New/Renewing Member Orientation

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The Harvard Alumni Association provides the following mission statement in its Club Officer Handbook:

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<th>The common purpose of Harvard Clubs is to advance the mutual welfare of Harvard University and its alumni by:</th>
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<td>• Providing opportunities for alumni, parents of students, and friends of Harvard University to meet and to serve as advocates, articulating the role and direction of the University;</td>
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<td>• Promoting and elevating the stature of the University within the community through club programming;</td>
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<td>• Providing opportunities for alumni to remain connected to the University and to serve the University;</td>
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<td>• Encouraging life-long learning, intellectual enrichment, professional growth, and social interaction through forums of continuing education and development; and</td>
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<td>• Attracting the world’s most talented individuals to Harvard University.</td>
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It is important to emphasize that a club leader’s role is to serve Harvard.

Beginning in 2018, the Club has been ramping up events and activities to meet a greater diversity of interests, to address the interests of alumni from all schools (not just the College), to connect with the larger community, and to expand engagement across the state. Please review the following, presented in no particular order, and let us know if you have ideas and suggestions.

**Club Events and Activities**

The following entries are current as of the date above, but are subject to change. The best place to track current activities is on the Club’s Upcoming Events page: [http://hcbirmingham.clubs.harvard.edu/events.html](http://hcbirmingham.clubs.harvard.edu/events.html). Partners/spouses are always invited.

Certain events are open to the non-Harvard community on a space-available basis, particularly if the event offers an educational opportunity that would also benefit outside participants. This is one way we contribute to the community.

We are always interested in new speakers. If you would like to volunteer or nominate, please let me know, johnrwhitman@mac.com. We would also welcome organizers outside of Birmingham who wish to lead events in their areas. Please share your ideas with me.
Annual Luncheon (Birmingham)

Usually held in December, this event offers a great opportunity for everyone to come together to celebrate the year. We feature a speaker and aim to allow ample time for conversations. This is a ticketed event, priced to break even on costs.

E.O. Wilson Distinguished Lecture Series (Birmingham)

Rowena Frazer initiated this event in 2009 to celebrate leadership in Alabama, starting with Professor E.O. Wilson, for whom the series in names. You can find a list of honorees for each year here: http://hcbirmingham.clubs.harvard.edu/article.html?aid=151. This event usually involves a dinner and presentation by or interview with the honoree. This is a ticketed event priced to break even.

Interviewing (statewide)

Few of our events come close to offering the satisfaction of interviewing high school students aspiring to attend Harvard College. To sign up, please email our President, Will Wright, william.wright@gmail.com.

Harvard Prize Book (statewide)

The Harvard Prize Book is a way to raise awareness of Harvard among talented students. Each Club is encouraged to donate one book per year to be awarded to an exceptional student at the end of 11th grade. The selection of the student is entirely up to the school. We view this as an opportunity to reach out to students through schools throughout the state, particularly in rural areas. Our approach is to invite alumni to sponsor one or more books designated to schools of their choice. In 2019, thanks to the generosity of our alumni, we donated 17 books, far more than in any prior year, and far more than any other Ivy League school, to our knowledge.

Lunch and Learn (Birmingham)

This noontime event, 12:00 to 1:30 PM on the fourth Friday of every month is an opportunity for us to get together for fellowship, with or without a speaker. Bring your own lunch or pick one up at the cafeteria at Protective Life in Birmingham.

Harvard Health Rounds (Birmingham)

This after work event, 5:15 to 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday of every month includes a speaker who addresses a health-related opportunity for innovation and entrepreneurship, followed by discussion among a wide range of healthcare practitioners, researchers, faculty, students, investors, and others.

All Ivy Toasts (Birmingham)

The presidents of eight Ivy Clubs based in Birmingham have agreed in principle to share engagement in events, where possible. The flagship event that brings everyone together is what we call All Ivy Toasts, currently coordinated by our brother Paul Blutter of Columbia. These
events are held quarterly at The Wine Loft in Birmingham and are a great opportunity to network with peers and just have a good time. (Answer: Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, Princeton, Yale.)

**Nonprofit Concierge (Birmingham)**

As an outgrowth of our current efforts to help build capacity in the nonprofit community, I volunteer to field questions from the public on nonprofit organizations and management from 10 AM to noon every Thursday at the Birmingham Public Library. The Club enjoys wide publicity from this effort.

**Nonprofit Management Accelerator Classes (Birmingham)**

Related to the above, I also offer free, one-hour presentations on topics dealing with nonprofit management at the Birmingham Public Library. These events are typically very well attended (breaking previous records), indicating a popular interest in the work of nonprofits in this community. The Club receives wide publicity from this effort.

**Deep Dives (statewide)**

Continuing the theme of nonprofit capacity, we select nonprofit organizations doing significant work and arrange to conduct a tour of their facilities ending with a discussion with the CEO about challenges and needs.

**Cultural Events (Birmingham)**

Under the leadership of our Chair of Cultural Events, we select interesting and educational opportunities to tour art museums, listen to music, attend theater, and more, including arranging for online course discussions, book discussion groups, and potluck wine and food gatherings.

