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# ClassACT

**Achieving Change Together**

## September ClassACTions Newsletter

For those tied to the traditional academic calendar, Labor Day and the beginning of September arrive with mixed feelings. We regret that “carefree” summer days are over, but anticipate new beginnings with excitement. With our 50th Reunion in the rear view mirror, ClassACT HR73 is looking forward to continuing our events, enhancing our activities and contributing to the expanding concept of alumni engagement beyond the Class of 1973 and throughout Harvard.

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## HOW DO YOU INTERACT WITH CLASSACT?

Before you scroll down to read our amazing ClassACTHR73 news, please take 2 minutes to answer our survey, and follow us on the social media platforms below!

Fill out our social media survey!



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## CLASSACT WELCOMES OUR SIXTH BENAZIR BHUTTO LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FELLOW, NAZMUL HAQUE



*Leigh Hafrey, Marion Dry, Nazmul Haque, and George Putnam*

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

ClassACT HR73 is proud to present our latest BBLP fellow, **Nazmul Haque**. **Marion Dry**, **George Putnam** and **Leigh Hafrey** met with Nazmul earlier this month to welcome him and share information about ClassACT. As an Edward S. Mason Fellow in Public Policy and Management at the Kennedy School, Nazmul is a candidate for a Mid Career Masters in Public Administration. He also has an MBA from North South University, Bangladesh.

Nazmul has over 20 years experience in structuring and financing infrastructure, renewable energy, and PPP projects in his home country, Bangladesh. As the Chief Investment Officer of IDCOL, the largest development financial institution of Bangladesh, he managed a loan portfolio of USD\$1+ billion, played an important role in negotiating sovereign debts and supported the government on various policy matters.

In addition to working on conventional infrastructure projects, Nazmul also

played a lead role in designing and implementing several 'Access to Energy' programs in the country that provided clean energy, water, and cooking solutions to millions of rural people and reduced indoor air pollution and respiratory diseases among women and children. In recent years, he worked on promoting energy efficiency across multiple sectors and mobilized US\$ 500m+ to support industries and buildings in adopting clean technologies and reducing their CO2 footprints.

Nazmul is also an international coach on project and climate finance and has consulted in several developing countries of Asia and Africa. He delivered speeches and presented papers at many seminars/conferences across Asia, Europe, Africa, and North America.

Finally, our new BBLP Fellow loves traveling, cooking and pottery-making, and is a proud father of two beautiful children –Zayed and Zubi.

We look forward to engaging with Nazmul both in person and via zoom during his year in Cambridge.

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#### **WORDS FROM 2022 BBLP FELLOW, LAILA KHONDKAR**

ClassACT HR73's [Benazir Bhutto Leadership Program](#) has provided six fellowships to promising leaders of the Muslim world. After obtaining her MidCareer Masters in Public Administration at HKS, last year's BBLP fellow, **Laila Khondkar**, traveled to Greece for a summer course on Migration and Refugee Studies. ClassACT HR73 provided the funding that enabled Laila to enroll in the course.

In the article below, Laila gives us her perspective on what she learned and her opinion of the current status of worldwide refugee policies.



**“Instead of selective humanitarianism, Europe should protect the rights of all asylum seekers and refugees.”**

**by Laila Khondkar**

My home country, Bangladesh, is presently hosting around one million Rohingya people who had to flee Myanmar after the genocide in 2017. Around ten million Bangladeshis lived as refugees in India during our liberation war in 1971. One of the biggest sources of income for Bangladesh is the remittance sent by labor migrants in different parts of the world. I have lived in several

countries for work and studies, and have experience of working with the Rohingya population in Bangladesh and refugees from Ivory Coast in Liberia. So, the concerns related to refugees and migration is not only a matter of theories to me or something that happens to other people in the news; this is also very close to my heart.

Intensive Summer Course on Migration and Refugee Studies (7-30 July, 2023) was offered by The François-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University, in collaboration with the Refugee and Migration Studies Hub at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. Attending the course has been a rewarding experience.

