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**Achieving Change Together**

## April ClassACTions Bulletin

In Massachusetts and a handful of other states, Patriots' Day is a major holiday in April. The Boston Marathon commemorates the rides for freedom and liberty by Paul Revere and William Dawes in 1775. This month in 2022, the world is watching the people of Ukraine's unwavering marathon efforts to preserve their freedom and liberty in the face of a ruthless and powerful dictator and his cadre of admirers and blinded followers. We, the people of the United States, have a great deal to learn from our Ukrainian neighbors. ClassACT HR73 encourages you to take stock of your precious freedoms, find ways to support the people of Ukraine and take actions, small and large, to preserve liberty here at home.

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### **CLASSACT BRIDGE RESPONDS TO UKRAINE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS**



*Photo from [whiteponyexpress.org](http://whiteponyexpress.org)*

A ClassACT Bridge founded in 2013, the [White Pony Express](http://whiteponyexpress.org) networks with

businesses and organizations in Contra Costa County, California to connect excess foods and goods and then distribute the items to neighbors in need. Utilizing these established connections, the community has responded with an outpouring of support for Ukrainian refugees in Poland and Ukraine. Classmate **Emily Karakashian** reports that the White Pony Express delivered several pallets of diapers, medical and hygiene kits, blankets, sleeping bags and warm clothing to a trusted partner organization that will ship the goods overseas. This is only the beginning as the effort to help during this crisis is ongoing. [Click this link to donate.](#)

To learn more about the war in Ukraine click on this link to view ClassACT HR73's recent zoom: [A Conversation on Russia's War on Ukraine.](#)

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## CLASSACT MOVEMENT TACKLES CLIMATE CHANGE AND MORE



*Graphic created by **Rick Brotman '73***

As the ClassACT movement grows across the Harvard alumni community there is increased opportunity for communication, collaboration and coordination between classes. On March 22, ClassACT HR73 convened a group of ClassACT representatives from the classes of '69, '73, '78 '79, '85, '86, '90 and '91 to discuss the status of their environment and climate-change efforts and possible opportunities to work together.

Some ClassACTs are in the very early stages of development of a climate change-focused project, while others are farther along. HR73 classmates **Bill Hedden** and **Anne MacKinnon** introduced the formation of the ClassACT HR73 Climate Change and Environment working group. ClassACT HR73 is exploring options for alumni to make a difference by utilizing connections, expertise and finances.

*\*Subsequent to the March 22 meeting, the ClassACT HR73 Climate Change and Environment working group met and decided to focus on E.O. Wilson's Half Earth Project. See notice below announcing the plans.*

Liz Losos '85 reports that ClassACT H85 has made efforts to "motivate Harvard to lead" and promote healthy competition with other institutions in the response to climate change. ClassACT H85 members are working on a data-driven "report card" that will grade each institution on the eight pillars

of transformational climate initiatives: emissions reduction, climate education, climate knowledge, stakeholder engagement and collaboration, investing and financing, climate disclosures, policy advocacy, and long-term institutional transformation.

Two members of the class of '69, Terry McNally and Valerie Nelson, have worked with the HAA to produce five [climate conversations](#) and have participated in a research effort by HGSD to study real-world climate adaptation and resilience in a [case study of Cape Ann](#).

ClassACT H91 is developing a public/private collaboration to protect the ocean's natural forest. Two '91 classmates, Pawan Patil and Jonathan Cardi, are hopeful that the SeaForest Trust, with its focus on the conservation, restoration and regeneration of sea kelp, will be an innovative leader in nature-based climate solutions.

Following a discussion of each project, there was a lively Q/A and brainstorming session.

By offering more multi-class meetings organized by topic, ClassACT HR73 will continue to lead the ClassACT movement and provide a vehicle for established alumni groups along with other newly forming future groups to communicate and work with each other to “achieve change together.” The next topic: “Saving our democracy.”

In addition, our HR73 Communications team—**Stan Mark, Henrietta Lodge, Dick Friedman, Rick Brotman, Jacki Swearingen, and Sandy Weissent**, ably assisted by Executive Assistant Diana Lobontiu—will lead a session on communications strategies for the multi-class group.

