make the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday "a day on, not a day off" by giving back to their communities in honor of Dr. King. Harvard students and affiliates responded enthusiastically to this call for action and were in full force at various service projects throughout the Boston area on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

The Chaplains of Memorial Church, the Harvard Black Students Association (BSA), The Phillips Brooks House Association, and the Harvard Foundation worked together to organize several service opportunities on

January 19th. Volunteers served breakfast in the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter and, later that afternoon, cleaned up the shelter; made everything from placemats for a soup kitchen to Valentine's Day cards for seniors at the Boston Cares and Somerville Boys and Girls Club "Volunteer Extravaganza"; and provided assistance at the Community Day Center of Waltham by serving lunch and helping with job searches and résumés.

After a rewarding day of service, volunteers and other members of the Harvard community were invited to a service in Memorial Church honoring Dr. King. Highlights of the service—sponsored by the Harvard Chaplains, Memorial Church, the Harvard Foundation, and the BSA—included music performed by the Kuumba Singers, readings by Kendra Boothe '09 and Lumumba Seegars '09, and an address from the Reverend Martin D. McLee, JD, district superintendent for the Metro Boston Hope District of the United Methodist Church. Three students also shared their reflections on the day's service projects. The Reverend Rob Mark, an assistant chaplain to Memorial Church who led the student group working at the Community Day Center of Waltham, commented later that he found one of the students' "call for others to get out of their comfort zones

and continue to look to the needs of others in the legacy of King... deeply moving."

Following the service, members of the congregation were invited to attend a reception in the Dudley House Dining Hall hosted by the Harvard Foundation. Attendees took this time to rest and to reflect on their day of service and on the legacy of Dr. King amid a group of people similarly committed to his message of social justice and community service. Most seemed to agree with Mr. Seegars' assessment of the day as an opportunity "to reflect on where we are as a community, but also where we can go."

—Bromwen O'Herin '12



Members of the Harvard community come together at a reception in the Dudley House Dining Hall, hosted by the Harvard Foundation.



Saron Tesfalul '10 (L.), vice president of the Black Students Association, and Foundation intern Matt Clair '09 relax after a day of volunteer service.

Student Initiated Programs Sponsored by the Harvard Foundation

The Harvard Foundation Student Advisory Committee is comprised of over seventy undergraduate cultural, ethnic, and religious organizations that receive grant funding and assistance from the Harvard Foundation each semester. These organizations conduct student-initiated programs and projects each semester that enrich the cultural life of the University. This section contains highlights from student events of fall 2008.

Kuumba Singers of Harvard College Hold Annual Dr. S. Allen Counter Christmas Concert

The beautiful and uplifting voices of the Kuumba Singers of Harvard College filled Memorial Church on Friday and Saturday, December 5 and 6, 2008, for the Annual Dr. S. Allen Counter Christmas Concert. The concert was entitled "Excellent is Thy Name" and was free and open to the public. In addition to the many Harvard undergraduate students in attendance, alumni, parents, and Cambridge residents filled the pews of the Church on both nights.

The concert is an annual Harvard event that honors Dr. S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation, for his support of the choir during its budding years. The choir also acknowledges the efforts of its first two directors, Dr. Hubert Walters and Mr. Robert Winfrey.

The concert was a testament to Kuumba's diverse talents and functions on campus. We in the Harvard community have come to expect the exceptional combination of the choir and the Kuumba band, but it is also always exciting to see the graceful steps of the praise dancers and experience the resonance of the readers' words. Mr. Sheldon K.X. Reid '96, who has done a wonderful job of leading the Kuumba Singers for the past ten years, conducted the choir and band on both nights. Mr. Reid was supported in his role by Kuumba President, Dana Morgan Hill '09, who welcomed and addressed the audience at the beginning of the concert.

The program featured guest singer and alumnus, Teddy Perron '97, singing a rousing version of Psalm 1. The choir sang a total of

sixteen songs, yet managed to keep the audience at the edge of its seats by singing a combination of invigorating and inspirational pieces. The choir's exceptional performance was clearly a reflection of its infectious energy, which had the audience on its feet several times during the concert. The standing ovations that Kuumba received on both nights are just evidence to the fact that everyone should experience at least one Kuumba concert before they leave Harvard.

—Elizabeth Eze '11



Annual Intercollegiate Vietnamese Summit Hosted by Harvard Vietnamese Society

The third annual New England Union of Vietnamese Students Associations (NEUVSA) Summit on November 14 and 15, 2008, was a unique event, providing students with the opportunity to build lasting social and academic relationships with others while exploring and reinvigorating their understanding of Vietnamese culture and heritage. Aptly titled "**Discovering the Whole of Vietnam**" (alternatively: "Discovering Who I Am"), this summit provided a great opportunity for Vietnamese students (as well as students from other backgrounds interested in Vietnamese culture and identity) to come together from all around the New England area, sharing their heritage, experiences, passions, and ideas on what it means to be a Vietnamese youth in America today.

The weekend included open discussions, social events, and seminars on topics ranging from Vietnamese history and art to contemporary issues facing Vietnam and Vietnamese-Americans. Former CIA leader Rufus Phillips served as our keynote speaker and was accompanied by several other speakers who are prominent members of the Vietnamese-American community. On Friday, November 14, students from 10 colleges around the New England region gathered to hear an invigorating lecture by Mr. Phillips, in which he related his experiences in the Vietnam War and reflected on relations between the United States and Vietnam. Recipient of the CIA's Intelligence Medal of Merit, head of the CIA during the Vietnam war, and author of *Why Vietnam Matters: An Eyewitness Account of Lessons Not Learned*, Phillips enthralled the audience with his firsthand account of what

happened behind the scenes of the war, as well as with his insights of what lessons could be learned from the war and applied to contemporary issues. The audience was diverse, consisting of Harvard undergraduate and graduate students, other summit attendees, as well as many people from the Cambridge community. After his address, audience members had a chance to mingle and have an intimate discussion with Mr. Phillips himself while enjoying a variety of *che*, a traditional Vietnamese dessert containing many different exotic ingredients ranging from coconut milk to jackfruit and *longans*.

After welcoming remarks over breakfast on Saturday, Harvard Professor Hue-Tam Ho Tai gave a remarkable lecture on premodern Vietnamese history. Rufus Phillips followed with a discussion over topics brought up since his talk the previous night, and then a delicious lunch of traditional *bánh mì* was catered. Speakers Thomas Vallyely and Ben Wilkinson followed with a presentation on post-1975 Vietnamese history and economics, which stimulated a lot of interest in the students. Having enough of history, the delegates shuttled over to David Nguyen's talk on humanitarian work in Vietnam and how they could make it work. To cap off the entire summit, there was an amazing cultural entertainment show in the Penthouse at Hilles, complete with guest dance groups, delicious food, and amazing lighting, slideshows, and testimonials. The summit ended on a high note as many friendships were forged over dinner, and Vietnamese students from all over the New England area are moving forward in building a more united, prosperous, and enriched Vietnamese-American community.

—Huy Nguyen '10



Students discuss a variety of social, political, and cultural topics at the Intercollegiate Vietnamese Summit.

Harvard Foundation Interns and Teach for America Hold a Discussion on Educational Inequality

A group of over 80 Harvard community members gathered in Fong Auditorium in November to participate in a discussion on educational inequality in America. Titled *Zip Code, Income and Race: Determinants of Educational Opportunity?*, the discussion featured panelists Komal Bhasin '03, principal of Excel Academy and former Teach for America corps member; Glenda R. Carpio, associate professor of African and African-American Studies and English at Harvard University who began her teaching career in Compton, California with the Teach For America program; John Diamond, professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education who is currently studying the impact of demographic change on suburban schools and communities; and Richard Weissbourd, a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education as well as the Kennedy School of Government, whose work focuses on the achievement gap and early childhood education.

The panel was moderated by Anya Bernstein, senior lecturer and director of undergraduate studies at Harvard. Dr. Bernstein began the discussion by asking panelists, "If we wanted to do the *most effective* thing that we could to address educational inequality, would we focus on changing schools, or would we focus on families and communities?" Dr. Weissbourd's response emphasized the importance of teaching and instruction. "You can close about half the achievement gap by improving teaching," he asserted. While acknowledging the role that schools must play, he also sought to deflate the image of public school drop-outs as crack-addicted gang-members, informing the audience that the second most common reason young people drop out of school is some kind of caretaking responsibility.

Dr. Diamond approached the question from a sociological perspective, focusing on the structural changes necessary to achieve educational equality. He characterized today's schools as being crippled by systemic inequality and stated that in order "to understand contemporary education, you must understand contemporary racism."

Dr. Carpio also focused on racism as a major source of educational inequality. She noted, "Most of the people here are brown and black folk," to underline her point that educational inequality is an issue more relevant to minority communities. Having recently published a book called *Laughing Fit to Kill: Black Humor in the Fictions of Slavery*, Dr. Carpio cited one of Richard Pryor's comments that

there was no war on drugs until drug addiction began to plague the white community. In her opinion, educational inequality has likewise been overlooked by whites because it has not affected them to the same extent as it has minority families and communities.

Ms. Bhasin drew on her personal experience as a teacher to illustrate the ways in which schools can play a large part in fighting educational inequality. She spoke proudly of her efforts and those of other Teach for America members to create a high-achievement educational environment in Texas for evacuees from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. She cited practices, such as having parents sign their children's homework assignments and teaching them how to read report cards, whereby the school was able to reach into the home and holistically improve education. Ms. Bhasin stressed the negative impact that low expectations have on students. Decrying the term "achievement gap," she pointed to the success of her students at Excel Academy as an example of how students in economically disadvantaged situations can succeed immensely if faced with high expectations.

