

Harvard Alumni for Global Action Newsletter

(formerly Harvard Alumni for Social Action)

Volume #1, Summer 2009

Welcome to our first newsletter!

For those of you who joined more than a year ago, the biggest news is our **name change**. After much discussion, we decided to become “**Harvard Alumni for Global Action**” (HAGA). The main reasons for the change were: (1) to avoid confusion with the Harvard African Students Association (HASA); (2) to reflect our mission more accurately, which is to convince Harvard to become a better global citizen; and (3) to appeal to a broader group of alumni. You can still find us at <http://www.hasa-sasa.org>. We are also at <http://www.haga-now.org>.

In this newsletter, you will read about **our first intern**, David Tao ‘11, who has been doggedly pursuing the Harvard administration and building up our alumni databases. You will also see a letter from GSAS Dean Allan Brandt about our first HAGA scholarship recipient, Karrell Pelle. We are pleased to have our **first HAGA member of the Harvard Alumni Association Directors**, Liz Ryan ‘81.

Through HAGA’s Africa Institution-building Fund, we have set up and expanded a **state-of-the-art student computing center** at Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE) in Tanzania.

However, we still haven’t convinced Harvard to allow alumni to make “alternate class gifts” to directly benefit a poor university in Africa with which Harvard already has academic collaborations. We still haven’t been able to reach many alumni, in part because Harvard hasn’t (yet) approved our request to become a Shared Interest Group. We also need to build up our two funds.

So please don’t forget about HAGA in your donations--either through Harvard directly for the African scholarship fund, or via HAGA’s own institution-building fund. And try to convince any other Harvard alumni you know to sign up at our website...numbers matter!

As always, it would be wonderful to hear from you about what could be done to make HAGA a more effective organization.

With best wishes,

Paula Tavrow ‘81, HAGA Chair

ptavrow@yahoo.com

Andy Pugh ‘81, HAGA Vice Chair

pugh.andy@gmail.com



Announcing the First HAGA Fellow

Congratulations to Karell Pelle, the 2008-9 HAGA Fellow!

*Karell is the first student to benefit from the
HAGA Scholarship Fund.*

*To learn more about Karell, see letter from
GSAS Dean Allan Brandt, page 5*

Update: DUCE

With HAGA's help, Tanzania's Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE) has a state-of-the-art computer center

An important part of HAGA's work is to convince Harvard to appreciate the importance of developing a real "sister" relationship with African institutions with which it has academic collaborations. Towards that end, HAGA inaugurated the HAGA African University Strengthening Fund, which we hope will eventually be administered by Harvard.

DUCE—the first beneficiary of HAGA's African University Strengthening Fund—was founded in 2005 as a constituent college of the University of Tanzania. The school's goal is to address the country's severe shortage of high school teachers and experts in the education sector. This shortage is most acute in the areas of science, mathematics, and language education. DUCE is helping to alleviate this shortage by providing quality education training to a new generation of Tanzanian teachers and educators. (More information on DUCE can be found at <http://duce.ac.tz/>). But, like most institutions of higher education in Africa, DUCE is seriously under-funded.

Alumni contributions to the HAGA University Strengthening Fund have permitted DUCE to introduce a state-of-the-art computer center to its growing student body, young teachers who will soon be at the forefront of Tanzania's high school instruction and administration. This center offers computer courses and connects DUCE students with reliable Internet services. Using HAGA funds, DUCE also purchased new computing hardware, including a student server and workstations that act as Internet portals and vital teaching equipment. More recently, DUCE bought a new LCD projector for the lab to aid in course instruction.

In 2009-10, DUCE will be expanding its technological capabilities. With HAGA's assistance, DUCE intends to install new back-up servers and create the redundancies necessary for a reliable technological infrastructure. DUCE will also be hiring a new computer lab technician to manage the site and extend the operating hours so that more students can benefit from the facility. Greg Estey '81—who spearheads HAGA's work in Africa—is working with Frank Philip of DUCE to set up an online group to provide extended support to students enrolled in courses that use the new computing center. This group could provide a method for HAGA members to provide nonmonetary support to this initiative. Greg would love to hear from anyone interested in this idea. Please email him at greg_estey@post.harvard.edu.

