

Please add ClassACTHR73@gmail.com to your contacts so future messages don't end up in spam or some other odd spot in your inbox.

November 2022 ClassACTions Bulletin



ClassACT 

Check us out at:

www.classacthr73.org

Comments? Questions?

classacthr73@gmail.com

From the Chair:

This is the first time I have posted a note in our monthly bulletin, and I will do so from time to time. Since this is a “beginning,” I thought it would be nice to share the lovely story of a greater “beginning.”

A dear friend who knows I adore my grandchildren recently dropped by to give me the children’s book, *The Birthday of the World: A Story about Finding Light in Everyone and Everything*. Written by New York Times best-selling author Dr. Rachel Naomi Rehman, the the book’s narrator recounts a creation story shared with her by her beloved grandfather.

“The world of thousand thousand things,” he tells her, was born when one great ray of light ended the darkness. Soon that light broke into millions sparks of light that inhabited everything and everybody.

Beautifully illustrated by Rachell Sumpter, the story goes on to recount how those sparks of light are hidden in all of us and in everything. Her grandfather tells her it is up to us all to grow our lights and reveal them. Dr. Rehman’s story ends with this line:

“One spark at a time, we can change the world back to the way it was at the beginning—whole and filled with light.”

It seems to me that all of us who come together to work for change through ClassACT HR73 have the desire to reveal our lights. Whether we are endeavoring to assist making a difference across an ocean (or in it), in a small community, through a program at Harvard, or in one-on-one collaboration with a classmate, we are striving to encourage and create changes large and small that will bring social justice, cultural understanding, democracy, a healthy planet, healthy people, and peace. In bringing our individual lights together, we commit ourselves to each other and to our work that we know contributes to making our world whole again.

If you haven't joined us yet, please know that your light will bring greater brightness to our work, to our world, and to us all. Know that you are welcome any time and with any amount of time and talent you can share!

With gratitude and admiration,

Marion Dry

(Interested in getting involved? Email us at classacthr73@gmail.com)

Meet This Month's ClassACTors Changing the World



Why we do what we do

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” - MLK

Our founders share a passion for intervening in systems where equity can be practiced. Growing up in North Carolina during the civil rights movement, they experienced the negative consequences of living and working in systems that did not recognize, understand, or appreciate differences. VISIONS was created to promote the benefits of multiculturalism and continue the legacy of justice they learned about and worked for in their youths.

[Learn more →](#)

Play (k)

0:05 / 6:32

⏪ ⏩ 🔊 🔍 ⚙️ 📺 📱 🗑️

Created by **Rick Brotman '73**

Trained as a psychologist, classmate **Sarah Stearns** helped start an organization called Visions 38 years ago. Visions helps bring diversity, equity and inclusion to non-profits, schools, corporations and other organizations throughout the country. Rather than helping formulate a written policy that gathers dust on a shelf, Sarah and other consultants help the people in the organizations, from CEOs to students, have meaningful conversation around these issues. Participants learn about and from each other, develop greater understanding of different ethnic, cultural and racial experiences and, as a result, communicate and work together more effectively. Check out the video above to hear more about Visions in Sarah's own words.



*Created by **Rick Brotman '73***

Fulfilling a lifelong goal, classmate **Michael Alexander** became President of Lasell University 16 years ago. As President, Michael has ushered in many innovative ideas that are aimed at promoting higher education and lifelong learning for all ages. With many of the students qualifying for Pell grants, most recently, Lasell has been a leader in promoting transparent tuition costs to students. In addition, Lasell University is associated with a retirement community called Lasell Village. Promoting personal growth and intergenerational communications, Lasell Village residents are required to complete continuing education hours and have several ways to interact with the Lasell students and faculty. Michael will retire in June, but through his leadership, Lasell has been catapulted forward. Hear more from Michael by clicking on the video above.

Join the ClassACT Kids' Coat Drive!



*Click above to view the video on the New Orleans ClassACT HR73 Bridges, created by **Rick Brotman '73***

[Click here to donate!](#)

Want to give a NOLA kid a coat to keep them warm this winter? We hope you will join us by donating a coat/s this year.

For the third year, ClassACT will impact children's lives in New Orleans by participating in the annual coat drive sponsored by ClassACT's Bridge, The Ole & Nu Style Fellas Social Aide & Pleasure Organization. The organization was founded by the extraordinary leader and activist Sue Press and is sponsored by **Rick Weil '73**. In two previous years, members of the Class of '73 have donated more than 100 coats each year, helping keep kids--toddlers to teens--from the Tremé section of New Orleans warm and dry in the winter. Sue has told us that our donations have been extremely helpful and much appreciated. Please consider donating a coat by going to the Amazon wish list link below! The coat giveaway event will take place around December 11, so please order your coat(s) soon.

To learn more about this organization and other Bridges, [click here](#).

**When choosing a shipping address, you must choose "Sue Press's Gift Reaistru" and the coat(s) will be delivered to her address privately. If you*

have any follow up questions, please email us at classacthr73@gmail.com.