The panel discussion was followed by a lively question-and-answer session. Several students from the audience had been students of Teach for America teachers and the discussion turned to the pros and cons of the Teach for America program. In general, panelists agreed that Teach for America has helped the public school system, but also that it could not be relied upon to solve all of the country's educational problems. Over the course of the discussion it proved easier to identify the inequities present in today's school system than to propose methods to eradicate educational inequality.

At the close of the event, the audience moved to Ticknor Lounge, where attendees were able to take a look at a variety of student groups that are working to fight educational inequality. Representatives from RAZA, the Association of Black Harvard Women, Let's Get Ready, the South Asian Association, Native Americans at Harvard College, Black Men's Forum, the Black Student Association, Teach for America, Fuerza Latina, the Leadership Institute at Harvard, Concilio Latino, Latinos in Health Careers, the Harvard African Student Association, Latinas Unidas, the Latino Men's Collective, and the Harvard Foundation were all present.

—Bronwen O'Herin '12

News & Notes: Ongoing Foundation Initiatives and News from the Semester

Harvard Foundation Welcomes New Assistant Director Mr. Loc Truong From the *Harvard Gazette*: "Truong new assistant director of Harvard Foundation"

Loc V. Truong has recently been appointed assistant director of the Harvard Foundation. Truong, a former administrative fellow in the Office of the Associate Vice President Administrative Fellows Program (AFC), has served as assistant director of employer relations at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) for the past three years. Truong will assist the director of the Harvard Foundation in conducting race relations programs throughout the College and will coordinate the foundation's Race Relations Advisers and Tutors program in the Harvard College Houses.

"Loc Truong comes to us with considerable experience in student affairs and a strong commitment to improving intercultural and race relations," said S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation. "The students and faculty of the Harvard Foundation and I are delighted to have him join the foundation and its vital mission of improving intercultural and racial understanding in our community of scholars."

Truong has more than 10 years of experience working in a variety of educational settings. He has mentored teen fathers in a parenting education program, and worked as a counselor with both Upward Bound and GEAR UP, organizations that support and



prepare first-generation low-income high school students for college. In 1999, as a featured guest both for the State of the Union address and for a special event at the White House, Truong was recognized by President Clinton and first lady Hillary Clinton for his volunteer work with AmeriCorps National Service. In his previous position as assistant director of employer relations, Truong worked closely with employers in various education industries, helping them strategize recruiting methods and connecting them with the GSE community. He also worked closely with graduate students and alumni, guiding them in their job searches and managing career expos. Hailing from California, Truong received his M.S. degree in school counseling from University of LaVerne and his B.S. degree in biochemistry from California Polytechnic State University.

"I am honored and excited to be joining in the work of the Harvard Foundation," Truong said. "I have a long-standing and very passionate interest in issues of educational access and diversity, and I look forward to working with Harvard students, and with Dr. Counter and other faculty, to strengthen the foundation and further its mission."

Dr. Fernando Ortega, Visiting Scholar at Harvard



Visiting scholar Dr. Fernando Ortega meets with students in the Harvard Foundation office.

Over the past years, a number of students and student organizations representing Harvard's Latino/Hispanic community have openly expressed their concern about the dearth of Latino professors at Harvard. While the University has significantly increased the number of Latino students admitted to the College and graduate schools over the past 25 years, it has lagged behind other Ivy

League universities in the hiring of persons of Latino backgrounds from communities that represent our student population, such as Mexican-American, Dominican, and Puerto Rican.

In past years, the Harvard Foundation has worked closely with the College dean for undergraduate education and faculty such as Professor Lawrence Buell on a number of strategies for recruiting underrepresented Latino minorities. For example, the Foundation and the Office of the Dean for Education initiated a visiting scholars program that brought distinguished Latino scholars to Harvard to teach classes and otherwise interact with our undergraduate students. Among these, for example, were Dr. Inés Talamantez (from the University of California, Santa Barbara) who taught a course in Native American religions, and Dr. María Herrera-Sobek (also from the University of California, Santa Barbara) who taught a course in Latin American folklore and mythology. Unfortunately, this program has not been sustained by the office for Undergraduate Education.

In the fall semester of 2008, the

Harvard Foundation collaborated with the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies in inviting Dr. Fernando Ortega to Harvard as a visiting scholar. Dr. Ortega, MD, PhD, is both a physician and an anthropologist, and serves as professor at Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador. During his visit, Dr. Ortega gave guest lectures and interacted with numerous Latino and other students on both scholarly and cultural projects. He discussed his research on both the health and medical practices of indigenous people in Latin America. He also initiated an exchange program by inviting Harvard students to visit Ecuador for studies in both anthropology and medicine. The students praised Dr. Ortega for his warm and welcoming demeanor and his impressive knowledge of peoples and cultures throughout Latin America and the world. It is our hope that Dr. Ortega will return to Harvard as a visiting scholar in the future under the auspices of the Harvard Foundation and the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies.

Monthly Student/Faculty Advisory Committee Meetings Fall Guest Speakers

Once a month, the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations brings its students and faculty together in a forum for exchange and discussion. The Student Advisory Committee (SAC), which consists of the Foundation interns and one representative from each of the student groups, and the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) meet in the Phillips Brooks House Parlor room on the second Wednesday of each month. At the meetings, a monthly guest speaker is invited to facilitate conversation between the broader Harvard community and the Foundation, especially on aspects of intercultural and race relations. The SAC members serve as a bridge between the student groups and the Foundation by voicing insights, proposing initiatives as well as reporting the information presented from the meetings to the groups.

The year began with the September meeting, during which the student groups met the new SAC board, co-chairs Kevin Liu '11 and Vikas Mouli '09, secretary Elizabeth Eze '11 and treasurer Fabian Poliak '11. Sergeant Kevin Bryant of the Harvard University Police Department was the first guest speaker of the year and gave an update on the HUPD outreach to the general Harvard Community. Dr. Paul Barreira, associate professor of psychiatry and director of behavioral health and academic counseling at Harvard University Health Services, was the second guest speaker at the meeting and spoke on the topic of

"Reducing and Coping With Stress in an Academic Environment."

October was the annual SAC/FAC meeting at the Office of Career Services (OCS). The OCS staff hosted the meeting and presented the wide variety of services offered, ranging from etiquette dinners to job searches. Students were given important information about the opportunities available to students to explore possible careers and internships. Because of the meeting, students groups, including Harvard Society of Black Scientists and Engineers and Latinos in Health Careers, collaborated with OCS on various career initiatives.

At the November meeting, the SAC Board revealed the changes to the Grant process. In order to expedite the voting process and to ensure the anonymity of the voting process, the SAC Board decided to move the voting process to an online form. By using this new process, the student groups' votes for the amount awarded to each event was averaged after dropping the three highest and three lowest votes.

In December, Dr. William Gelbart, professor of molecular and cellular biology, addressed the students on the topic of "Race from a Geneticist's Perspective." In light of election of our next president Barack Obama, Gelbart talked about the use of discrimination from an evolutionary point of view, which is transformed into racism when combined with incorrect labels influenced by culture, instigating a lively

discussion between both Faculty Advisory Committee members and student group representatives.

For the final monthly meeting of the semester in January, the SAC Board invited David Friedrich, manager of the Student Organization Center at Hilles; Jason McCoy, fellow for campus life; Haining Gouinlock, program coordinator for student events and activities; and Ashly Tomlinson, administrative coordinator for the Student Life and Activities Office. There was a very fruitful discussion about student social spaces, event planning and new room reservation system, and other SAO policies for student groups.

At the monthly Harvard Foundation meetings, the Faculty Advisory Committee members and student group representatives voted on requests by several student organizations to become members of the Student Advisory Committee. Among the organizations welcomed into the Student Advisory Committee was Pan-African Dance and Music Ensemble, which is a performing group dedicated to creative expression of various forms of dance from Africa. The Harvard College Sri Lanka Society is a new undergraduate student group on campus that aims to raise awareness of Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan culture, and important Sri Lankan issues.

—Kevin Liu '11

Race Relations Advisor Activity Reports

The Harvard Foundation oversees the Race Relations Advisor program, which aims to help promote positive and amicable relationships within the Harvard College community on a day-to-day level. Race Relations Advisors are House and first-year residence tutors and proctors whose responsibilities include facilitating racial and cultural discussions, coordinating House programs on race relations, and immediately addressing any matter in which a student may feel distress with regard to race, ethnicity, or religion. The reports below are only a small selection of the ongoing work conducted by Race Relations Advisors.

Gran Torino Outing

Twelve students and tutors came together for an outing to see *Gran Torino*, starring Clint Eastwood. Outings are always a different and exciting way to meet students in the House that I may not have had contact with yet, and this time was no exception. We went to the film together (and ran into the group coming from Dunster); many of the students on the walk over expressed their excitement that the House was sponsoring an event to see a movie, and that it was a different and interesting way to spend their evening. Afterwards we went to Burdick's, where we had the chance to discuss the movie from both a cinematic and a cultural perspective. Many of the students expressed their interest in the movie's focus on the Hmong people—as it is a less common ethnic group to be featured in a story about racial conflict. Overall I thought the outing was a wonderful way for students within the house to meet new people, but also to have the experience of this level of conversation with tutors and students.

—Myrna L. Perez

Winthrop House Race Relations Advisor

2008 Presidential Election

From a programmatic standpoint, Foundation intern Richie Serna '10 and I began the year with a discussion of race and identity focused around the election of our nation's first black president, Barack H. Obama. We felt the historic nature and excitement around the election created an opportunity for us to engage students in a roundtable dialog about the politics of race and representation in America, which received renewed interests and attention from the media in light of President Obama's biracial background and cosmopolitan upbringing. Obama's speech on race in America in Philadelphia, PA, piqued the interests of students from a variety of backgrounds on issues of race and diversity.

