



Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship 2023-2024 Annual Report

About the Center

The Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship is the hub that supports all public service efforts at Harvard College. We offer curricular and cocurricular programs to prepare Harvard College students with the knowledge and tools needed to meet the challenges facing our society. Through academic coursework, leadership development, volunteerism, community activism, and pre-professional experiences, the Center offers numerous pathways for students to engage in public service. We work with a wide range of partners to ensure that programs address critical community needs. The department oversees a number of collaborative public service efforts where Harvard students can make important contributions to social welfare and develop a strong sense of public purpose. Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) is our oldest and largest program. Other signature programming includes the Public Interested Conference, the Global Day of Service, Public Service Recruiting Day, the Scholarship and Social Justice Conference, and SPARK.

For more information, visit <https://publicservice.fas.harvard.edu>.

Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA)

PBHA is the largest student-run, community-based, staff-supported nonprofit public service organization affiliated with Harvard College.

Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship

The Mindich Program offers 40+ community engaged courses in departments throughout FAS and sponsored research opportunities for undergraduates.

Student Engagement and Leadership

The Student Engagement and Leadership team supports student development and high-impact practices by advising more than 70 student organizations on campus.

Pathways to Practice

The Pathways to Practice team supports over 350 Harvard College students through summer, winter break, and post-graduate work experiences.

Welcome from the Center



Dr. Julie Reuben serves as Faculty Director of the Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship. Please don't hesitate to contact our team at publicservice@fas.harvard.edu with your questions or ideas.

Inspiring and supporting civic engagement is our core purpose. Through coursework, volunteerism, community activism and pre-professional experiences, we continue to discover new ways for students to learn about and impact the world outside of Harvard's gates.

This past year, we were able to advance this mission in significant ways. In partnership with the Office of Undergraduate Education, we launched the Harvard College Certificate for Civic Engagement. Students who integrate academic work, civic engagement and reflection will be recognized with this honor on their transcripts. We are excited by the Certificate's potential to inspire the development of new courses, build community, and equip students with knowledge and skills essential for effective civic engagement throughout their lives.

When possible, we strive to develop partnerships with other Harvard programs to create more high impact opportunities for our students. Collaboration with the Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability allowed us to offer a climate-focused Fellows at the Forefront cohort for the fourth consecutive year. Students at the forefront of climate research and practice met each week to share their learnings at the direction of Professor Jason Beckfield. A partnership with the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies supported students working on full-time public service projects in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico.

In addition, we partnered with the Institute of Politics and Bloomberg City Leadership Initiative enabled Harvard College students to work in tandem with post-graduate fellows from Harvard Kennedy School to strengthen government services. These opportunities were offered through the new Stad Fellowship program, which provides opportunities for students to intern with elected officials. In just its second summer, we expanded the Stad Fellowship to full scale, supporting 40 students in working with elected officials across the United States.

Two new storytelling platforms allow us to share essential stories of impact. As part of its 120th anniversary, PBHA will be sharing 120 stories of alumni, community participants, volunteers, and program directors as they reflect back on the impact PBHA had on their lives. The Profiles in Leadership series features stories and podcasts of notable Harvard alums and the lessons they have learned about social impact work. All content is developed by a student production team. Speaking of inspiring stories, we had the incredible opportunity to host civil rights activist Ruby Bridges at PBHA's annual Robert Coles Call of Service award during PBHA Alumni Weekend.

Our programs advance Harvard College's mission to educate citizens and citizen-leaders for our society. We strive to help students contribute to the public good while at Harvard and to develop a life-long sense of public purpose.

Highlights from 2023-2024

One of the biggest highlights from this past year was a full circle moment for the Harvard community as PBHA honored civil rights icon Ruby Bridges with the Robert Coles Call of Service award. Coles, a psychologist who would later become a beloved Harvard professor, befriended and supported Bridges as she became the first African American child to integrate public schools in New Orleans. Bridges shared more about her life's work addressing racism by educating children about civil rights and inspiring generational change. In that spirit, Harvard has made several substantial commitments to civic work through deepening academic and professional connections. The Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship (MPES) serves an integral role in leading our department's academic efforts, offering 45 courses during the 2023-2024 school year in 15 departments across all four academic divisions: Arts & Humanities, Science, Social Science, and School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS). In 2023-2024, 892 Harvard College students enrolled in MPES courses. These courses challenge students and faculty to integrate scholarship with community perspectives, knowledge, and expertise to have impact within and beyond the academy. Students learn about communities, organizations, and issues as they learn how to develop evidence-based arguments. MPES courses will also provide a core foundation for the Harvard College Certificate for Civic Engagement program.

