



Harvard College Democrats Alumni Newsletter

Summer 2010

President's Message

As President of the Harvard College Democrats, it is my sincere pleasure to introduce the inaugural issue of our alumni newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is very simple: we want to keep former members of our organization informed of our activities so as to foster a sense of community that extends beyond Harvard's campus. Hopefully, the Harvard College Democrats were a significant part of your undergraduate experience; our goal is to continue to be relevant to you as an alumna/alumnus.

I cannot stress enough how important the alumni community is to our overarching mission. The purpose of the Harvard College Democrats is to provide a forum in which progressive-minded students can interact with each other and the leaders of their party. In a sense, you are these leaders. No matter what field or industry you have entered since your time at Harvard, you belong to a generation of progressives that are having an impact on all sectors of society. From your positions of leadership, you have the benefit of wisdom and experience, judgment and practical knowledge. Whereas we have ample opportunity to talk about the issues as students, you have the chance to experience them firsthand. There's just so much we can learn from you.

In return for your support and guidance, we hope to become the means by which you reconnect with your activist roots. The Harvard College Democrats have always had a tremendous effect on progressive politics, and we don't plan to stop any time soon. From canvassing efforts in battleground states to local rallies against Don't Ask, Don't Tell, we are constantly looking for new ways to bring out the best of who we are and what we believe in as an organization. In the coming weeks and months, we will continue to fight for a progressive agenda both on this campus and across this nation. Hopefully you'll join us.

Again, it is with much excitement that I introduce to you our new alumni newsletter – the first step in a much larger effort to strengthen the ties between past and present members of this organization. As progressives, we believe in change. Increasing the involvement of our alumni is one change this organization desperately needs.

Here's to the start of a new and exciting conversation!

Most Sincerely,
Jason Berkenfeld
President, Harvard College Democrats

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Donate

The Harvard College Democrats rely on your generosity to fund our campaign activities that support Democratic candidates throughout New England. It costs \$500 to send a bus of 50 students to New Hampshire for a day of campaigning, and any donation you make supports both youth activism and the progressive agenda. Please donate today! Please note that donations to the Harvard College Democrats are not tax deductible.

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Other Highlights

Newly-created ServCorps participates in campus weatherization

In February, the Dems created a new service initiative named ServCorps to connect members with relevant public service opportunities in Cambridge. Throughout the spring, ServCorps has been active in a variety of initiatives, including a weatherization sponsored by the Environmental Action Committee to reduce the heating and cooling costs of the Phillips Brooks House.

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2010 Campaign Plans

In the fall of 2008, with the election quickly approaching, the Dems took to the streets and interstates, traveling to New Hampshire each weekend to campaign for Barack Obama, in addition to Senate and House candidates. We contacted over 32,000 voters in key swing states, canvassing from September to Election Day. We may have slept in churches and on floors, crammed into school buses, and dialed more strangers than ever before, but as any member will tell you, it was an experience we wouldn't have missed for the world — the victory we enjoyed election night was merely icing on the cake!

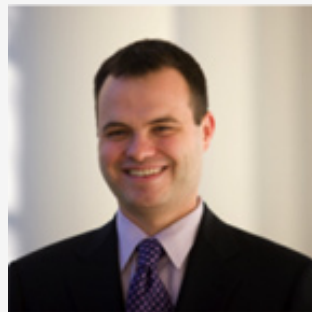


We are now actively preparing for 2010, looking for competitive congressional races across the country, in addition to the exciting Senate and House races in New Hampshire. Paul Hodes' bid to replace retiring Republican Senator Judd Gregg's seat promises to be one of the best opportunities for Democrats to pick

up a Senate seat in 2010 and both of the Granite State's House races top the list of potential Republican pick-ups. Here in Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick will face a challenging race in the fall, which will no doubt garner significant national attention, as Governor Patrick is frequently compared to President Obama. Both New Hampshire and Massachusetts are set to be key battlegrounds in the 2010 election – and the Dems plan to be on the front lines, in these and other races around the country. [Read More »](#)

A discussion with former Dems President Eric Lesser

Earlier this year, member-at-large Jeremy Patashnik spoke with former Dems President Eric Lesser about his time at Harvard, memories of the Dems, and lessons learned from the '08 Obama Campaign. Since graduating in 2007, Eric has gone on to **progressively bigger and better** things, and he now serves in the White House as the Special Assistant to Senior Adviser David Axelrod. Eric shared his thoughts for the alumni newsletter.



JP: What was your favorite/most meaningful memory from your time with the Harvard Dems?

EL: Putting together our campus organizing plan for the 2006 midterm elections. We had several terrific candidates we were helping, including Deval Patrick in Massachusetts, Sheldon Whitehouse in Rhode Island, and Paul Hodes in New Hampshire. By the fall we had several hundred students taking trips out to knock on doors, register voters and generate enthusiasm. It was an inspiring election because it showed how much the country wanted change, and was a precursor to the even wider enthusiasm of 2008.

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Other Highlights

Progressive Soiree brings together community of Democrats

In line with a tradition the Dems have maintained for the past few winters, last March's Progressive Soiree brought together Harvard's Democratic students for an evening of liberalism and camaraderie. Aimed at fostering a larger progressive community on campus, the Dems invited members of other like-minded organizations to Kirkland Junior Common Room for mingling and merriment.

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Member-at-large becomes Burgerman to benefit Citizen Schools

Our members are known for pushing the envelope to support the causes they are passionate about. Sam Novey, the former Communications Director of the Dems, is a prime example. In order to raise \$100,000 for Citizen-Schools, Sam ran the Boston Marathon wearing a larger-than-life burger suit. [Read More »](#)



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