At this event, which was organized as a dinner conversation, students and staff discussed a number of issues ranging from whether or not calling Barack Obama the first black president was accurate to whether America was becoming "post-racial." The event was well attended and very successful.

—Cameron Van Patterson

Lowell House Race Relations Advisor



Dr. Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation, meets with Race Relations Advisors in the Foundation conference room to discuss their roles and responsibilities.

Dinner with the HUPD

Dinner with the Harvard University Police Department was a nice event because it provided a friendly atmosphere in which to ask questions and share experiences. This event was organized partly in response to the "Quad incident," but I was more interested in it being a community-building event that would give the officers a chance to talk about their work and their backgrounds and the students a chance to see them as regular people. In my email to students, I said, "As a Race Relations event, we will surely talk about their experiences with race on campus, but we can take the discussion in whatever direction you are most interested in going. Note: I have promised them that this dinner is in no way meant to be adversarial and that Dunster students are a respectful (and generally awesome) bunch."

As it turned out, a black student was able to recount his experience as a freshman when an officer followed him to his room, even after being shown his Harvard ID, and questioned his roommates about whether he was "really a Harvard student." The officers had a chance to apologize and also explain how they train new officers. The end result was greater understanding and appreciation on both sides, and I think a number of other houses also chose to host HUPD dinners afterwards. The officers indicated that they were interested in attending more events like these.

—Jennifer Kan-Martinez

Dunster House Race Relations Advisor

"Our World" Photo Contest and Discussion with Beverly Tatum

The Race Relations Advisors for the Yard sponsored two major events this year, both in conjunction with the Freshman Dean's Office. The first was the "Our World" photo contest, which invited first year students to submit photographs reflecting the theme of cultural diversity. Nearly one hundred photos were submitted. Ten winning photos were selected for display in Annenberg Hall and one grand-prize winner received tickets to Cultural Rhythms and a gift certificate for dinner in Harvard Square.

The winning photographs also were displayed at a reception preceding a discussion with Beverly Daniel Tatum, President of Spelman College. President Tatum's essay, "Choosing To Be Black, the Ultimate White Privilege" was part of the readings for Community Conversations during first year orientation.

—Brendan Randall

Ivy Yard Race Relations Advisor

Other events and activities organized by Race Relations Advisors in the fall 2008 semester included:

- Race, Culture and Power discussion
- Film screening of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*
- Ramadan study break
- Genetics and race discussion event
- *Traitor* film screening
- "Tracing Oprah's Roots" screening
- Mexican-style dinner
- Race Relations "brain break" events
- *Borat* screening and racial humor discussion
- Boston Conservatory dance performance outing
- Discussion of Asian race relations
- Race and politics discussion
- Mumbai tragedy discussion
- Race and gender film outing
- Meet-and-greet with Foundation representatives
- Fall holidays study break
- "White privilege" discussion

“Waite Mischaracterizes Committee Members” Response to *Harvard Crimson* Article

As members of the committee that chose the readings for this past Freshman Orientation week, we fully understand that the process, however hard the committee members worked, is imperfect. Therefore, we appreciate constructive criticism that gives useful insight into how we may better discuss these issues. Unfortunately, in “Black Mischief” (op-ed, Oct. 15), Roger Waite does not take this opportunity to constructively engage in a healthy debate; instead, he misses any opportunity to do so by flinging personal attacks and out-of-context quotes in light of a clearly undeveloped and unguided thesis.

Not focusing on the committee as a whole, Waite arbitrarily attacks members of the committee. Professor Matory is one of the most well-respected professors at Harvard, both among faculty and students, and has shown a firm commitment to open dialogue on all sides of issues, a philosophy which he brought to the committee with his insistence that the readings left space to address multiple aspects of privilege from a variety of viewpoints. Professor Counter shares this same commitment

and has worked tirelessly for over a quarter of a century to make Harvard a more diverse and understanding community.

Mr. Waite misrepresents the character of these two individuals by taking each one of their quotes completely out of context. For example, attempting to paint Dr. Counter as anti-German for opposing the screening of a film that had graphic depictions of clitoridectomies performed on young girls, a concern shared by the Black Students Association and Stephen Williams, Peabody Professor of American Archaeology and Ethnology. Never in his Black Collegian article does he say or imply that any racial groups are “mooching off” of “affirmative action benefits,” he explicitly credits individuals of all backgrounds for their involvement in the Civil Rights Movement and other struggles for racial justice.

Waite argues that “the pieces encourage not only hackneyed white guilt but male, middle-class, Christian, heterosexual, and able-bodied guilt as well.” However, the introduction of the packet explicitly states, “The emphasis is not on finding ‘right answers,’ but on figuring out where you

stand on an issue and articulating your position for the benefit of the group.” At no point does the committee seem to attack one particular group or label one as right and another as wrong. It may be this focus toward asking questions rather than providing answers that led Waite to conclude that the readings were not coherent and “failed to proceed logically.”

It is true that the pieces address privilege. It is also true that race is discussed primarily. Although this does not equal a perfect packet, the committee had hoped to use race as a “lens” for addressing these other issues. Unfortunately, it is glaringly obvious that Waite missed this point. He writes, “the freshmen were exposed to a poetic call for revolution and thereby were informed of the existence of a ‘war between races.’” The poem he references actually ends with the author—Lorna Dee Cervantes—concluding, “I do not believe in the war between races but in this country there is war.”

—the *Harvard Crimson*:

Lumumba Seegars '09, Nwora Ayogu '10

Commentary: the Insensitive *Harvard Crimson* Article “Black Mischief”

In our attempts to improve racial and cultural understanding at the University, we frequently meet to discuss areas of College life where students might feel racial discrimination and harassment. Invariably, minority students have cited some of their fellow students who write for the *Harvard Crimson* as a primary source of racial abuse and harassment in the Harvard community. Over the years, the students and faculty of the Harvard Foundation have sponsored a number of programs and projects to address this sensitive area and to encourage those student writers and editors at the *Crimson*, *Salient*, and other student periodicals to become more racially and culturally knowledgeable and sensitive in what they write about others. In some instances, the articles and titles printed by student writers and editors in the *Crimson* are so offensive that they engender unnecessary anger and antipathy in the minority students. Many feel that the writers and editors who perpetrate these racially hostile acts really feel a sense of impunity, arrogance, and that they face no consequences associated with their offensive acts. A recent example of the racial insensitivity of some writers and editors at the *Harvard Crimson* is seen in the article by Roger Waite '10, entitled “Black Mischief” (*Harvard Crimson* Oct. 13, 2008). This article, which fairly took issue with the readings of Freshman Orientation Week, was somehow contorted by Waite into a misinformed diatribe about race and orientation that created more heat than light.

First, Waite fails to mention that the Harvard Foundation and Freshman Dean's Office have, for over 25 years, hosted an annual Freshman Family Brunch, at which first-year students and their parents hear presentations from students, administrators, and faculty about Harvard's diversity and the Foundation's efforts to create an atmosphere of racial understanding and tolerance. Second, Waite's assertions about the origins of the Freshman Conversations are incorrect. This project was developed not by Archie C. Epps alone, but by student and faculty recommendations following what many minority students perceived as racial provocations by students who were writing offensive articles for the *Harvard Crimson* that were creating serious divisions among students at the College. The idea was to introduce other points of view from a diverse group of writers on topics ranging from individual college experiences to self-reliance. Adopting the model of the Harvard Foundation, the office of the Dean of Students (then headed by Archie Epps) asked the faculty to lead introductory conversations on diversity for entering first-year students.

The selection of readings for the class of 2012 was indeed made by the Freshman Dean's Office as Roger Waite asserts. However, his assertions regarding individuals who selected the readings are misinformed and dishonest. Waite simply had to contact the Freshman Dean's Office and the persons he named to ask if they were involved in the selection of the readings to get the

facts. Rather, Waite and those who crafted his article for publication in the *Crimson* were clearly more interested in presenting damaging misinformation than the truth. This is evident in his political description of Professor J. Lorand Matory '83, with comments that are totally unrelated to the freshman readings, and were clearly designed more as a thinly veiled attempt to discredit Professor Matory than address the issues of the reading. Some have suggested that Professor Matory had little to nothing to do with the selection of specific reading materials for the entering freshman class.

While it is fair for Waite or anyone else to agree or disagree with the selection of the readings, it is grossly unfair for him, and those who abetted the publication of his “point of view,” to mischaracterize the individuals involved, students and faculty, in such an egregious and dishonest way. It is clear that Waite did not attend any of the committee meetings on the selection of reading materials by the Freshman Dean's Office, nor could he have interviewed any of the participants for the facts. For example, Waite erroneously suggested that Dr. S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation, was directly involved in the selection of the reading materials for the class of 2012. In this case, Waite is again incorrect and careless in his reporting. The Harvard Foundation was represented at the Freshman Dean Community Conversations committee meetings by its student activities coordinating assistant, who happens to

Commentary: "Black Mischief" (continued from page 13)

be white, an important point in exposing Waite's deceptive statements about "black mischief." Dr. Counter was not at all involved in the selection of the readings.

Perhaps what offended students most was that Roger Waite and those who worked at the *Crimson* in 2008 would permit a racially offensive title such as "Black Mischief" to be printed in a widely distributed student publication. Many questioned whether Waite and his fellow students at the *Crimson* would have ever published such a misinformed

article under a title such as "White Mischief" or "_____ Mischief" (the reader can fill in the blanks). The publication of an article entitled "Black Mischief" by Roger Waite and the 2008 editors of the *Crimson* was clearly designed to be racially provocative and offensive. (Other *Crimson* articles include "The InvAsian.")