Sustaining pathways to public service is critical to our work as Harvard College sponsored 601 students to work full-time on public service projects in Summer 2023. Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) provides summer learning and social engagement to over 700 youth in the Greater Boston area. The Pathways to Practice team sponsored 191 students during summer 2023 including 53 students through the Priscilla Chan Summer Service Award. Additionally, 144 incoming students from the Class of 2027 participated in SPARK, representing 29 states and 25 countries, where they worked on public service projects in their hometowns with ongoing training and support from our team. Over 10 percent of the Class of 2027 applied to be part of the SPARK program.

PBHA had over 900 new student volunteers in Fall 2023 through 60+ programs and continues to adapt programs to meet constituent needs with the Housing Opportunities eviction prevention pilot, the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter Street Team, and 600 students enrolled in online Adult ESL programs. Harvard's fourth annual Global Day of Service continues to be an anchor in the first-year orientation experience and offers a way for the broader Harvard community to support the work of over 75 community partners around the world.

We also organized the 30th annual Phillips Brooks House Holiday Toy and Joy Drive which provided over 700 gifts in support of a dozen local community organizations. Through the Fong Family Winternship Program, 55 students worked on public service projects during winter break in January 2024. Over 30 students kept PBHA's two shelters running during winter break to ensure guests had a warm meal and a safe place to stay. Fellows at the Forefront, our pilot program that connects research and professional development, supported an environmental justice cohort, bringing a dozen students together with scholars and practitioners to advance our work on pressing social issues.

Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA)



PBHA is a student led, staff supported organization that engages 1,300 volunteers year-round through 60 programs ranging from homeless shelters to summer camps that address gaps in opportunities and resources in greater Boston.

Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) made significant strides to re-establish programs during the 2023-2024 academic year, with over 1,300 active volunteers working with 60 community-based programs. Student officers, program directors, staff, and alumni anchored their work around the theme of "Investing in Our Collective Selves." Through this theme, PBHA prioritized community well-being in several ways, helping students to find collective strengths and navigate the tensions they were feeling and observing in their day-to-day work. Through PBHA's work with the Bittenweiser Public Service Academy, over 200 undergraduates participated in a public-service training in Fall 2023. Removing barriers to participation is a core priority for PBHA's strategic work. Applications for the First-Year Chan Stride program doubled, reflecting the urgency students feel in finding financial support.

The Summer Urban Program was composed of 612 campers, 81 Junior Counselors, 19 Junior Counselors-in-Training, and 105 Senior Staff (Directors and Senior Counselors). Ten summer day camps were licensed by Cambridge and Boston. Beyond the camps, PBHA operated two homeless shelters and an English Language Learning program for adult learners. The shelters spent the summer developing new policies and practices to improve guest experience and outcomes. This included developing new systems for case management, introduction of emergency beds, and creating a long-term stay model for shelter guests to provide them with more stability. One highlight was the semesterly Youth Summit in September, in which over 150 new volunteers and directors with PBHA mentoring and tutoring programs convened to build skills for working with young people and prepare to enter these communities responsibly.

September's Youth Summit was the largest in recent history and began with a powerful keynote speech by Ray Porch, the Director of Family and Community Engagement at Cambridge Public Schools, who emphasized the importance of this work for children and families and encouraged volunteers to remain involved in public service and show up consistently for Boston and Cambridge communities throughout college and beyond.

PBHA's Alumni board has focused on work in three key areas: advocacy for PBHA sustainability and support, connecting alumni and to one another and current undergraduates through mentorship and events, and governance and more intentional connection to other Harvard offices. PBHA also recognized Kwame Owusu-Kesse '06 and Ayanna Johnson '93 with the Outstanding Alumni Award in 2023 for their dedication to public service and social justice. As the CEO of Harlem Children's Zone, Kwame spoke about how he saw his own story in the young people with whom he worked in PBHA programs and how he continues to see himself in the youth he mentors and supports at HCZ. Ayanna spoke about how PBHA prepared her for a career as a teacher, school founder, and principal.

From PBHA's recent groundbreaking alumni study which generated responses from over 1,000 alums spanning seven decades of service, there are five key ways that PBHA enhances Harvard College's mission to educate citizens and citizen leaders for our society: 1) PBHA builds the pathways to a lifetime of public purpose through professional and pro bono service; 2) PBHA inspires a commitment to civic engagement through volunteering, philanthropy, organizing, and advocacy; 3) PBHA teaches concrete skills that impact professional success long after graduation; 4) PBHA facilitates a sense of belonging on campus that encourages diverse leadership, especially for first-generation, BIPOC, and low-income students; and 5) PBHA instills empathy and the ability to work with people from a wide range of backgrounds and communities.