HAGA Member Elected to Harvard Alumni Association

Liz Ryan '81 cites HAGA as an example of positive alumni networking.

Liz Ryan is no stranger to networking. Years into a successful directing and producing career, she is a member of the Screen Actors Guild, Women in Film, and the Association for Women Directors. She's been awarded the prestigious Frank Capra Award for career achievement in the entertainment industry. Yet when it comes to continued involvement at her alma mater, HAGA is one group she's quick to recognize for its strong message and success in connecting alums. Liz has been a member of HAGA since its beginnings as HASA, and helped plan the 2006 reunion events that sparked the organization's initial growth.

"The esprit de corps that we shared [through HAGA] is one I'd hope to encourage among alumni everywhere," said Ryan, who was recently elected to the Harvard Alumni Association Directors by her peers. Congratulations from HAGA, Liz! We look forward to working with you to bring ideas for good global citizenship before the alumni audience



2009 Summer Reunion Events

HAGA hosted two social events at Grafton Street Pub during this summer's Reunion Weekend. If you're planning on being in Cambridge for next year's Reunion Week (2010) and would like to help plan HAGA events, please contact HAGA Intern David Tao (davidtao@fas.harvard.edu).

HAGA Reaches Out to Newest Alumni

A new generation of HAGA members emerges as 43 graduating seniors sign on.

Alumni organizations normally consist largely of graying members of various classes. However, all that changed at a Currier House luncheon this past June 4th, one day before Commencement and Graduation ceremonies. Armed with nothing more than some HAGA information sheets, Intern David Tao was able to recruit 43 (more than half of those in attendance) members to the class of 2009..

Recent graduates may have little to offer financially, yet their involvement is valuable to HAGA. By connecting with recent graduates, HAGA is better able to understand the current situation at Harvard and to tailor our advocacy more appropriately. And knowing that these alumni will be asked for donations from Harvard for the next sixty years, why not get them on board while they are young? Encouraging Harvard to be a better global citizen can be done with even a \$10 donation.

If you're interested in becoming involved with this new recruiting effort of recent Harvard graduates (in the past five years), please email HAGA Intern David Tao (davidtao@fas.harvard.edu).

The 2009 HAGA Summer Intern

A note from David Tao '11

Greetings! For those of you I've already met over the past few weeks, hello once again, and my apologies for the constant stream of emails! For anyone I haven't met yet, let me say that it's a pleasure working for HAGA, and I hope to get to know many more of you this summer.

A bit about me: I'm originally from Bardstown, Kentucky, am a rising junior living in Quincy House, and I concentrate in Social Studies. I play tighthead prop for the Harvard Rugby Football Club, am on the executive board of the Harvard Advocate, and act as a liaison for the Institute of Politics. Like I am sure can be said for many of you, my Harvard experience is busy and fulfilling.

While searching for summer opportunities in the nonprofit sector, I stumbled upon the HAGA internship. After speaking with Gab Lesser '81 over the phone, I knew without a doubt what I wanted to do with my summer. When HAGA Chair Paula Tavrow '81 called later to offer me the job, I couldn't yell "I accept!" fast enough. I have since learned that the internship was made possible with a generous donation from Ruth Milkman '81.

What makes this internship most rewarding is the knowledge that I'm working in support of a cause in which I personally believe. Researching Harvard's few existing African initiatives only serve to highlight how far the University has to go in order to truly become a global institution. Indeed, our tiny friend Amherst College—with an endowment less than one-seventeenth the size of Harvard's—boasts an African student population that comprises 25% of its international student body (as compared to Harvard's 2-4%).

Clearly, progress is being made and HAGA continues to grow. With your help, it will only be a matter of time before Harvard becomes a global citizen and starts building real capacity among African scholars and institutions.



HAGA intern David Tao and HAGA's first member from a 1940's graduating class, Helen Martin Raisz '48

Keeping Up with the Times

HAGA expands its reach in the world of social networking.

In a world where social networking utilities like Friendster and Myspace seem to hit the recycling bin almost as quickly as they rose to prominence, it's difficult to keep pace with all the forms of digital communication. So HAGA has decided to have a multiple presence. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, Google and Yahoo Groups, and LinkedIn..