Half Earth: A Formula for Preserving Biodiversity

“The one process now going on that will take millions of years to correct is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly our descendants are least likely to forgive us.” E.O. Wilson



[Click for bio info, resources, and all forum videos](#)

Recently, ClassACT HR73 hosted #ClassACTHR73 Forum called **Half-Earth: Conserving Biodiversity from the Deep Sea to Mt. Everest**. Moderators **Jesse H. Ausubel '73**, Director of the Program for Human Environment at the Rockefeller University, and **Dr. W. John Kress '73**, Distinguished Scientist and Curator Emeritus at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, led a powerful discussion with three fellow classmates about the existential threats to biodiversity and the possible ways to preserve species and their habitats. The distinguished panel included **Broughton Coburn '73**, a Visiting Assistant Professor for Colorado College and an author and environmental conservationist who has helped to protect plants and wildlife on the Himalayan plain and in the valleys and mountains of Wyoming; **Sharon S. Tisher '73**, who for 27 years has taught environmental law and policy courses at the University of Maine while chairing boards for environmental non-profits like the National Resources Council of Maine and compiling a climate chronology; and **Dr. Deane Wang '73**, Associate Professor Emeritus at the University of Vermont, who has researched biogeochemistry and nutrient cycling as well as teaching about sustainability. Drawing inspiration from the late biologist E.O.

Wilson's concept of "Half Earth," they explored ways to realize Wilson's vision of protecting half of the Earth's land and oceans in order to prevent the extinction of more species, champion biodiversity and save the planet.

The five environmentalists outlined the breadth and severity of the existential crisis of safeguarding and restoring a sufficient amount of habitat for the estimated ten million species that currently reside on Earth to survive. From the oceans that are overrun with ships and mining to the forests where trees are felled for lumber and agriculture, uncounted numbers of yet to be discovered species of insects and plants may perish before they have been detected by scientists. The interaction among species, what Kress called the "Complexity of Nature," is threatened from the jungles along the Amazon to the wetlands of Maine, the panelists stressed.

Through methods as accessible as cultivating biodiversity in a backyard garden, panelists asked audience members to take part in the struggle for Half-Earth and the planet. In addition they urged classmates to engage together in a new initiative of the ClassACT HR73 Environment and Climate Change Working Group that focuses on issues that imperil our society and planet today. Scientists and non-scientists alike are encouraged to connect in order to devise a project that can carry on the mission of E.O. Wilson and other great biologists and environmentalists. Please send us an email at classacthr73@gmail.com if you are interested in working on this with us.

Fishing for DNA in the Hudson with Jesse Ausubel '73



Front row: Left to right: Missy Holland, Katherine Flanders Mukherji, Jesse Ausubel; 2nd row: Alan Dean, Whit Stillman, Eric Rayman and Rebecca Sykes

Read more on the tour and Jesse's eDNA work [here](#)

As part of ClassACT HR73's Environment and Climate initiative, the morning after a terrific, warm, and welcoming New York City dinner hosted by the HR73 Harvard College Fund, a group of intrepid HR73 classmates gathered on Little Island. They were there to take a deep dive into the marine life of the Hudson River, the New York Harbor, and the Central Park ponds and other New York waterways, guided by classmate Jesse Ausubel. With HR74 friend and colleague Mark Stoeckle, Jesse pioneered the use of aquatic "eDNA," collecting a glass or bucket of sea or river water, filtering out bits of DNA and analyzing the short sequences to identify the kinds and amounts of marine life that lived nearby.

The data come from pieces of DNA in cells shed naturally by animals in the water—this means that no animal is harmed using this method. For example, using eDNA technology, samples taken from the "Loch" in Central Park at 103rd Street had traces of largemouth bass, bluegills and other fish; songbird, Norway rat (this is NYC, after all), dogs, and humans (don't ask). An early eDNA sampling of the Hudson by Jesse and his team at Rockefeller University discovered three species (cunner, American eel, and oyster toadfish) that had not been found using the traditional seining method. In addition to working with world renowned scientists and engineers, Jesse trains high school students to collect and analyze data. One such project resulted in the New York Times front page expose of "[Sushigate](#)"- revealing that 25% of fish in New York City fish stores were mislabeled. Jesse graciously answered all questions of our decidedly non- scientific group, leaving us with a terrific tease for our next NYC excursion based on another subject of his research: [The National Cockroach Project](#).





Jesse Ausubel '73

Jesse, the recipient of the 2022 Nierenberg Prize for Science in the Public Interest, has received numerous awards and honors for his work, including one that can never be bestowed on any other scientist: During Jesse's 10-year global Census of Marine life project, a team in the Philippines discovered a new species of deep sea lobster, which they named in his honor [Dinochelusausubeli](#) -- "Ausubel's Mighty Clawed Lobster."

As HR73 classmate **Eric Rayman** summed up, "Today was one of the best lectures I've listened to in, say, 50 years."