For the next five years, PBHA's leadership is focused on three strategic focus areas: accessibility and inclusion, community solidarity and partnership, and fostering a restorative and just organizational culture. 2024 marks PBHA's 120th anniversary and in partnership with PBHA's Board, the PBHA-Alumni Shared Interest Group board, Harvard's Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship, and Harvard Public Affairs and Communications, the team has started planning ways to leverage this anniversary as an opportunity to uplift core goals and build awareness about the organization's great work. The 120th anniversary celebration will generate momentum for support of PBHA among stakeholders over the next 5 years leading up to the 125th milestone year.



Proceeds from the annual Harvard Night at Fenway support **PBHA's Summer Urban Program**. PBHA's team, led by student President **Hiren Lami** (left) and Executive Director **Maria Dominguez Gray** (second from left), work to make transformative experiences possible for over 700 youth every summer. **Dean Rakesh Khurana** (third from left), who has worked to elevate civic work on campus over the past decade, threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the game.

For more information about PBHA's student-led, staff supported programs, visit <https://pbha.org>.



I Am Ruby Bridges
How one six-year-old girl's march to school changed the world
written by Ruby Bridges
illustrated by #1 New York Times

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“Every one of our babies comes into the world with a clean heart and a fresh start in life. It is us adults, we have kept racism alive, and we pass it on to the next generation... that 6-year-old [in me] kept saying, ‘Talk to the 6-year-olds.’ So that’s what I started to do.”

- Ruby Bridges (top center)

Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship



GENED 1057: Poetry Without Borders (see above), one of 45 Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship courses offered in 2023-2024, explores how poetry transcends four kinds of borders - performative, linguistic, geographic, and aesthetic. Students explore poetry outside of the classroom while engaging with communities beyond Harvard.

In 2023-2024, the Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship (MPES) offered 45 courses in fifteen departments across all divisions, as well as courses in the General Education, First Year Seminar, and Expository Writing programs. Nearly 900 unique students enrolled in MPES courses, and more than 100 enrolled in two or more courses during the year.

The MPES was pleased to support course design and implementation for twenty-one new courses in addition to our returning courses. Eleven new faculty members are teaching engaged scholarship courses in AY24-25.

The new Engaged Scholarship Pedagogical Framework was implemented beginning Fall 2023. The framework shows the key characteristics of engaged pedagogies, from Foundational courses that allow students to develop skills in the classroom; to Public Facing courses that extend course concepts through forums for communication with defined publics; and to Community Engaged, immersive courses in which students work with organizations and communities on mutually beneficial projects. The framework has been well-received by faculty who appreciate its clear illustration of the spectrum of course types, which is helpful for identifying how engaged scholarship intersects with disciplinary and curricular priorities. The framework has also facilitated new collaborations with departments such as History and Literature and the First Year Seminar program.

The Engaged Scholarship Faculty Committee has been essential for elevating the profile of the MPES at Harvard and engaging new faculty. Its membership this year reflects the tremendous level of enthusiasm senior faculty have for engaged scholarship, and their dedication to continuing to grow the program.

Other faculty development initiatives included the MPES-Expos Learning Community, a formalized pathway for Expository Writing preceptors to develop engaged scholarship courses through a year-long faculty development and curriculum planning initiative; and the MPES Faculty Pedagogy Learning Community, an informal group open to all. MPES also continues to work closely with the Office of Undergraduate Education, the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, the Harvard Art Museums, and other offices that offer additional pedagogical resources and curriculum development support for faculty.

Student development initiatives included a year-long series of reflection-based events hosted by the MPES Student Advisory Committee. For the first time, MPES staff led a six-week Bok Seminar for graduate students, "Community and Civic Engagement in the Classroom," that introduces graduate students to engaged scholarship, prepares them to become Teaching Fellows or Research Assistants for MPES courses, and brings them into the larger MPES community.

Finally, the MPES team unveiled a [new website](#) for undergraduate students, faculty, and graduate students, as well as updated logos to represent the joyful, organic quality of working in and with community. The MPES [Digital Library](#) and [Canvas](#) sites continue to provide faculty resources and tools to develop new courses and redesign existing courses.