We have made a lot of progress over the years at Harvard in improving the level of discourse among students of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Today, we enjoy a level of fellowship among students of different

racess and religions that is much better than that of Harvard students in previous decades. It is important to continue to build on the level of trust and accord that has been achieved, and not to tear it down with racially offensive and provocative articles under the guise of "editorials" that incite animosity, as did Roger Waite and other editors who published the article "Black Mischief" in the *Crimson* on October 13, 2008.

Commentary: Inaccuracies in the Harvard Crimson Article "Best Face Forward"

The article in the *Harvard Crimson* entitled "Best Face Forward" (*Harvard Crimson*, Oct. 9, 2008), by Alex Fabry '09, contains a number of inaccuracies and misinformation that beg correction. Although the article is about the Harvard Foundation's Portraiture Project, the Harvard Foundation is not mentioned a single time. It is difficult to believe that this is not intentional. Alexander Fabry interviewed several Harvard College students, who work at the Harvard Foundation as interns, and Dr. Counter for an article that he "was planning to write on the Harvard Foundation's successful Portraiture Project." Unfortunately, he never mentions any of these interviews or offers a single quote from any of his fellow Harvard College students or the Foundation's director, each of whom gave him a good deal of their time for the interview.

While some have suggested that Fabry's refusal to mention the Harvard Foundation's role of the creation and coordination of the Portraiture Project is simply sloppy writing and poor command of the facts, other students believe that proper attribution of the Foundation's role was stripped from the article by *Crimson* editors. In any event, this glaring omission of the Harvard Foundation's role in

the creation of the Portraiture Project by Fabry and the *Crimson* editors was disturbing to many students, and difficult to comprehend.

Fabry and *Crimson* editors erroneously state that in 2002, "then-President Lawrence H. Summers established the Minority Portrait Project." The Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project was initiated by Dr. S. Allen Counter and ratified by the students and faculty of the Harvard Foundation in 2004. The Harvard Foundation requested and received support for this project from the Office of the President. This request had been initiated at the time Neil L. Rudenstine served as President of the University and was consummated with the Office of the President at the time of Lawrence Summers' tenure.

While the aim of the Harvard Foundation's Portraiture Project from its inception was the inclusion of Harvard minorities of color among the more than 1,000 oil-based portraits around the University campus, it has also included persons of non-minority backgrounds who have been instrumental in the University's integration of persons of all races, cultures, and religions in the Harvard experience, such as former Deans John Monro '34 and L. Fred Jewett '56. By agreement of the student-faculty portraiture committee, the

persons represented in these portraits must be Harvard faculty and administrators who have served the University with distinction for 25 years or more, or who have died. The Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project has been one of the Foundation's most successful endeavors and has received tremendous positive feedback from students, faculty, and alumni about the significance of this initiative of multicultural inclusion and recognition.

The Harvard Foundation's Portraiture Committee has worked very closely with artist Steve Coit '71 and Sandra Grindlay, curator of the Harvard University's portrait collection, in both the creation and placement of these impressive portraits. The committee decided that each portrait should be placed at a site in the College where they can be appreciated by students of all ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. This project has meant a great deal to students and faculty at Harvard in demonstrating that the services of persons of all backgrounds are valued in our community. It does not serve us well when writers such as Fabry and others attempt to diminish the Foundation's role and significance in the creation and success of this project by childishly excluding the Harvard Foundation from mention in a major *Crimson* article on our Portraiture Project.

"Per Wästberg at Harvard" (continued from page 5)

optimistic about future of literature" for "as long as there are books... and libraries... there will be people dedicated to literature."

In their closing remarks, the student facilitators graciously thanked Dr. Wästberg for his presentation. Identifying with his experiences in Widener, facilitator Ms. Aykroyd remarked, "I know personally that the stacks are what drew me here." Another freshman remarked that he was encouraged by this event to go read a book instead of surfing the internet on his next study break. After the program, Dr. Wästberg then headed to his former residence in Adams House to read from his recently completed book of his personal memoirs from his time at Harvard.

—Alexandra Rahman '12

President Drew Gilpin Faust Welcomes Per Wästberg '55

Harvard's president, Drew Gilpin Faust, welcomed Per Wästberg and his wife Sophia Wästberg to Massachusetts Hall for an official greeting. They discussed Dr. Wästberg's meeting with Harvard faculty and students, as well as his experiences with some literary giants associated with Harvard such as T.S. Eliot, Seamus Heaney, and Toni Morrison. Dr. Wästberg requested and received an autographed copy of President Faust's latest book, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*.

Masters of Adams House Host Dinner for Former Resident Per Wästberg

The Masters of Adams House, Dr. Judith Palfrey and Dr. Sean Palfrey, hosted a memorable dinner for former student resident and Nobel Committee chairman Per Wästberg. Over 50 students and faculty attended the event that included welcoming remarks by the House Masters and a tribute by Swedish student Martin Liby Alonso '09. Dr. Wästberg was presented with the Harvard Foundation Medal for his literary achievements and to honor his service as chairman of the Nobel Committee for Literature. Former Adams House Master Professor Robert Kiely attended the event.

Harvard Foundation Student Grant Summary Reports

Each year in the fall and spring semesters, the Harvard Foundation distributes approximately \$28,000 per semester in grant funding to the organizations that comprise the Student Advisory Committee. Any undergraduate student organization officially recognized by Harvard College with a mission of improving race relations and promoting intercultural awareness and understanding may apply to join the Harvard Foundation Student Advisory Committee. Once the organization has been voted in as a member of the Student Advisory Committee by a group of peer representatives and Faculty Advisory Committee members, the organization may submit grant applications for programs and projects that enlighten the Harvard community on aspects of race, culture, religion, and ethnicity.

The Harvard Foundation accepts grant applications once per semester. All complete grant requests received prior to designated deadlines are voted on in a two-stage review process. First, representatives from each of the Student Advisory Committee organizations review the grant applications during a series of grant review sessions. Under the supervision of the director of the Harvard Foundation and staff, the review process is organized by Harvard Foundation student officers, who are elected by their peers at the start of each academic year. The officers and Harvard Foundation staff make every effort to conduct the review in the most objective and comprehensive manner possible. After the Student Advisory Committee reviews all applications, members of the Harvard Foundation Faculty Advisory Committee then review the grant applications. Final funding totals for each Student Advisory Committee organization are determined, and funding is distributed retroactively.

At the end of each semester, student organizations that received grants from the Harvard Foundation are required to submit grant summaries. A diverse selection of these summaries is included in the biannual *Harvard Foundation Journal*.

Latino Men's Collective (LMC) with Latinas Unidas de Harvard (LU) *LMC/LU Discussion*

The Harvard Latino Men's Collective and Harvard Latinas Unidas hosted a discussion about precedent social standards within the Latino community. It is often the case that Latino families and leaders prescribe social mores based on gender. The long-established norm has been to put those social mores on the female, meaning that she has to uphold the standards of being submissive and the housewife, while the male often receives proper education, power, and money to take on whatever endeavors he likes. As a new generation of educated Latinos, we discussed the historical pros and cons of such cultural rigidity, as well as the relative values of traditional standards in a modern context. Having these conversations can very well help challenge the norms and even eradicate them. The whole idea of this event was to foster an environment where new ideas can come up, and where old ideas are revisited to either improve them or build upon them.

Now that the event has taken place, it seems that we have identified the problem and now hope to remedy these social standards. The conversations were lively and well suited for our purposes. We identified that one of the biggest problems in keeping social mores so ingrained in the Latino community is the "machismo" ideology. Early on, Latino children—especially girls—learn and even deal with the social standard that the man has more physical power, as well as mental power since he is given more privilege with regard to speaking or doing what he wants to do. And we also noted that because of these privileges, males acquire more confidence while females tend to be much more submissive and followers instead of leaders in their fields.

—Daniel Diaz '11

Harvard College Latinos in Health Careers (LiHC) *Homeopathic/Traditional Medicine Discussion*

A large majority of our membership comes from families of a Hispanic/Latin-American culture. These cultures foster a historical use of home remedies even in present times. Our event was a round-table discussion in the Dunster Seminar Room among undergraduates about the ways in which our parents have managed to mix the homeopathic ideas which they were taught growing up with the conventional medicine that we now receive. The discussion event was attended by undergraduates of both the LiHC membership

and the general Harvard undergraduate population from various fields of study, not just those students focused on a medical career.
—Moises Gallegos '10

Harvard Philippine Forum (HPF) *Filipino Food and Dance Workshop*

In December, the Harvard Philippine Forum held its first official Filipino Food and Dance Workshop in Mower Basement. The event was publicized on numerous house and student organization lists throughout the week before the event and was aimed to bring Filipinos as well as non-Filipinos to the event. HPF seeks to expose the rich culture and history of the Philippines to the general Harvard community. We feel that for the most part, the Harvard community is not familiar with Filipino culture, and therefore we hope that these workshops will be a fun way to get students interested in the Philippines.

For the first food and dance workshop, about 20 undergraduate participants learned how to make *turon*, a Filipino dessert that is similar to an egg roll but is filled with banana and jackfruit instead of vegetables and meat. Participants learned how to cut the bananas, fold the egg roll, and fry the dessert. Overall, we made over 100 *turon* over the course of the workshop. During the food-making event, we also held *tinikling* dance workshops. *Tinikling* is a popular dance in the Philippines that simulates *tikling* birds gracefully dodging bamboo traps set by farmers. The dance involves dancers moving through two clapping bamboo sticks. During the workshop, we demonstrated several moves and had newcomers try to dance through the clapping sticks.