[CLICK FOR FULL ARTICLE HERE](#)

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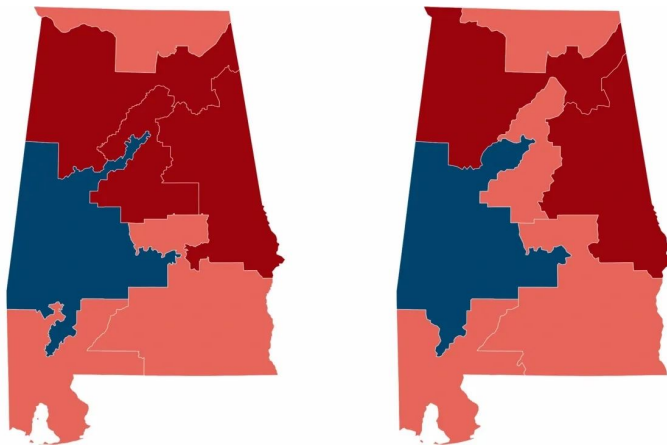
### VOTING RIGHTS UPDATE

Voting rights in numerous states are being impacted this summer and fall. Classmate **Marilyn Go '73** provides us with up-to-date information about happenings in Alabama, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire. Whether or not you live in one of these states, the issues she explains will help you to understand the nationwide trends.

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### SUGGESTED END OF SUMMER READING

By **Marilyn Go '73, Jim Harbison '73, Jacki Swearingen '73**



*On the right is Alabama's previous Congressional map, and on the left is the map following the 2020 Census.*

Summer has not officially ended, so there is still time to squeeze in some reading about voting rights. This article contains a compilation of articles and other writings concerning redistricting, voting and related issues that may provide insight into the current and continuing challenges to protecting our democracy.

[CLICK FOR FULL ARTICLE HERE](#)

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## A VISUAL RED BOOK

Begun as a reunion-focused project, the [ClassACT HR73@50 Video Project](#) is continuing to produce short vignettes focusing on how our classmates have spent their lives since college seeking to make the world a better place. Influenced by the conviction of our time, “we can change the world,” our classmates have contributed in a myriad of ways to positive change. With profound thanks to **Rick Brotman '73** and his videography skills, in each monthly newsletter, we will continue to feature different classmates as they share how they have changed the world.

This month we hear from two of our classmates, one a renowned academic and the other a committed public servant. Nobel Laureate **Roger Myerson '73** explains how game theory makes the connections between the natural and social sciences. Humans need to “understand ourselves, not just the atom” in order to devise solutions to global problems.

*Click below to view interview with **Roger Myerson '73***



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Federal Judge, **Dan Polster '73** describes his devotion to public service and his work not only overseeing the Federal multidistrict litigation of more than 3000 cases regarding the nationwide opioid addiction crisis, but also his involvement in the promotion of understanding rights, responsibility and civic literacy in 10th and 11th graders in Cleveland.

*Click below to view interview with **Dan Polster '73***



## CLASSACT HR73 BRIDGES UPDATES

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### UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF GREATER BOSTON



*Summer interns on one of the final days of the Summer Institute in Global Leadership*

ClassACT HR73 bridge [United Nations Association of Greater Boston](#), participated in Harvard's Global Day of Service on September 1, 2023. They had eight Harvard undergraduate volunteers who provided posts on social-media sites and wrote 22 country profiles. The profiles will be used in their upcoming Greater Boston Model UN Conference at Suffolk Law School in early October and will support students engaging in the Model UN Conference focusing on the topic set forth by the UN's [Human Rights Council to Model UNs around the world](#).

This was the first year that UNAGB participated in Harvard's annual Global Day of Service and they have plans to do so again next year. The Global Day of Service is organized by Harvard's Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship. It seeks to establish a vibrant culture that promotes civic engagement across the greater Harvard community.

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### WHITE PONY EXPRESS





*Click above to watch Chiena Ty and President Biden*

Fighting food insecurity during the summer months is only part of [White Pony Express's](#) charge – they are also actively combating climate change. By diverting fresh, healthy food from landfills into the hands of our neighbors, they're reducing CO2 and methane emissions. They track the environmental impact, specifically with regard to clean air. WPE is excited to share that the organization was highlighted on a national scale for their work and environmental impact when their California Climate Action Corps Intern, Chiena Ty, introduced President Biden at a climate action event in the Bay Area.

#### SALIH SELF-DEVELOPMENT CENTER



*Young women learning sewing skills at the Salih Self-Development Center*

The [Salih Self-Development Center](#) has been dedicated to providing adolescents and young adults from the Aboabo township of Kumasi, Ghana with vocational training in sewing since 2014. Twenty girls have been supported and have graduated from the Salih sewing program. With this vocational skill, the graduates have improved the quality of their lives. One of these graduates traveled to Cameroon, married, started her family and opened her own shop for tailoring.

Presently, the Salih Self Development Center owns two acres of land with an installed well and a caretaker cottage. It plans to move the sewing center from

its rented space to a planned warehouse facility which will also eventually have vocational programs in carpentry, plumbing and electrical work.