For more information, visit <https://engagedscholarship.fas.harvard.edu/>

Pathways to Practice



U.S. Senator-Elect **Ruben Gallego** '04 (see above) spoke to students about his life in public service at the Stad Fellowship launch program in October 2023.

The Pathways to Practice team developed several transformative collaborations in 2023-2024. Through the endowed fund established by Marc Stad '01 and Elisa Stad, the Pathways to Practice team created the Stad Fellowship program to support 40 summer fellows annually in working with elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels. This program offers a mix of placements developed in collaboration with elected officials along with funding to support student-designed summer projects that best align with their personal and professional goals. The Institute of Politics Director's Internship Program and Bloomberg City Leadership Initiative are core collaborators in building partnerships.

A core priority for the Center is sustaining the SPARK program beyond its five year pilot initiative. SPARK was developed as an immersive six-week public service program where a record-high 143 incoming first-year students from the Class of 2027 developed a public service project at home while receiving funding and ongoing support from Harvard staff, faculty, and student leaders. One core goal for SPARK is to help students find public service pathways while they are at Harvard before they arrive on campus. Sustaining connections between pathways is also critical to our work. Students have the opportunity to pursue short-term internships during winter break through the Fong Family Winternship Program. The Fong Family Winternship program, supported 55 students exploring public interest work during their winter break at social impact organizations around the world in January 2024. These experiences help students to explore career paths and forge relationships with potential employers. The Mindich Service Fellowship program serves as the anchor of the Center's summer community partner portfolio, supporting 75+ community partners each year.

The College's annual Public Service Recruiting Day each October is transitioning into a year-round platform to support graduating seniors seeking out post-graduate pathways to public service. Through a grant from the Johnson Climate Fund, we will be able to co-sponsor a post-graduate fellow from the Classes of 2025 to 2027 to work at Environmental Defense Fund. Harvard has developed a similar relationship with the City of Boston Mayor's office. The Pathways to Practice team is building toward a long-term goal of co-sponsoring 25 outstanding seniors annually working at leading social impact organizations upon graduation.

A core goal for the Center has been to develop international experiences in partnership with Harvard's international centers. Students will be working on social impact projects with community partners in conjunction with the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. This work is being supported by Titi Liu '93 and Eric Rosenblum '93. Students are also being supported through a gift from Lew Auerbach '63 to support summer public service internships across Canada, with a dedicated cohort of students working in Toronto starting in Summer 2025. The Center is able to leverage community partnerships and on-the-ground expertise of Harvard's international centers while providing critical support for public interest career advising and recruiting outstanding students.

For more information, visit <https://publicservice.fas.harvard.edu/pathways>



SPARK is an immersive, paid, six-week public service program for incoming first-year students that deepens community connections between home and Harvard. The SPARK advising team (top left) provides ongoing support to students throughout their project assignments.



The annual **Public Interested Conference** offers several outstanding ways for students and alums to explore public interest careers, make connections, and discuss social issues. Spring 2024 Fellows **Erika Mouynes** (center) and **Grisella Martinez** (right) shared insights about career pathways in government.

Student Engagement and Leadership

The Center's Student Engagement and Leadership programs have played an integral role in enhancing co-curricular programming for students. Staff provide crucial scaffolding for students through the Certificate for Civic Engagement's practicum and capstone experiences. In addition to supporting student leadership development, staff advisors work with approximately 50 student organizations throughout the school year and coordinate several signature programs including the Global Day of Service, the Scholarship and Social Justice Undergraduate Research Conference, StorySlam, and Decisions and Desserts in collaboration with the Safra Center for Ethics.

The Center provides grants to student organizations pursuing community-based work through the President's Public Service Fund, COOP Public Service Grants, and the Harvard College SOCIAL Challenge. The President's Public Service Fund was established in 1984 and supports over 40 student organizations each year. The Harvard College SOCIAL Challenge provided funding to 24 student organizations pursuing collaborative socially impactful projects during the 2023-2024 academic year. The SOCIAL Challenge supports solution-focused service projects, activities that promote social well-being, innovative and scalable social ventures, and community-building activities (including co-sponsoring conferences and workshops). SOCIAL is an acronym for Students Organizing, Catalyzing, Impacting, Advocating, Leading. The goal is to incentivize impactful work and use social media to generate visibility for great ideas. This work has been supported by John Simon '84, co-founder of GreenLight Fund, a national network of experts from the public sector, private sector, and philanthropy working together to scale innovative, results-driven, mission-driven programs for the public good.