The workshop brought together both members and non-members, Filipinos and non-Filipinos, to learn about Filipino culture, dance, and food. In the future, HPF hopes to hold more workshops to explore more foods, more dances, and also more aspects of Filipino culture.

—Gerald Tiu '10

Harvard Polish Society *Polish Independence Day*

Independence Day is one of the most essential Polish national holidays. Being able to celebrate it here, away from home, is a core element of our events related to the idea of national identity. As every year, we celebrated this special occasion with traditional Polish food and good cheer in a group of old and new friends from both within and beyond the College. The event was well attended

by enthusiastic students and allowed us to reflect upon more than just the exact reason for the celebration.

—Krzysztof Kozak '10

Harvard-Radcliffe RAZA

La Frontera Discussion: The Mexican-US Border Issues

RAZA's "Frontera Discussion" focused on Mexican-USA border issues—a topic which, with many of our members living close to the US-Mexico border, hit home for many participants. The increase in violence and murders due to the drug cartels have been overlooked by US media; this discussion aimed to inform our membership about these issues as well as provide them with an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. In October, Rachel St. John, an assistant professor who teaches the freshman seminar History of the US-Mexico Border, joined the discussion to help participating students to understand the main issues.

It was evident that our membership was passionate about the issues. Diana Robles, president of RAZA, related her experiences of her grandmother who, out of fear of living on the Mexican side of the border, moved to the USA to avoid being troubled by the recent increase of violence. Like her, many others told of stories of families' increasing fears to cross to the other side of the border. With the guidance of Professor St. John, we also explored the issue of illegal immigration and the various social and economic factors that contribute to it. We touched upon possible solutions and identified current efforts by both sides to ameliorate illegal immigration and recent increase in violence. Attendees at the event were served Mexican desserts named *jericallos* to those who attended. We also provided Mexican soda (*Jarritos*). The room was filled to capacity, and everyone enjoyed the topic. We even invited Professor St. John to visit us again to continue the discussion after the presidential election.

—Marvin Urzua '11



Diana Robles describes her experience with US-Mexico border tension.

Harvard South Asian Association (SAA)

Passport Comedy Night: Sonal Shah

Scrubs is one of the most popular comedies on television, one which represents the difficult lives of young doctors through the lens of comedy. South Asians are over-represented in the medical profession in the United States, and so the introduction in the seventh season of *Scrubs* of an Indian-American intern, played by Sonal Shah, was of no surprise to the community. However, the introduction of Ms. Shah was greeted with particular enthusiasm among young South Asians. In our effort to bring South Asians in non-traditional professions to speak to our community, the SAA executive board believed that Sonal Shah would be an excellent choice. She would be able to discuss both her arrival on *Scrubs*, screen some previously unseen episodes of the show, and speak about her experience as South Asian in show business.

On December 11, 2008, several dozen students attended our event with Sonal Shah, which featured a full screening of the season premiere of *Scrubs*—months before the show would hit the

airwaves—as well as a lengthy and informative discussion on her experiences in show business. Ms. Shah spoke to the unity of the South Asian community within show business, the expectations of her as she embarked on her effort to portray a (somewhat neurotic) Indian intern and about her relationships with such recognizable stars as Zach Braff, John C. McGinley and Sarah Chalke. The event was unique to Passport and we were proud to host it.

—Kiran Bhat '10

Harvard College Sangeet

The Carnatica Brothers Concert

Harvard Sangeet was proud to host a concert featured Shri K.N. Shashikiran and P. Ganesh, together known as the Carnatica Brothers. Grandsons of the legendary Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar, they stormed the Carnatic music world at the age of two as child prodigies and have since emerged as front-ranking musicians. They now have a vast experience of over 3,500 concerts, lecture demonstrations, *jugalbandhis* (duets), and fusion concerts. They have garnered critical acclaim and popularity with their emotive style of singing and their strict adherence to classicism. The Carnatica Brothers, who were accompanied on the violin by Harvard's own Suhas Rao '12, interspersed explanations throughout the performance to help audience members better understand the intricacies and details of the music. The overarching theme of the concert was an elaboration on the differences between *ragas* within the same "family"; that is, developing and expanding on minor variations in chord structures.

—Anusha Tomar '11

Taiwanese Cultural Society (TCS) with AAA, AAB, CSA, HHKS, HVA, KA, Thai Society *Asian-American Male Sexuality Workshop*

"Why can't you say 'sexual' and 'Asian man' in the same sentence? Why aren't Asian-American guys supposed to date white women? Why do so many Asian-American women prefer white guys?" These were the questions addressed by William Lee, the speaker in this workshop about a potentially taboo subject. He was already experienced in the topic, having held this workshop in similar college contexts. The participants who attended were diverse and not exclusively men or Asian Americans. In fact, the event was geared more towards women and their understanding of the Asian-American male and his accompanying stereotypes. No topics were off limits, and acceptance and understanding among people was fostered. Thought-provocative and constructive discussion was conducted, accompanied by refreshments provided by TCS as well as co-sponsoring organizations.

—Peter Hung '12

Harvard Wushu Club

Wushu Seminar

Wushu is the practice of contemporary Chinese martial arts. Chinese martial arts itself, including both barehanded and weapons forms, has a history of thousands of years and is deeply ingrained in the Chinese culture. Examples of its modern influence include the popularity of tai chi among the elderly, and *wuxia* films like "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon". Wushu emphasizes the performance aspect of these arts, adapting combat techniques and modifying them to highlight speed, power and flexibility.

Many members of the Harvard community have not heard of wushu, or are unsure of what it is. This seminar was an opportunity to inform the Harvard community about the history and practice of wushu. Information about the Harvard Wushu Club was also presented at this seminar.

The seminar was held in the Lamont Forum room, and attended mainly by Harvard undergraduate students. Powerpoint and oral presentations by Wushu Club board members described wushu's long history. A description of the club was also provided, detailing

practice schedules, annual performances, and other aspects of the club.

This semester we had several performances around the Harvard community and in the surrounding area, including a demo for the China Care Dumplings program and the Asian American Association's Feast. We will participate in several more performances in the spring, including Cultural Rhythms, the Chinese Students Association Banquet, Eastbound, and a demo at the Harvard College in Asia Project conference.

We advertise our club heavily and practices are open to all College affiliates. We emphasize that no experience is necessary and encourage people of all skill levels and backgrounds to attend practice and learn more about our art.

—Chioma Madubata '11

**Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA)
with Concilio Latino, HASA, Harvard Undergraduate Global Health Forum, Students Taking On Poverty, Organization for Asian-American Sisters in Service
Stand Up**

Stand Up and Take Action Against Poverty took place on Friday October 17, in Paine Hall and was funded by the Harvard Foundation, the Undergraduate Committee, and the Committee for African Studies. There were several organizations and student groups involved in the planning and execution of this event, including: the Institute of Politics, the Office of Career Services, Oxfam International, TruthAIDS, the Weatherhead Center, Concilio Latino, Global Hunger Initiative, Harvard African Students Association, Harvard College Global, Health & AIDS Coalition, Harvard Project for Sustainable Development, Harvard Undergraduate Global Health Forum, Students Taking On Poverty, and Organization for Asian American Sisters In Service. Stand Up saw 200 students in attendance from Brandeis, Boston University, Carleton, MIT, Tufts, and Harvard.

The Stand Up keynote speaker, Hyoun-Joon Lim, spoke about issues of extreme poverty, introduced the UN Millennium Development Goals and discussed his work with the United Nations World Food Program. Around 8pm the student leader profiles portion began. Harvard student David Sengeh '10 discussed his work with Lebone Solutions; graduate student Anne Liu spoke about MIT's Global Poverty Initiative; Sangu Delle '10 & Darryl Finckton '10 discussed their project for clean water in Ghana, Project ACWA; Clotilde Dedeker '10 discussed her work in co-founding the NGO Circle of Women. OXFAM International was highlighted and discussed by a representative, as was TruthAids. Martha Tesfalul '09 discussed the Millennium Campus Network—what it is and ways in which student organizations can get involved. Following this, the top 3 responses to the Idea Bank prompts were selected and the winners were awarded prize giveaways. Finally, everyone in the audience was asked to "Stand Up" and read the Pledge To Take Action aloud together. The event then ended with a performance from the Sisters of Kuumba, after which attendees were invited to the after-event in the Cambridge Queen's Head Pub.

—Kalaya Okereke '09

Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgendered, and Supporters Alliance (BGLTSA)

Good Asian Drivers Tour

The performance group Good Asian Drivers aims to increase queer Asian-American visibility in the United States and serve as a positive role model. This social mission, along with an undeniably entertaining performance and a reputation for being personable and approachable, makes the Good Asian Drivers a duo that must be placed on everyone's radar.

Originally from Waipahu, Hawaii, Kit Yan is a transgendered *boi* who has been performing in the Boston poetry slam scene from the age of 18 and has toured all over the country. Kit has featured with such nationally recognized poets as Jason Carney, Iyeoka Okoawo,

Reggie Gibson, and Michael Brown. Before the age of 21, he landed a spot in the Lizard Lounge national slam team, competed in the Individual World Poetry Slam, and won the world's largest slam.

Melissa Li is an Asian-American lesbian singer-songwriter who has performed in the Boston area for over eight years. Her music is a mixture of folk rock and pop, with a hint of soul, and it is heavily influenced by Ani DiFranco, Jonathan Brooke, Kris Delmhurst, Deb Talan, Melissa Ferrick, and a slew of other pop/rock/folk divas. Through deeply personal acoustic songs, often punctuated with a vocal style reminiscent of R&B/soul, Melissa rants about love, loss, and social injustices.

