



HARVARD ALUMNI DAY 2024

Friday, May 31, 2024

Harvard Yard

Tracy “Ty” Moore II AB '06, President, Harvard Alumni Association

Sarah C. Karmon, Associate Vice President and Executive Director, Harvard Alumni Association

ORDER OF PROGRAM

Alumni Parade from the Old Yard

Welcome Remarks and Introductions

Tracy “Ty” Moore II AB '06

Volunteer Recognition

Sarah C. Karmon

“Radcliffe, Now We Rise to Greet Thee”

Performed by alumni members of the Harvard University Choir, Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, Radcliffe Choral Society, and Harvard Glee Club

Report to the Alumni by the Interim President of Harvard University

Alan M. Garber AB '77, PhD '82

Musical Performance, “Julie-O”

Eliot Min AB '23 and Eugene Ye COL '25

Presentation of Harvard Medals

Alan M. Garber AB '77, PhD '82

Address by the Harvard Alumni Day Speaker

Courtney B. Vance AB '82

“Fair Harvard”

Performed by alumni members of the Harvard University Choir, Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, Radcliffe Choral Society, and Harvard Glee Club

HARVARD MEDAL RECIPIENTS

The Harvard Medals have been bestowed by the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) since 1981 in recognition of extraordinary service to the University.

[Learn about the Harvard Medal recipients](#)

SCOTT A. ABELL AB '72

Scott Abell has devoted more than three decades in service to Harvard. After graduating from Harvard College in 1968, Abell founded and served as chair and CEO of Abell & Associates, leading its work in financial services and health care consulting. Recognizing Harvard's impact on his life, Abell has dedicated many years to strengthening alumni connections, serving as president of the Harvard Alumni Association and dean for development of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. As a member of the Board of Overseers from 2012 to 2018, Abell chaired its committee on institutional policy and the governing boards' Joint Committee on Alumni Affairs and Development, and led the Overseers as president in his final year. Abell received the Harvard Alumni Association Award in 2003 for his work on behalf of alumni.

KATHERINE N. LAPP

Through skillful leadership, Katherine "Katie" Lapp expertly guided Harvard's administrative functions for 13 years as executive vice president. She built a resilient organization that weathered uncertainty, including the Great Recession and COVID-19 pandemic. As a member of the president's senior team, Lapp oversaw finance, administration, and capital planning. She helped steer Harvard's sustainability goals and campus development in Allston. In 2019, she played a key role in Harvard's pandemic

response, managing surveillance, remote learning technology, and the safe return of students. Lapp joined Harvard in 2009 from the University of California, bringing stability during the recession as she strengthened financial practices and modernized operations. Prior to Harvard, Lapp served as executive director of New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority and director of New York's Division of Criminal Justice Services. She sits on the board of the Museum of Fine Arts, among other organizations.

M. LEE PELTON PhD '84

Lee Pelton has dedicated his career to advancing social justice and expanding educational access. A distinguished academic and civic leader, Pelton served as a college president for 23 years and now leads the Boston Foundation, an organization committed to equity and closing disparities for marginalized communities. A steadfast Harvard volunteer, Pelton served on the Board of Overseers and visiting committees. The grandson of sharecroppers, Pelton was the first in his family to attend college. He held roles at Harvard, Colgate, and Dartmouth before becoming president of Willamette University. There he strengthened the school's reputation while establishing programs for underrepresented youth. Pelton later became president of Emerson College, where he increased faculty, enhanced student body diversity, developed national and global programs, and emerged as a powerful voice on social issues.

CHIEF MARSHAL OF THE ALUMNI

BARATUNDE THURSTON AB '99

Baratunde Thurston tells stories of interdependence through our relationship with nature, each other, and technology. An Emmy-nominated host, producer, writer, and public speaker, he is the host and executive producer of the PBS television series *America Outdoors with Baratunde Thurston*, creator and host of *How To Citizen with Baratunde*, which Apple named one of its favorite podcasts, and a founding partner and writer at Puck. His

comedic memoir, *How To Be Black*, is a *New York Times* best-seller. In 2019, he delivered what MSNBC's Brian Williams called "one of the greatest TED talks of all time." Thurston is unique in his ability to integrate and synthesize different and difficult topics in a style that's intelligent, compassionate, and humorous. Thurston serves on the boards of Civics Unplugged and the Brooklyn Public Library and lives in Southern California.

HARVARD ALUMNI DAY SPEAKER

COURTNEY B. VANCE AB '82

Known for compelling, powerful performances across the stage and screen, Courtney B. Vance has cultivated an extraordinary career that showcases his passion, talent, and intellect.

Born in Detroit, he graduated from Harvard while working as an actor at the Boston Shakespeare Company. While studying for his master of fine arts at the Yale School of Drama, he met Angela Bassett, now his spouse and an award-winning actor in her own right. They have two children, founded Bassett Vance Productions, and work with many community organizations, such as UNICEF, Habitat for Humanity, and the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

Throughout his acclaimed career of over 40 years, Vance has portrayed a wide range of characters, both real and fictional, showcasing remarkable versatility. He won multiple awards for his performance as Johnnie Cochran in FX's *The People vs. OJ Simpson: American Crime Story*—including Emmy, Critics' Choice, and NAACP Image Awards, in addition to Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and Golden Globe nominations. His role as Uncle George in HBO's *Lovecraft Country* earned him an Emmy for Outstanding Guest Actor, and his portrayal of Aretha Franklin's father, Rev. C. L. Franklin, in National Geographic's series *Genius: Aretha* won an NAACP Image Award. His film roles

include *Hamburger Hill*, *The Hunt for Red October*, *The Tuskegee Airmen*, *The Preacher's Wife*, and *Isle of Dogs*.

Vance's stage accolades include a Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in Nora Ephron's *Lucky Guy*, as well as Tony nominations for his debut performance in August Wilson's *Fences* and for his lead performance in *Six Degrees of Separation*. He was also nominated for a Grammy for his narration of Neil DeGrasse Tyson's book *Accessory to War*.

In addition to his artistic work, he serves as chair of the SAG-AFTRA Foundation, which provides educational resources for individuals pursuing careers in all facets of the performing arts, and leads the Entertainment Industry Council, which provides support for artists throughout their careers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he helped orchestrate a fundraising effort that distributed more than \$6.1 million to over 6,500 SAG-AFTRA performers and their families. He is also an ambassador for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

Recently, Vance authored *The Invisible Ache: Black Men Identifying Their Pain and Reclaiming Their Power*—a deeply personal reflection on issues of grief, relationships, identity, and race that provides a framework for Black men navigating mental health challenges.

MUSICAL PERFORMERS

ELIOT MIN AB '23

Eliot Min is a beatboxer originally from Hong Kong. At Harvard, he was deeply involved with the Harvard Opportunes, Harvard's oldest all-gender a cappella group, as its music director and vocal percussionist.

Additional musical performances will be provided by alumni members of the:

EUGENE YE COL '25

Eugene Ye is a cellist and rising senior in Cabot House, concentrating in applied math-econ and computer science. He is the principal cellist of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra and president of the Harvard Signet Society.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR
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