

Payal Loungani ALB '05

Why I Wish to Serve:

In case you haven't noticed, big changes have occurred with our special and beloved Harvard Extension School over the last 5-10 years: a new dawn and Dean have arrived, student and alumni activity has exploded, and thus, with our newly engaged base, these truisms surface: we are more connected, we feel energized by this, and there is no looking back.

My Leadership Experience as Harvard Student, Alumni and Professional:

While serving over the years on the student association (HESA), the alumni association (HEAA) and the University-wide Harvard Alumni Association Board of Directors with numerous esteemed comrades across all Harvard, I stand a veteran and happy witness to these changes: helping bring about catapulted growth and transformation to our student and alumni experiences. HESA and HEAA have morphed beyond our wildest dreams to become the networks and platforms aiding engagement and camaraderie, which many of us felt lacking as members of a non-traditional, evening study program. Well, no more.

My Vision and Goals:

As engaged and energized members of the Harvard Extension and Harvard-wide alumni networks, it means we have lifelong access to peers like ourselves (intellectually-curious, civic-minded and empathically-engaged in our respective communities), friends and professional contacts in every industry the world over. It means we have a chance to, without exaggeration, change the world and leave it better than we came to it.

With your overwhelming approval of the amended HEAA Constitution and Board structure enabling more of us to get involved, and with his commitment to growing alumni engagement, Dean Hunt Lambert's vision and leadership has created an opportunity like never before to seal this plan for providing great, collective alumni experiences and render them as the new norm.

To take alumni engagement to new heights at the Harvard Extension School, I plan to partner and work closely alongside the Dean's Office and you, my peers: to push boundaries in programming, engagement and collaboration, to highlight the work of our world-class faculty, students and alumni worldwide, to push to new territories and leave the HEAA more robust than ever, whereby none of us will again feel like Harvard's 'extension', but rather proudly *center and square* within Harvard.

Student Life:

Service with Harvard Extension Student Association (HESA), and other cross-school activities provided me access to the best professors and the most active and welcoming peers. Experiences I shared with affiliates at other Harvard schools help highlight commonalities of academic rigor and achievement ubiquitous at the Harvard Extension School, and aid in cross-school outreach as needed.

- Research & Faculty Assistant: Harvard Kennedy School of Government (KSG), Harvard Business School (HBS) - National Bureau of Economics Research (NBER), Wellesley College. 2003-2005.
- Participant and scholarship recipient, Harvard Summer Study Abroad, Portugal. 2004.
- Campus Representative of Books for Africa (Better World Books), in conjunction with Harvard Extension Student Association (HESA). 2004-2005.

Alumni Life:

Various leadership positions on Harvard and outside boards gives me experience, insight, vision and goodwill to push forward the continuing work of the Harvard Extension Alumni Association (HEAA): promoting and increasing alumni engagement, while at the same time, helping to identify and foster the future leaders of the Association.

- Director, Harvard Alumni Association (HAA), Board of Directors, representing Harvard Extension School and its alumni. Committees served: University-wide Alumni Outreach and Continuing Education. I helped catalyzed a number of cross-school, continuing education events and projects. 2010-2013.
- Organized and participated in a number of Harvard alumni events in UK, Myanmar and Bhutan. Organized the first ever Harvard Global Networking Night (GNN), Thimphu. 2013-2014.
- Director of Alumni Reunions & Co-Chair of Alumni Weekend, Harvard Extension Alumni Association (HEAA). 2015-present.
- Member, Governance Committee, Harvard Extension Alumni Association (HEAA). 2015-present.

Professional Life:

Please see <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ploungani/>