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### CLASSACT HR73 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE



*Photo from half-earthproject.org*

The concept of “Half-Earth,” as proposed by the late Professor E.O. Wilson of

Harvard in his book of that title, aims to renew global efforts to conserve biodiversity across the planet in both terrestrial and marine environments. Now more than ever, significant new efforts are needed to advance the goal of setting aside half the planet as a reserve for biodiversity protection. To that end the ClassACT HR73 Climate Change and Environment Working Group has launched a program focused on Half-Earth to explore the conservation activities of members of HR73 and plans to host a Forum on the topic to engage the Harvard community. Classmates interested in learning more or assisting with this work should contact [John Kress](#) and/or [Jesse Ausubel](#) who are leading this project.

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## LGBTQ YOUTH RIGHTS: PROTECTING THE QUEER FRONTIER

[Click here to learn more](#)



Graphic by **Rick Brotman '73**

Harvey Milk, the champion of human rights who was murdered for his fight to end discrimination against San Francisco's gay community, once said of LGBTQ young people:

*"The only thing they have to look forward to is hope. And you have to give them hope. Hope for a better world, hope for a better tomorrow, hope for a better place to come to if the pressures at home are too great. Hope that all will be all right."*

On Thursday, April 7, ClassACT HR73, in collaboration with JusticeAid, hosted a forum that examined the ways that advocates, friends and families can offer support to young people who identify as LGBTQ. Moderator **Tazewell Jones**, a JusticeAid board member and an attorney, led a discussion about the barriers these young people face to winning equality and acceptance by families and communities. The panel of LGBTQ activists included **Li Nowlin-Sohl**, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union's LGBTQ Rights team, **Alana Jochum**, the executive director of Equality Ohio and a co-chair of Equality Federation's Board of Directors, and **Jorge Membreño**, a social worker who now serves as deputy executive

director of SMYAL (Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders). Founded in 1984, SMYAL is a Washington D.C. organization that provides housing, clinical services and advocacy for LGBTQ youth. SMYAL is JusticeAid's grantee partner for 2022.

Together the panel members examined proposals in states like Florida and Texas which are designed to marginalize and stigmatize LGBTQ young people and their families. Some legislation is designed in particular 'to erase' trans youth by interfering with the physical and mental care that young people and their families have chosen, said Nowlin-Sohl. Other bills seek to censor classroom discussions and curricula that mention gay people, Jochum explained.

It's realizing our youth's fears, said Membreño. Our youth have this inherent sense of fear because of the trauma that they have experienced, said Membreño. These political challenges have only made ongoing problems like homelessness and inadequate physical and mental health care among LGBTQ young people more pressing, Membreño added.

In the Calls to Action at the forum's conclusion, moderator Jones called on the audience to strive to listen harder, to explore pathways to empathy, and to find ways to stay involved consistently in the struggle to preserve and expand the rights of LGBTQ people on a national and local level.

ClassACT Co-Chair Marion Dry called on all to support JusticeAid's work for SMYAL this year. JusticeAID is a non-profit founded by HR73 classmate Steve Milliken, which raises money through music concerts to aid organizations working for justice and equality. JusticeAid will be holding two events in New York in mid-May to support SMYAL to which all are invited. To learn more about JusticeAid, its events and how to support it, please go to <https://justiceaid.org/>.

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### TAKE US OUT TO THE BALLGAME!



Please join us in Ohio as we kick off our 50th Reunion year! On Friday, May 6 and Saturday, May 7, join fellow classmates and co-owners of Minor League Baseball's Dayton Dragons **Ken Bartels** and **Jane Condon, Allison** and **Carl Muller**, and **Nick** and **Julie Sakellariadis**, for a ballgame. Conclude

the weekend on Sunday, May 8 in Cincinnati for a guided tour of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center hosted by ClassACT HR73 Board Members **Dan Hoffheimer** and **Marion Dry**, followed by lunch at a nearby restaurant.

It is not too late to join in the fun!

To RSVP, please search for the email in your inbox and click on the RSVP button. If you can't find it, let us know and we will connect you with the right folks at the HAA.

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### Interested in helping ClassACT?

ClassACT is built on classmate participation and we are interested in having every classmate as a member of our ClassACT community. If you are interested in learning more about ClassACT and how you can be involved, please visit our [website](#) or send us an [email](#).

While encouraging the sharing of time and willingness to work together, ClassACT also welcomes financial support. To support our work in this way you can donate below.

[Donate Here](#)

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