The Leverett Old Library theater was filled nearly to capacity by an audience consisting of Harvard community members of all colors, ages, and backgrounds. To their pleasant surprise, when the performers jokingly asked to see if there were any straight men in the audience during the program, hands were indeed raised—gay, lesbian, bisexual, or straight, everyone in the spectrum turned out for the performance. The program itself was fantastic—a great mix of humor, dialog, poetry, and song. In the beginning, the audience was very excited for the show to start, and that energy was carried through the night.

Good Asian Drivers presented a very unique opportunity for the Harvard community to explore the intersection of queer and Asian



Rock duo Good Asian Drivers, Kit Yan (L.) and Melissa Li, performs in the Leverett Old Library as part of an event to raise LGBT awareness.

identities. The performance artistically introduced a wide audience perspectives to many issues—race, gender, sexual orientation—that are important in today's LGBT world.

Another goal was to educate the Asian community about LGBT issues, like the unique challenges that face individuals in the closet and coming out of it in an Asian family. Out members of the Harvard BGLTSA are familiar with the vast number of closeted students on campus, but we also know that there are certain environmental reasons for which they choose to stay in the closet. We know that different cultural backgrounds have perspectives on being queer that, being very different from the "white American" perspective, create different challenges that mainstream queer activism resources do not address. With Kit and Melissa's personal stories in their song and poetry, we hoped to inspire awareness of these issues within the significant Asian contingency at Harvard. We wanted to start addressing these challenges ourselves.

At the same time, the LGBT audience itself got a taste of the often-overlooked Asian contingency of their community. In the past, the BGLTSA itself as received feedback that some of its events cater to the white audience and that it needed more diversity in our campus activism. Indeed, this was a result of the fact that, stereotypically, the greater LGBT world is almost exclusively represented by the young, white, gay male. We're trying to change that. With this event, we facilitated creating more diversity through education. In both the LGBT and Asian audience, we brought awareness of issues that focus on the diversity of each sphere. This event sparked an active dialog between them and will create an even more open and accepting environment for the Harvard community.

—Jack Cen '11

BlackCAST (Black Community and Student Theater)

The Front Page

The production of *The Front Page* promoted interaction and dialogue within the Harvard theater community regarding its efforts to diversify and make theater accessible to all students irrespective of typecast roles. *The Front Page* was not just a play; it provided the opportunity for minority and female students to participate in theater in a space that is supportive to their talent. Although the play was initially written for a cast of 22 Caucasian men and 2 Caucasian women, we adapted this play to be gender- and color-blind and our lead characters included women and people of color. Our production staff—including producer, assistant producer, director, choreographers, lighting, sound, and set designers—was also very diverse. Many of the more established and heavily-funded production groups like The Hasty Pudding are limited to a certain community. As such, minority and female students are less likely to be involved in these efforts despite interest in theater. Through the financial assistance we received from The Harvard Foundation, the Undergraduate Council, and the Women's Center, we were able to provide these theater positions to women and minorities who otherwise might not have had the opportunity to learn and grow in the Harvard theatre community.

In our spring production, *The Exonerated*, we will to continue to offer an alternative creative space for these students, both as actors and production staff members. We hope that through the support of The Harvard Foundation we will be able to expose the greater Harvard community to another expression of theater, expanding the repertoire of BlackCAST as well as diversifying the theater community on campus.

—Oluwadara Johnson '10

Harvard Hillel and Harvard Islamic Society (HIS)

Interfaith Iftar

In September, over 100 Muslims and Jews participated in a co-sponsored Interfaith Iftar, or “break-fast” for Ramadan, with Harvard Hillel and Harvard Islamic Society. After the Muslim call to prayer and the breaking of their fast, student speakers from each of the communities spoke. A Muslim student spoke about the meaning of Ramadan and why they fast, while a Jewish student spoke about the importance of building strong relationships between the communities. Then everyone, including some community members of other faiths, enjoyed a fully Kosher, catered meal of traditional Jewish cuisine. The event was very successful and allowed for a great deal of positive interaction between the two communities in both a religious and social setting.

—Rebecca Gillette '10

Continuing its annual tradition of inviting the greater Harvard community for an Interfaith Iftar—a gathering in which Muslims break their daily fast, which lasts from dawn to dusk in the Holy month of Ramadan. With the gracious invitation to participate in the Harvard Chaplain's daylong event series with *Newsweek* and the *Washington Post's* “On Faith” series exploring spirituality at Harvard, an Interfaith Iftar was held in a large tent outside of the Science Center. With nearly 400 people in attendance and the tent's walls being opened for passersby to observe, the event was very well welcomed and received not only by the Harvard Muslim community, but also by the greater diverse Harvard community as well as *Newsweek* and the *Washington Post*. The program proceeded with the usual iftar program of a call to prayer, a breaking of the fasts with dates and milk, and a brief 10-minute evening prayer—all narrated by the president to those curious about the Muslim ritual. Attendees were also provided with information sheets describing in detail the purpose of the month of Ramadan and of the ritual as well as translations of the prayers recited. All attendees enjoyed a great restaurant-catered meal that was provided with the generous help of the Harvard Chaplains and the Mormon student

organization. While enjoying dinner, the entertainment continued with performances from two students of HIS doing a rendition of a hymn with traditional drum accompaniment, a performance from Harvard Kuumba, and Harvard Hillel's a cappella group. Concluding the evening, Sally Quinn of the *Washington Post* shared her reflections on the day's events and her personal journey as an atheist exploring spirituality. With such diverse entertainment and speakers and an incorporation of various faiths involved in running the event, the Harvard Islamic Society could not have wished for a greater celebration of Harvard's diversity of spiritual exploration.

—Tariq Ali '09



Students meet with prominent Latina professionals at the Latinas Unidas Empowerment Conference. L.-R.: Eliana Murillo '10, Odette Rodrigues '09, CNN Español anchor Glena Umaña, Briana Castaño '10, and Danielle Urbina '10.

Latinas Unidas de Harvard

The 2nd Annual Latina Empowerment Conference

Our goals for the 2nd Annual Latina Empowerment Conference were to present a line of inspiring keynote speakers and panelists, expand attendees' opportunities for professional development, and facilitate networking through professional workshops and a post-conference career fair. Attendees heard from incredibly accomplished Latinas who represented diverse professional and personal backgrounds, but who shared a common sense of ambition that has propelled them to the tops of their respective fields.

This year's event was bigger and better than that of last year. We were able to hold the event at the Marriott Hotel, and added leadership workshops and a career fair to the conference. The conference featured very distinguished speakers this year: the keynote speakers were Lucia Ballas-Traynor, publisher of *People en Español*, and Maria Elena Salinas, news anchor for *Univision*, and other guests included Presidents and CEOs of various organizations. We nearly doubled our attendance and reached a greater number of Latinas from the Boston area this year as well, many of whom came up to members of LU after the conference to thank us for putting together such an empowering event!

—Zeina Fayyaz '10

Harvard-Radcliffe Chinese Students Association (CSA)

Brew Talk

Last year, Chinese Students Association began the “BrewTalk” events, which is basically a series of discussions, by students, about current social, political, or cultural issues in China or here in the US. The idea was inspired by the constant stream of debates and discussions going on through our e-mailing list, “hrca-talk.” The Chinese Students Association's membership is very large and sprawling, and with over three hundred members it is hard for everyone to meet and connect with each other. But we really wanted to give our student group a sense of community; and Brew Talk is a chance for people to meet, mingle, and speak or debate about issues important to them. For example, we held a Brew Talk session on December 13th, after a screening of the movie *Falling for Grace*, to hear what our members had to say about the movie, which was produced

by Asian-American Fay Ann Lee. In addition, we like to use the discussion session to hear what members have to say about CSA, getting feedback about events that have already been held, and hearing suggestions about events students would like to see. This was our second year holding the series, and we are glad that it was as successful as the first!

—Daphne Xiao '11

Harvard Dharma with the Harvard Islamic Society *Henna Study Break*

The henna study break was perhaps the event Dharma was proudest to have held. Given that the Mumbai attacks in India occurred only days prior to the event, the henna study break exhibited the unity that exists between Muslims and Hindus at Harvard. The event appropriately began with a moment of silence for the victims of the Mumbai tragedy.

The atmosphere soon became cheery however, as Dharma and HIS members familiar with henna design applied the decoration to eager Harvard students. Henna, also known as *mehndi*, is a black paste generally applied on the hands that slowly creates a reddish-orange imprint on the skin. Henna decoration is practiced in various parts of South Asia and by South Asian expatriates abroad. Though traditionally applied by women immediately before marriage, henna is now embraced by members of both sexes as bodily decoration.

Carrom was also played at the event. *Carrom* is a South Asian billiards-type board game in which players attempting to sink tiny disks into holes in the board. The game particularly appealed to members of the Sri Lankan community, who sportingly sought to challenge their South Asian counterparts.

—Palak Patel '11



Rares Pamfil '10, Ani Childress '10 chat at a dinner event co-hosted by the Harvard Armenian Society and the Harvard Bulgarian Club.

Harvard Bulgarian Club with the Harvard Armenian Society *Armenian and Bulgarian Cuisine Night*

On a cold November Tuesday, members from the Harvard Armenian Society and Harvard Bulgarian Club joined together to bring the undergraduate community a real treat: the Armenian and Bulgarian Cuisine Night. Dishes and desserts originating from the far-off regions of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus were enjoyed by students of all backgrounds within the cozy comforts of Lowell JCR. Familiar treats such as baklava and hummus were consumed alongside lesser-known but just as delicious foods like Armenian string cheese, *kashkaval* cheese, *lahmejunes* (Armenian pizza), *sarma* (stuff grape leaves), and *choreg/kozunak* (yellow Easter bread), all provided by Sevan Bakery in Watertown. Alexander Karadjian '11 and Ani Childress '10, presidents of the Bulgarian Club and Armenian Society, respectfully, made a short presentation describing the similarities between the two cuisines, noting that Ottoman influence in the two countries' histories was responsible

for most of the overlap. They concluded by stating that despite a geographic distance between Armenia and Bulgaria, the delicious cuisine ties the two cultures together and demonstrates an important commonality.

