



**HARVARD**  
Alumni Association  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear HAA Board of Directors,

Welcome to the 2020–2021 HAA Board of Directors! I am looking forward to working with all of you on the inspiring agenda we are planning for the coming year.

Throughout the coming months we will continue to build on the important work from previous years and celebrate the many ways alumni are coming together around the world to build community and promote and support positive change. We will hear from University leaders and faculty who will share research and insights that can inform our work on the HAA Board and in our alumni communities. I hope you will leave each Board meeting (whether by Zoom or in person) energized by what you have seen and heard and that, as Harvard ambassadors, you will share your experiences with others.

This year will be marked by new opportunities, experimentation, and adaptability. We have implemented a **new board structure** with the purpose of ensuring that our work has purpose and clarity, that your time is used effectively, and that you feel empowered to do the work of building welcoming and inclusive communities. And that the connection, training, and information sharing between Cambridge and our alumni community is strengthened. This work is more important now than it ever has been, and I am looking forward to seeing what we learn and create together.

As I know we all recognize, we are doing this in the midst of a public health crisis which will impact our ability to meet in person for at least part of the year. Both the **fall (October 23–24, 2020) and winter (January 29–30) meetings will be virtual**, held via Zoom. The majority of the meetings will take place throughout the weeks of October 19 and January 25. We are looking at our program and thinking critically about when to schedule the various components of each meeting. ([Click here for the tentative fall meeting schedule.](#)) We are also excited to explore some programming throughout the fall to welcome and onboard our newest Directors, spread out the time during which we will ask you to be at your computer, and create more touchpoints with the group throughout the year (dates/times TBD). Our fall and winter virtual meetings will include social and networking opportunities, reflecting the important feedback we heard coming out of the spring 2020 remote meeting.

Our hope is to meet in Cambridge for our spring meeting currently scheduled for April 30–May 1. We will update you early in 2021 if plans change due to public health concerns.

As we prepare for **cross-cohort work (formerly known as Initiatives)** we will be highlighting a different topic at each meeting (rather than the previous year-long topics segmented into groups) with the purpose of supporting you, HAA volunteers, and strengthening our volunteer networks around the world. We will continue building on the work that has taken place in recent years and experimenting with different formats. Evaluation of each program in order to understand what works and why will be important and we expect to learn a lot in the coming year to help develop this work for the future.

We have a comprehensive and dynamic agenda ahead of us. I look forward to seeing you on Zoom this fall as we kick off the year. Thank you for all your efforts in building our Harvard alumni community.

Sincerely,

John J. West Jr. MBA '95  
HAA President, 2020–2021

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