

this feat depends on community and shared values, the University should be, above all, a locus of meaningful interactions. A visitor in 2036 should still find students meeting with professors, debating ideas in seminars, huddling with great texts, and planning the future of the world over dinner.

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The Arts: More Than Diversion

by MIA RIVERTON

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A FORMER HARVARD PRESIDENT once told me, “The arts may be a nice diversion, but they’re just not that important at Harvard.” Despite this anecdotal opinion, with which I naturally take issue, numerous alumni have risen to prominence in the arts, media, and in entertainment. It is axiomatic that many Harvard graduates are destined for greatness in their chosen paths, whether because of, or in spite of, what the University offers them as students; those of us who believe in the transformative potential of the Harvard experience certainly hope for the former.

Graduating students are often blessed with an abundance of career opportunities in their respective fields, thanks partly to University resources dedicated to helping them move from academic study to professional endeavors. But it is widely acknowledged within the alumni community that students seeking to realize their arts-related ambitions receive less attention and fewer resources than those in more traditional areas such as law, medicine, or—my personal *bête noire*—investment banking.

When President Drew Faust commissioned a special task force to explore the role of the arts at Harvard, my fellow graduates in creative fields responded with enthusiasm. Perhaps this signaled a sea change, a shakeup in the status quo—maybe Harvard finally cared! Though the recommendations of the task force were comprehensive and commendable, the timing of its report, released in late 2008, could not have been worse. As the world economy crumbled, it became apparent that many of the hoped-for changes would be long delayed at best, or—more likely—ignored or forgotten amid the financial turmoil.

But I remain hopeful. I believe that Harvard will continue to expand curricular programs in the arts and media, and that it will ultimately rise to the challenge of elevating and integrating this important domain with other academic priorities. In doing so, Harvard should not lose sight of the infrastructure that already exists to foster the development of gifted student artists (as well as future arts patrons).

The freedom and richness of student art-making, powered by the Office for the Arts, allow for the kind of exploration and risk-taking that beget meaningful work and enable personal growth.

Art is not a diversion, but rather an essential expression of the human condi-

tion, and its significance will only grow as our world becomes increasingly interconnected and rich in media. To remain part of the global conversation, Harvard needs to ensure that its facilities, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and career services in the arts meet the high standards set by 375 years of excellence. My hope for the next 25 years is that Harvard will find a way to commit the necessary energy, effort, and resources to support this core part of the University experience.

Mia Riverton '99 is an actor, writer, producer, and musician based in Los Angeles. She is a founder and president of the University-recognized Shared Interest Group Harvardwood, a nonprofit organization for Harvardians in the arts, media, and entertainment, as well as a founding member of the Harvard Arts Resource Council.

“Even Higher” Education

by ROSABETH MOSS KANTER

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BETWEEN 2011 AND 2036, Harvard’s river-spanning campus in Cambridge and Allston became a magnet for mature professionals. It offered a unique advantage not available online: access to idea exchange and connections across the whole University, including multigenerational dialogue and interdisciplinary, problem-solving education. Harvard was known as a pioneer in later-stage education.

On a typical day in 2036, undergraduates mingled with former CEOs, financiers, military generals, attorneys general, medical leaders, and all the others enrolled as fellows in the Advanced Leadership Institute. Prior to this innovation, lifelong learning had been much discussed but rarely implemented at Harvard. There were mid-career programs; short executive-education programs at many schools; and ad hoc opportunities for a few late-learners to enroll in degree programs. Most of these efforts were extensions of professional education. For people finishing their careers, Harvard offered some informal peer-learning activities with no particular focus. But no program offered access to the entire Harvard course catalog, or prepared those later in life to take their experience to a new realm and tackle the problems of society. The Advanced Leadership Initiative, which had started with its first cohort in 2009, was an effort to fill the void by drawing on collaborations among faculty from all of Harvard’s schools.

The fellows came to campus to create projects to ensure public goods such as sufficient global supplies of high-quality education, healthcare access, and economic opportunity. The undergraduates brought fresh ideas that combined with their elders’ wisdom-from-experience, with help from faculty experts.

Gaining credentials in advanced leadership had become an increasing obligation for those who reached the pinnacle of their professions. Starting in 2005, Harvard faculty across the professional schools had promoted the idea that accomplished leaders would define their legacies by the difference they made in the world *after completing* their main careers, through a bold project, in collaboration with faculty and students (some of whom might be their own grandchildren)—making the transition from good leader to advanced leader through one or two years of study. The fellows would come to Harvard as learners and mentors, ready to absorb and use the latest knowledge, sometimes returning



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