Food has a seemingly magical property; it can bring people together who otherwise would not have a reason to meet each other. On this night, the two student groups got to know dozens of other curious Harvard students who dropped by to have a taste of the traditional dishes (or were perhaps lured in by the exotic Bulgarian pop music blaring from the JCR). Even some grad students found their way to this culinary hotspot. The disappearance of the food in under an hour is our best indicator of the event's success!

—Eva Kirilova '11

Harvard Africa Business and Investment Club (HABIC)

HABIC Networking Event

HABIC's October event was designed to create a social gathering for students interested in business and investments regarding Africa, and to allow them to network. Various refreshments and drinks were served, and through an informal discussion, attendees discussed the current situation in Africa as well as any ideas they had for the club to better achieve its goals. It was also an excellent opportunity for HABIC's executive board to interact with members of the organization and the Harvard community in a casual setting and get to know them better. The primary goal was to provide an opportunity for the attendees to become more involved in HABIC and share their ideas.

—Christian Franco '09

Harvard African Students Association (HASA)

Politics Meeting

For this event we decided to discuss the role religion has begun to play in Africa instead of politics because many members were more interested in this topic. We met in the Adams Upper Common Room and discussed the religious nature of many African societies as well as some of the most prevalent religions and religious practices found on the continent. The discussion focused on the rapid expansion of religions like Christianity and Islam and the effect and role they have been playing in the societies of several countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and others. Other issues addressed were religious violence and the introduction of religious social structures among others.

—Ayodeji Ogunnaike '10

Asian American Association (AAA)

AAA-SAA Joint Barbecue

Last year, outgoing president Jimmy Zhao '08 was the driving inspiration behind an inaugural AAA-SAA co-sponsored event; ever since the South Asian contingent of the AAA split off and formed its own South Asian Association, the two organizations had maintained informal communication, but they never officially collaborated. The 2007 barbecue was the first official meeting of the two organizations in the 15 years since SAA had been created, and the event turned out to be a hit—this year was no different. Waves of people kept coming and coming to the event—after one cohort got their food, mingled, and left, another would come to replace it.

One might say, though, that the quality of the food was more the draw rather than the historic nature of the event. We had food catered from Café Bombay and Tanjore, as well as the Hong Kong Restaurant, Yenching, and Spice. AAA and SAA board members together scrambled to serve countless trays of food, and the line wound out into the Winthrop House hallway. We hastily ordered and picked up more trays of food when we realized we had much more attendance than we originally expected. Even though we ordered a second round, it was quickly consumed. Nevertheless, the event was very enjoyable because although everybody attends the same school, there are rarely chances for the South Asians to gather informally with the East Asians. People discussed classes and their

social lives, they caught up with friends they hadn't seen for a while and, as mentioned, consumed a lot of food.

—Wendy Lee '11

**Harvard Hong Kong Society (HHKS)
with Student Astronomers of Harvard-Radcliffe (STAHR),
Chinese Students Association
Mid-Autumn Festival**

The Mid-Autumn Festival is a traditional Chinese celebration of important phase of the Lunar year that marks the end of the harvest season. The date is marked by the autumnal equinox and a full moon. On this day, family and friends traditionally gather together to eat moon cakes under the bright harvest moon. This year, HHKS has again expanded this annual event with the help of the Chinese Students Association and STAHR to give a larger portion of the Harvard undergraduate community the opportunity to experience this important holiday. We provide several varieties of authentic moon cakes and hot tea in full view of the harvest moon in the Science Center Observatory. HHKS also shares the story behind this historical festival with an educational presentation and informational pamphlets describing the traditional importance of the event. This is one of HHKS's annual events and has been very well received in the past.

—Linda Yao '10



Google Engineering Director, Marcus Mitchell, addresses HSBSE members at its 8th Annual Mentorship Luncheon.

**Harvard Society of Black Scientists and Engineers (HSBSE)
8th Annual Mentorship Luncheon**

Traditionally, HSBSE holds our Annual Mentorship Luncheon to foster an interactive environment where students can build meaningful relationships with professionals in their fields of interest. In years past, students have consistently appreciated the strength and caliber of the minority professionals who attend. We typically have mentors from institutions such as MIT, Children's Hospital Boston, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and local pharmaceutical companies. Students and mentors mingle over a catered lunch and then a keynote speaker addresses the group to offer reflections and advice on their experiences of being a minority in science, engineering and other related fields. This is followed by a Q&A session with a panel of the mentors and keynote speaker.

This year's 8th Annual Mentorship Luncheon took place on Sunday, December 7, in Ticknor Lounge. Our keynote speaker was Marcus Mitchell, Google Engineering Director, and our graduate school panelists included Chinyere Obimba from Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Dental Medicine DMD Candidate Jason Outlaw, and Jamil B. Scott, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow from the Harvard School of Public Health. The event was very successful and the advice offered by the panelists and keynote speaker proved to be very informative and helpful as noted by attendees. Most of the discussion centered on reflections about being an African-American in a science/engineering/medical field and there was

also some conversation and advice about academic and career choices. Overall, the event went very well and we anticipate a future mentoring relationship with the panelists and keynote speaker as well as continuation of this event in future years.

—Tonia Branche '10

**Harvard College Interfaith Council
Interfaith Day of Service**

Members and leaders of various student religious organizations came together on Veteran's Day to serve our community during an event sponsored by the Harvard College Interfaith Council entitled Belief in Action. The volunteers worked to prepared the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter for its opening for the winter season on November 15th.

Students gathered in front of Boylston Hall to meet each other through an icebreaker activity before going over together to the shelter. At the shelter, one of the directors of the shelter gave a brief history and tour before the participants divided themselves into smaller groups to work on various tasks to ready the shelter. Some of the volunteer activities at the shelter included cleaning the bathrooms and kitchen, sorting donated items, setting up beds, and arranging the facilities. As some groups were finishing their tasks, students who had finished their work made scarves out of polar fleece to give to some of the shelter's guests.

After the service project, we gathered for dinner and discussion at Memorial Church. While enjoying a delicious Thai dinner funded through grants from the Harvard Foundation and the Undergraduate Council, participants of diverse faiths discussed how people of many faiths could unite under the common goal of serving our community and the role of service to others in their religious lives. During the discussion, many of the participants commented on how much they had enjoyed the event and were looking forward to future Interfaith Council events.

—Sarah Hallett '11

**Harvard Japan Society
Okonomiyaki Workshop**

The Okonomiyaki Workshop, which took place in the Mather Junior Common Room in November, attracted about 100 attendees from all class years and houses. Most of them were not members of Japan Society, and had heard about the event through the publicity we conducted over House e-mail lists.

After a brief demonstration, the attendees were all free to make their own *okonomiyaki*, which many people told us they enjoyed. The *okonomiyaki* had varying degrees of success, but one of the great things about this dish is that it's hard to actually go wrong. For most, it was the first time eating *okonomiyaki*, and for others, it was a chance to re-experience what they had eaten during their summer internships in Japan. The ingredients provided were cabbage, *okonomiyaki* batter, shrimp, bacon, bonito flakes, seaweed flakes, mayonnaise, and *okonomiyaki* brown sauce. Both non-vegetarian and vegetarian options were available. After the toppings ran low, we also used sliced cheese and ham from the dining hall, which worked surprisingly well.

—Kaoru Takasaki '10

**Harvard Korean Association (KA)
Sib Family Events**

As a community building activity, Korean Association held monthly "sibling" events. At the beginning of the year, all who wanted to participate in these events were asked to submit their names into a pool. From this pool of names, groups (referred to as "families") were assembled. These families then stick together throughout the year, and though the Korean Association sponsored "Sib family events" once per month, the families were encouraged to go out and have their own meals or downtime together; the Korean Association subsidized their first family meal to encourage this. Sib family events were open to all KA members and they further

enhanced the coherency between our members and promoted the idea of family, a virtue that the Korean tradition values highly. The Korean custom emphasizes the Confucian idea of filiality and this is one of the ways in which we spread the Korean culture within the campus and help our members feel comfortable sharing our tradition with other people. Our activities varied monthly but they were a combination of “family” game night, meaningful discussions regarding our heritage, cooking workshop, “speed friend-ing” event, movie night, and overall bonding all the while!

—Angela Chong '10

Kuumba Singers of Harvard College Voices Newsletter

Voices is Kuumba's literary publication and newsletter. With roughly 1,000 copies printed annually, *Voices* represents an important aspect of Kuumba's mission: sharing the creativity and spirituality of black culture through the written word. *Voices* includes original poetry, prose, and reflections by members of the choir, as well as reflections by members of the Harvard community who have been affected by Kuumba's mission. *Voices* also provides updates on Kuumba's year to date and examines the ways in which Kuumba's history at Harvard is connected to current events sponsored by Kuumba and other campus groups concerning issues of race and diversity. This year our corresponding secretary, Samra Girma '11, was the editor of *Voices*, and she produced a publication that told the tales of several of our “Kuumbabes,” old and new. This year's publication of *Voices* was made possible only through the grants of the Harvard Foundation, the Undergraduate Council, and the support of our many parents and alumni. We thank everyone so much for all the support they have shown us over the years!