Rama S. Mehta Lecture by Elisa Lonc3n Antileo

Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University

[Click here to register](#)



*Creator: Cristian Soto Quiroz | Credit: Cristian Soto Quiroz
Copyright: Cristian Soto Quiroz 2021*

Harvard Radcliffe Institute is pleased to welcome Elisa Loncón Antileo to deliver the Rama S. Mehta Lecture for 2022–2023. In 2021, Loncón was elected as one of the representatives of the Mapuche people to the Chilean Constitutional Convention, and was then named the Convention’s first president (July 2021–January 2022). The Convention was tasked with rewriting the dictatorship-era constitution, a process that began after mass protests across the nation in 2019 and a national vote in favor of replacing the old constitution in 2020. Although Chilean voters rejected the proposed revisions in September, the process of developing the recommendations—which directly addressed issues of gender parity in representation and environmental protections, among other changes—was instructive and will inform subsequent efforts toward reform.

Born in the Mapuche community of Lefweluan in Chile, Loncón is a linguist and an Indigenous rights and languages activist. She holds a PhD in humanities from the University of Leiden and a second PhD in literature from the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. Currently a professor in the Department of Education at the University of Santiago de Chile, Loncón researches the teaching of Mapudungun, an Araucanian language spoken in south-central Chile and west-central Argentina by the Mapuche people. She is also affiliated with the Center for Indigenous and Intercultural Studies of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. In 2021, Loncón was awarded the René Cassin Human Rights Award from the Basque Government to recognize her substantial contributions to the defense of human rights and was named one of Time Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People and one of Financial Times’s 25 most influential women.

ClassACT Becomes a Movement



ClassACT HR73 touches the lives of many classmates through multiple opportunities for engagement, education, and action. We continue to seek meaningful ways to affect positive change in the world and to build a community dedicated to “achieving change together.” Our goals have already resonated with thirteen other Harvard classes, several of which have

developed their own ClassACT platforms to pursue ClassACT concepts and are using the ClassACT name. While each class pursues its independent course, we are exchanging ideas and mutual support. We have also begun to identify potential multi-class initiatives in areas such as environmental change and civic engagement. ClassACT initiatives have continued to receive strong encouragement and support from the Harvard Alumni Association, and we anticipate that this success will continue to evolve and attract other classes. There is a standing invitation to classmates to become involved in the ClassACT movement. If you would like to help, please let us know by emailing classacthr73@gmail.com.

More Classmate News



Headshot by Paulius Musteikis

Marie Kohler '73 has reached out to report that she is “Excited that my play **BOSWELL** will soon be running Off-Broadway -- November 12 - December 4th. 2022. Come and see! First produced in Milwaukee at the theater company I co-founded, then taken to the Edinburgh Fringe in 2019, it was scouted by 59E59 Theaters and invited to NYC. If you're able, come see my history-oriented comic-drama -- and me. (I'll be doing Fri. and Sat. night talk-backs.) Those who took Prof. Bate's class on Samuel Johnson will, I think, enjoy.” To learn more about the show click on this [link](#)!

ClassACT HR85 Update: The Other Side of Prospect

Register here

Class ACT HR85 Presents:
The Other Side of Prospect:
A Conversation with
Classmate Nicholas Dawidoff '85

**THE OTHER SIDE
OF PROSPECT**



A STORY OF VIOLENCE,
INJUSTICE, AND
THE AMERICAN CITY

NICHOLAS DAWIDOFF



Monday, December 5, 8-9 pm EST, via Zoom

ClassACT 
IT TAKES YOU AWAY TO FIND OUT THE WORLD

Come gather with Nicholas Dawidoff '85 as he shares with us how he came to write his latest book, a story about a violent crime and its aftermath, and what this one, brief tragic event can tell us about past and present social conditions in one city neighborhood that uncannily reveal so much about America. Foremost it's about innocence and experience, the way, if you are born in the wrong American place, your childhood may be transformed by injustice. *The Other Side of Prospect* was just named one of *The New Yorker's* Best Books of 2022 So Far.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nicholas Dawidoff is the critically acclaimed author of six books, including *The Catcher Was a Spy* and *In the Country of Country*. He is a Pulitzer Prize finalist and has also been a Guggenheim, Berlin Prize, and Art for Justice Fellow.

WHERE TO READ

If you choose to purchase/read, please consider supporting Nicky's [local independent bookstore](#).

The book is also available on [Amazon](#).

WHAT TO DO

If the civic and social concerns raised by The Other Side of Prospect leave you wanting to make a contribution towards broader community improvement and well-being, Nicky believes these [three non-profit organizations](#) do excellent, inspiring and responsible work.

Interested in helping ClassACT HR73?

ClassACT HR73 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 HR73 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 HR73 also welcomes financial support. To support our work in this way you can donate below.

[Donate Here](#)

Please add ClassACTHR73@gmail.com to your contacts so future messages don't end up in spam or some other odd spot in your inbox.

[Class Achieving Change Together \(Class ACT\), Inc.](#)