**Popup Walks (statewide)**

We maintain an opt-in email list of those who wish to be notified of spontaneous opportunities to walk/hike anywhere in the state. Anyone on the list can announce an outing to others on the list anywhere in the state. To date we have had walks at Red Mountain and Oak Mountain State Park. To jump on the list, send me an email.

**Community Volunteering (statewide)**

Volunteering in your local nonprofits is an excellent way to do good and indicate that Harvard encourages such engagement. We currently have volunteer roles at the Public Library of Birmingham and the Community Food Bank of Central Alabama. If you choose to volunteer as a Harvard alumna/us, please send us your hours for the year and an imputed market value of your time, and we will indicate the financial value of your volunteer effort as part of the Harvard Club’s contribution to the community. For regular voluntary work, use the Independent Sector’s value of a volunteer hour: https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt_details/. For professional work, use the average hourly compensation for the occupational equivalent calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for your area, e.g.: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_13820.htm.
Club Regional Representatives

The Club may select willing volunteer representatives from areas around the state that have a density of eight or more alumni living in the region. Outside of Birmingham, these regions currently include: Anniston, Auburn, Dothan, Florence, Gadsden, Huntsville, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa. Club Regional Reps undertake the following activities:

- Coordinate the annual student interviewing process.
- Organize regional events to include Harvard or All Ivy alumni.
- Notify the Chair of Harvard Engagement and Community Service of fellowship, internship, and job opportunities that should be posted at Harvard.
- Act as a regional point of contact for the Club for alumni, interviewers, students, employers, and others interested in Harvard and the Club’s work.
- Suggest ways for regional alumni to be connected to the Club, its mission, and its activities.

If you are interested in such a role, particularly in the largest regions of Huntsville, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa, please let me know, johnrwhitman@mac.com.

Regional Reps appear on the Club Officer’s page of our website: http://hcbirmingham.clubs.harvard.edu/officers.html. To engage regionally, contact the Rep closest to you.

Communications

All alumni have the opportunity to opt in or out of communications from the Club (the “unsubscribe” link at the bottom of every newsletter ends your torment). But it might be worth hanging in there, just to what we’re up to.

Newsletters

Our weekly (mostly) announcement of immediately forthcoming events to jog your memory in case you might want to sign up. We try to send these out Monday mornings.

VIA: Veritas in Alabama

Our specialized, monthly newsletter with, shall we say, literary works that alumni want to share with each other. This is one way we can invite and engage everyone throughout the state to have an active role in our Club through this ongoing, evolving literary discourse on whatever interests them. It’s also a great way for those far from Birmingham to share what is happening in their part of Alabama. And yes, students in Cambridge are also encouraged to submit their works to share through VIA. There should be a link to download the VIA guidelines in every newsletter.
**Member Directory**

If you are a current, dues paying member of our Club, you will have the option to appear (or not) every time we publish a Member Directory newsletter, currently about every six months. This is a great way to salute our supporting members and also to indicate by omission the need to step up and support our mission. We are a very small Club in a state with very big needs. Our aim is to engage the Club in ways that can raise awareness of the great opportunities here. Membership numbers are a strong indicator of support for this aim.

**Annual Alumni Survey**

How can we expect to hear from you if we don’t ask? Our annual survey of all alumni who have opted in to our newsletters is how we get collective feedback. Please consider it part of your mutual membership obligation to take the 10-15 minutes to respond. We try not to ask questions that we can’t do anything about, so this is a way for your voice to have an impact. Thank you!

**Get Involved**

All of our efforts are entirely voluntary, undertaken by alumni who are intrinsically motivated to pursue these activities. And being involved, while it can be a lot of work, can also be really fun and rewarding. Because it is expected that individual interests may vary, time available may fluctuate, and for other reasons, the types and nature of events can change, depending on the volunteer leading the charge. But all events are subject to the approval of the sitting board.

To see the current list of officers and their email addresses, please go to: [http://hc-birmingham.clubs.harvard.edu/officers.html](http://hc-birmingham.clubs.harvard.edu/officers.html).

**Assist a current officer**

**Cultural Events**

If you have ideas for cultural events or would like to help organize them, please contact our Chair of Cultural Events.

**Speaking**

If you are engaged in some exciting work or play, we’d probably like to hear about it. Please contact our Chair of Membership and Events.

**Posting jobs**

If your organization has jobs for which a Harvard graduate might qualify, please inform our Chair of Harvard Engagement.

**Posting internships**

If your organization has openings for internships, please inform our Chair of Harvard Engagement.
Organizing new events

If you would like to volunteer to lead new events, please contact our Chair of Membership and Events.

Managing Harvard Prize Book

If you would like to manage the annual Prize Book, please contact our Chair of Membership and Events.

Interviewing

If you would like to interview students, and we hope you do, please contact our President.

Maintaining web site

If you would like to help maintain our web site, please contact our Chair of Membership and Events.

Fund-raising

If you would like to help us raise outside funding for our mission, please contact our President.

That’s it for now. We are delighted that you are on the Harvard Club of Birmingham team!