—Jeremiah Cross '11

Mariachi Veritas de Harvard with Ballet Folklórico de Aztlán (BFA) 2nd Annual Sights and Sounds of México

At public events in Mexico, like elsewhere in the world, dancers and musicians perform folk songs and dances to create memorable public entertainment and draw the audience into the performance. *The Sights and Sounds of México*, a joint concert between Ballet Folklórico de Aztlán and Mariachi Veritas de Harvard, is our attempt to bring to the Harvard and Cambridge communities the public folk culture of Mexico.

For the second year in a row, the *Sights and Sounds of México* concert was held at the Leverett House Dining Hall. This past December 12th, the two-hour concert included songs and dances from different regions of Mexico to portray the differences in folk culture within Mexico. Each group performed pieces and opened and ended the show with joint performances by BFA and Mariachi Veritas de Harvard.

The 150-person-large audience constantly sang and hollered along with the songs, as is the custom in public performances in Mexico. Mariachi Veritas de Harvard backed two guest singers from the Harvard community, as is customary at each concert. BFA performed well-choreographed pieces that ranged from fast-paced footwork to twirling with lit candles balanced on their heads.

The audience's adulations at the end of the show demonstrated the success of the show in spreading knowledge and true representations of Mexican culture to the Harvard community. Funding and support provided by the Harvard Foundation permitted the *Sights and Sounds of Mexico* to be a resounding success that will surely become a part of the Harvard fabric.

—Diego Rentería '11

Harvard Vietnamese Society Visit by Writer Nguyen Ngoc Bich

On December 4, 2008, the Harvard Vietnamese Association welcomed to our campus Nguyen Ngoc Bich, a distinguished lecturer, author, and translator. Aside from a lifetime of accomplishments as a

professor at top institutions such as Trinity College and Georgetown and a celebrated author, Nguyen's story is an amazing one from the start. As an international student at Princeton, he did translation work on the side as a way to keep in touch with his Vietnamese culture while abroad; at the time, he thought little of these translation jobs.

Upon returning to the United States after the fall of Saigon as a refugee, penniless and with nowhere to turn, he wandered into a bookstore and came upon a volume of Vietnamese literature. Surprised to find that they were his own works, he contacted the publisher and from there built a foundation for a career educating others in Vietnamese poetry, music, and literature. Even as Vietnamese students, we often give traditional literature a stigma of being boring and difficult to understand but in one hour, Nguyen was able to blow this stereotype out of the water. Starting off with traditional poems of love and seduction, Nguyen reads with passion hundred year old works of our ancestry.

Like elementary school students, the attendees of the workshop laugh and giggle at the nature of the poetry they once thought would be so dull. “Vietnamese people know how to have fun!” Nguyen exclaims as he moves on to drunken poetry, those of commoners and scandalous monks and their love for good drink and fun times. Then, inviting his audience to join in, he teaches us the meter and rhymes of traditional river songs. We know the lyrics, they are familiar to us but Nguyen engages his audience even further with his honey coated voice “ho”-ing the sounds of Vietnam. It rings of nostalgia, of home, of a distant land full of grace and culture. One look around the room is enough evidence of the success of this workshop. Eyes wide open and on the edge of their seats, the roughly 30 attendees of the workshop cling on to Nguyen's every word. Every few minutes, a round of laughter and applause explodes from room 106 of Emerson resounding in the hallway. An hour and a half later, the workshop is over but the attendees still linger, hoping for a word with Nguyen, another story, another poem, another song, and another piece of their culture.

—Huy Nguyen '10



Harvard students listen to esteemed author and scholar Nguyen Ngoc Bich recite traditional Vietnamese poem during a visit hosted by the Vietnamese Society.

Letter from the Director**S. Allen Counter, Director of the Harvard Foundation**

Dear Students and Faculty,

The 2008 fall term was one of the most active in the Foundation's history in terms of student programs in the areas of intercultural and race relations. The Harvard Foundation received 239 grant applications from some 50 student groups for support of their selected ethno-cultural projects. These groups included the African Students Association; Asian American Association; Ballet Folklorico de Aztlan; Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgendered, and Supporters Association; Bhangra, Black Students Association, Bulgarian Club, Dharma, Harvard Hillel, Harvard Islamic Society, Korean Association, Latino Men's Collective, Native Americans at Harvard College, Polish Society, RAZA, South Asian Association, Thai Society, Vietnamese Association, Women in Science, among others. The spectrum of programs included cultural workshops, conversations with Institute of Politics fellows, a Korean fan dance workshop, mentorship conversations, a Polish Independence Day discussion, a Vietnamese identities summit, an Islamic community *iftar*, and US-Mexico border issues. The range and depth of these programs reflected the widespread scholarly, cultural, and social interests of the broad demographics in our student body of 2008. With support from the office of the Dean of the College, the Foundation was able to offer financial support for these projects, which took place in the Harvard Houses and halls of the University, and were open to persons of all ethnic backgrounds. In addition, the Harvard Foundation initiated University-wide programs that served to bring together undergraduate and graduate students around major themes in intercultural relations.

One of the salient programs in the fall 2008 semester was a visit by the chair of the Nobel Prize Committee for Literature and head of the Swedish Academy, Dr. Per Wästberg '55. He began his visit with a memorable program for first-year students, "Freshman Conversation with the Chairman of the Nobel Prize Committee for Literature." This event was hosted by the Harvard Foundation and the Freshman Dean's Office. Throughout the week he met with both undergraduate and graduate students to discuss the world of literature and how the winners of the Nobel Prize are selected. He gave particular attention to his lifelong campaign to include more minorities and women among the Nobel Prize winners. In collaboration with Comparative Literature Professor Susan Suleiman, he held a comprehensive discussion with graduate students and writers at the Barker Center. He also visited the local Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School library, where he spoke with the principal, librarian, and students about past Nobel Laureates and the importance of literature. Dr. Wästberg's visit was in keeping with the Foundation's tradition of introducing our students to the most distinguished intellectual leaders who may also serve as scholarly role models.

The Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project continues to please both students and faculty alike. This project, initiated in 2004 by a student-faculty committee, commissions portraits of faculty and administrators from diverse ethnic backgrounds who have served Harvard with distinction for at least 25 years, or who have died. To date, the project has completed nine portraits and placed them in the Houses, libraries, and halls of Harvard, where they may be viewed by our students. This fall students, faculty, and friends gathered in Phillips Brooks House to place the portrait of legendary and beloved Harvard Dean and civil rights leader John Monro '34. In January 2009, before a gathering of his fellow faculty and students, Professor Stanley Tambiah witnessed his portrait being placed on the wall of the Kirkland House Junior Common Room during a reception sponsored by the Harvard Foundation and the Masters of Kirkland House. The Harvard Foundation will place three portraits at sites around the University in the spring semester of this academic year.

On December 15, 2008, after a wide search, the Harvard Foundation appointed its first assistant director. Loc Truong, MA, a former administrative fellow at Harvard, was selected for the position. Mr. Truong's primary responsibility will be coordinating the Race Relations Advisors/Tutors in the Harvard Houses and managing many of the day-to-day activities of the Harvard Foundation's operations. We are delighted to have Mr. Truong join the Harvard Foundation.

The Foundation was pleased to welcome Dr. Bruce Price '72, professor of neurology and psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, to our Faculty Advisory Committee. Dr. Price, a noted specialist in cognition, was a resident of Quincy House as an undergraduate student. He has been involved in undergraduate student advising and activities, and he has long been active in the programs of the Harvard Foundation. He joined the Harvard Foundation students and faculty in a relief project in Louisiana immediately following Hurricane Katrina. We are happy to welcome him to the Harvard Foundation.

Most of the programs for the fall 2008 semester are summarized in this journal, which serves as both a report to the faculty and administration and a compendium of the Foundation's diverse activities. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Student/Faculty Advisory Committee members for their dedicated efforts and support of the Harvard Foundation. I also wish to thank faculty members who are not on our committee, but who have expressed a great degree of interest and tremendous support for the work that the Foundation does for the University. I would especially like to thank the Dean of the College, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the President for their support of the mission and work of the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. S. Allen Counter
Director, the Harvard Foundation**Acknowledgements**

The students and faculty of the Harvard Foundation would like to thank the following individuals for their special contributions to the mission and work of the Harvard Foundation during the fall 2008 semester: Dr. Drew Gilpin Faust, president of Harvard University; Dr. Evelyn Hammonds, dean of Harvard College; Dr. Donald Pfister, Asa Gray Professor of Systematic Botany, curator of the Farlow Library and Herbarium, and chairman of the Harvard Foundation Faculty Advisory Committee; Mr. John F. Gates, associate dean for administration and finance; Ms. Sandra Grindlay, curator for the Harvard University Portraiture Collection; Mr. Stephen Coit '71, artist of the Harvard Foundation Portraiture Project; and the Reverend Professor Peter J. Gomes and Ms. Jan Randolph, of Harvard's Memorial Church.

The Harvard Foundation is grateful to Dr. Leo H. Buchanan for his proofreading assistance.

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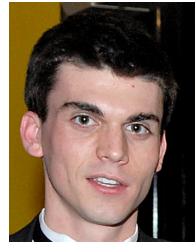
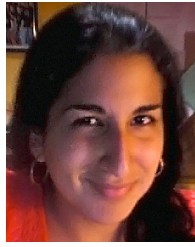
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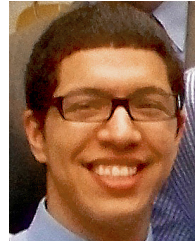
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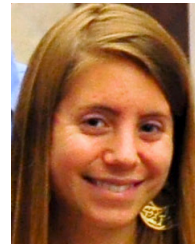
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