Harvard's ninth annual Scholarship and Social Justice Conference celebrated the theme of black ecology - the convergence of environmental and racial justice movements - to uplift historically marginalized communities. Chaired by George Aumoithe, several leading scholars spoke about how their own personal and academic journeys influenced their work in this emerging field. Marcos Luna, a professor of geography and sustainability at Salem State University, served as the conference's keynote speaker and he encouraged student researchers from over 20 colleges to use their problem-solving skills to persevere through setbacks. Luna was forthcoming about some of his own mistakes in hopes that students could learn from his journey. He encouraged students to proactively ask how they can help and to make sure they ask community members what their priorities are.

Storytelling has been an important focus for the Center with the expansion of the StorySlam collaboration with the Office for the Arts at ARTS First and the launch of our Profiles in Leadership series. StorySlam featured several students who spoke about their first-hand experiences with the "good, bad, and ugly" of leading campus initiatives. The Profiles in Leadership series features stories and podcasts of notable Harvard alums and their social impact. A student production team developed over a dozen stories at the direction of Susan Johnson McCabe and Cong Tony Sun.



The **First-Year Urban Program (FUP)** is a student-led pre-orientation program that introduces incoming students to social justice work with community partners in the Greater Boston area.

For more information, visit <https://publicservice.fas.harvard.edu/student-engagement-and-leadership>



Marcos Luna (third from left with the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations team) served as the keynote speaker from the 2024 Scholarship and Social Justice Conference. Luna's scholarship focuses on environmental justice and the analysis of social and environmental inequities.

Certificate for Civic Engagement



Starting with the Class of 2025, students who complete three pre-approved civically-focused courses, a 300 hour practicum, and a capstone reflection series will be eligible to earn a **Certificate for Civic Engagement**.

Harvard College launched the Certificate on Civic Engagement in March 2024 to support and recognize students who integrate academic study with sustained public service. Through the Certificate, students are exposed to rigorous analysis of social issues, direct engagement with community organizations, and they contextualize what they learn to deepen their personal commitments and professional goals in civic life post-graduation. To earn the certificate, students must take at least three civically focused courses, complete a 300 hour practicum, and a capstone project. When students complete the certificate program, it will be listed on their academic transcript. The Certificate for Civic Engagement has deepened our engagement with faculty and collaboration with the Office for Undergraduate Education (OUE). During the Spring 2024 term, 81 students completed the Certificate enrollment process.



Collaboration with campus and community partners is essential to our work. **StorySlam** (left) is a collaboration with the Office for the Arts where students share stories about how their civic experiences have helped them to find their voice, lead through challenging times, and connect meaningfully with communities. The **Global Day of Service team** (center) rallied over 1,200 volunteers to work with 76 community partners on five continents in August 2023. Musicians from the Leon Fleisher Academy (right) performed at the **Service is the Key** community concert in February 2024.

Students: 5 Ways You Can Take Action

1) Volunteer

Sign up to volunteer with [Phillips Brooks House Association](#), the [Institute of Politics](#), or over [50 other student-led service organizations](#).

2) Find trainings and workshops

Sign up for trainings with the [Buttenwieser Public Service Academy](#) and the [Dean of Students Office](#).

3) Take courses

Check out over [45 Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship courses](#) including offerings with the Harvard College Writing Program.

4) Explore internships and jobs

[Harvard Global Health Institute](#), [Phillips Brooks House Association](#), the [Institute of Politics](#), and [Mindich Service Fellowships](#) sponsor 600+ summer service experiences. Don't forget to explore [Crimson Careers](#)!

5) Follow us on social media



[@harvardserveres](#)



[@pbha](#)

Alums: 5 Ways You Can Take Action

1) Mentor a student

MCS Firsthand Advisors platform connects students with hundreds of alumni working in public service.

2) Join a Club or Shared Interest Group

Harvard Clubs and Shared Interest Groups offer a wide range of opportunities for Harvard alumni to stay civically engaged. There are over 190 Clubs and over 50 Shared Interest Groups around the world.

3) Volunteer or serve on a board

Visit publicservice.fas.harvard.edu to learn more about upcoming days of service and nonprofit board recruitment fairs.

4) Sponsor our work

Alums can make contributions to Harvard College's public service efforts online at any time. In the donation field, select "Other" and indicate that the gift is for public service (fund #330600).

5) Follow us on social media



[@harvard_serves](https://www.instagram.com/harvard_serves)



[@pbha](https://www.instagram.com/pbha)

For more information about 125+ programs
across Harvard supporting social impact work,
visit <https://socialimpact.harvard.edu>.