As many of you may be aware, Twitter allows members to chronicle what's going on real time (search Harvard-HAGA on Twitter). The site—a relative newcomer to the world of social networking—features daily “Tweets” of 140 characters or less detailing anything relevant to HAGA members.

HAGA also has a LinkedIn page (again, search “Harvard Alumni for Global Action”). With a growing number of employers and professionals using online tools to get connected in their fields, LinkedIn is a way to reach Harvard alums who might otherwise remain unaware of HAGA.

Of course, there's also HAGA's official website, now listed at a new, easy-to-remember URL (www.haga-now.org). Whichever way you choose, it is simple to stay current and participate in HAGA with only the click of a mouse!

Two HAGA funds need your donations:

To support the HAGA Scholarship Fund:

1. Make an online donation to Harvard for HAGA!

Visit http://post.harvard.edu/harvard/devel/html/jgifts_intro.html and fill out the “Gift Details” section as follows:

- a. For “School” select “Faculty of Arts and Sciences.”
- b. For “Fund within that school” select “Harvard College Fund: Financial Aid/Scholarship.”
- c. In the “Additional Information” box, type “HAGA Fund.”

2. Send a check to Harvard for HAGA!

Write “HAGA Fund” in the memo line of your check and mail to:
Griffin R. Lamb, Associate Director, Harvard College Fund
124 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

3. Redesignate a previous donation to HAGA!

If you have already made a contribution to Harvard this year, you can email Griffin Lamb (Griffin_Lamb@Harvard.edu) and ask her to redesignate all or part of your contribution to the HAGA Fund.

To support the African University Strengthening Fund:

1. Make US\$ checks out to Human Rights Education Associates.
2. Write “HAGA Fund” in the memo line.
3. Mail to:

Human Rights Education Associates
97 Lowell Road
Concord, MA 01742



The GRADUATE SCHOOL of ARTS AND SCIENCES

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

June 17, 2009

Dear Members of Harvard Alumni for Global Action (HAGA):

As dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), I am very pleased to write with this inaugural report on the HAGA Fund to Support Graduate Students from Africa. For the 2008–2009 academic year, **Karell Pellé** benefited from the fund.

Karell is a citizen of Cameroon, but grew up primarily in Kenya. After graduating with distinction from secondary school in Nairobi, she came to the U.S. to attend Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, where she earned a BS summa cum laude in biology. During her senior year, she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and received the Global Awareness University Award and the Faculty Award for Outstanding Achievement in Biology. Among her myriad activities and leadership positions, Karell was president of the American International Association, a volunteer with the Springfield Alzheimer's Association, and a member of Concerned Black Students. She also held a summer internship at the Institute for Genomic Research in Rockville, Maryland, where she worked on developing a vaccine for East Coast fever in cattle.

At Harvard, Karell is a second-year PhD candidate in the Program in Biological Sciences and Public Health (BPH). A truly interdisciplinary program, BPH combines faculty and resources from the GSAS, Harvard Medical School, and the Harvard School of Public Health to train research scientists in areas related to disease prevention and treatment. Karell's interest in this field grew out of her experiences growing up in Africa. "I was fortunate to develop a strong curiosity for the interconnection between poverty, infectious diseases, and development in Africa," she says. "I was convinced from a young age that with advancements in scientific research we can generate better quality of health in populations afflicted by disease."

Karell's program enables her to study not only the biology of pathogens and host-pathogen interactions but also the disease manifestation of the pathogen in the human host in order to better design prevention strategies and therapeutics. "With access to the School of Public Health, I also benefit from classes in the epidemiology, biostatistics, and global health departments and from daily interactions with students who may have different perspectives on disease impact, prevention, and control. HSPH provides a great interdisciplinary environment in biological sciences and public health, which in my opinion is needed to combat diseases that have grave public health impact."

After completing her PhD, Karell says she will continue her training as a post-doc in an infectious disease laboratory. Then she plans to return to Africa, where she will seek a research position that facilitates her involvement in public health policy-making.

By establishing the HAGA Fund, you and your fellow alumni have enabled the Graduate School to make a crucial step forward in strengthening the bridge between this university and Africa. Not only will talented students like Karell benefit immensely from your generosity, but so will the entire academic community here at Harvard. On behalf of the faculty and students at the GSAS, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Allan M. Brandt
Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Amalie Moses Kass Professor of the History of Medicine