*Recently built caretaker cottage*

**David Weeks '73 is seeking guidance for accessing vocational training equipment for programs in carpentry, plumbing and electrical work and exporting this equipment by container ship to Acra, Ghana from Baltimore.** He also would like to consult with contractors working with skilled trades people in the construction industry. The issue of taxes on US vocational equipment also needs to be addressed. In July of 2023 Salih Self Development Center President Ibrahim Salih traveled to Kumasi. There he met with the Honorable Mubarak Muntaka, member of the Ghanaian Parliament, to discuss not having to pay taxes on any donations received.

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#### OSILIGI HOPE FOUNDATION



In July 2023 **David Weeks '73** traveled to Kenya and Pakistan. In Kenya he checked on the progress made on the two Maasai medical facilities that have been built. In the month of July more than 700 patients were served in the Osiligi Medical Dispensary, the first facility constructed for maternal care and general practice. The Narok Health Department has agreed to add another physician to aid the only doctor and his assistant presently assigned to this facility.

David is pleased to report that the second medical facility that houses a pharmacy, medicinal lab for traditional medicine, dentist and vision office has been fully constructed and the local Narok Health Department has agreed to equip and staff the facility.

David, his Maasai partner, and three Maasai elders met with the Governor of the Narok district of Kenya, and his executive team to discuss the construction of a hospital ward and brought an architectural plan to share with local Narok Health Department authorities.

The Governor is dedicated to public health and agreed to pay half the construction cost (approximately \$400,000.00) of the hospital ward and equip and staff it. David indicated that he and his Maasai partner would raise funds to balance the expense of this valuable two-story structure that will provide residential housing for the staff and patients in need of short term care along with equipment and birthing rooms for more complicated deliveries. The project will start this fall with \$120,000.00 dedicated by the Narok government for the establishment of the foundation for the hospital ward. **David seeks ClassACT HR73 classmate support in identifying grants and prospective funding for this project that promotes global health equity.**

LEARN MORE

Recently retired from his educational work, he has established a 501c3 nonprofit entitled Wings of Hope Global Cooperative Inc. He is in the process of writing updated narratives for his Ghana and Kenya ClassACT Bridge projects as well as other projects in Guinea, Pakistan and Myanmar to be placed on his website. In addition to Development consultation, he is seeking website development consultation. David also has been supporting the medical education for an aspiring Maasai doctor and has another Maasai student in need of financial support for medical studies.

**Please contact David at his new email: [weeksdavid05@gmail.com](mailto:weeksdavid05@gmail.com) or by cell at 443-794-4302 if interested in providing support for his international service initiatives.**

SPORTS ANALYTICS CLUB PROGRAM



*Ed Tapscott at the Star Hill Pathways Program, photo from SACP*

The University of Virginia (UVA) School of Data Science, under the leadership of Siri Russell, partnered with the [Sports Analytics Club Program](#) (SACP) to sponsor a Sports Data Analytics Camp as part of the Star Hill Pathways Summer Program.

Campers, who were middle-school students from the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County, were given a unique opportunity to gain first-hand exposure to a wide range of career possibilities, including in data science. They were introduced to the concept of accurately mining research matters in pursuit of information to engage in knowledgeable debate and determining what "smart basketball" means.

The camp wrapped up with an "on the court" interactive basketball data research project designed by SACP cofounder Ed Tapscott. The campers executed the project at John Paul Jones Arena as part of the end-of-camp exposition.

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### OLE & NU STYLE FELLAS SOCIAL AID AND PLEASURE CLUB

#### 300 Back-to-School Backpacks and School Supplies Donated



*Participants in Sue Press's Backpack Giveaway*

Classmate **Rick Weil** reports that [The Ole & Nu Style Fellas Social Aid and Pleasure Club](#), along with Sue Press and her family just completed their 25th year of back-to-school backpack and school supplies giveaways. The event was held outdoors at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church, the main Catholic church in the Tremé neighborhood. Due to the months'-long heat wave, with temperatures near or over 100 degrees, not as many children came to the event this year. But despite this, more than 300 backpacks were given away or donated to local schools and churches for distribution.

Braving the heat, a little brass band of kids, many of whom participate in ClassACT Bridge Roots of Music, came together across the street from the church and played for the event.

In New Orleans, there are many Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs that work together and support each other. This year, the Prince of Wales SAPC came to Sue's giveaway and provided the kids with school supplies to put in the backpacks. The PoW is the second oldest SAPC in the city, founded in the 1920s.

Sue and ONSF have been doing these events, and others, for over 25 years now. Other events include their annual second-line parade, their annual formal ball, and neighborhood cleanups.

Look for announcements of ClassACT's participation in their winter coat giveaway, also in its 25th year.

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## HALF-EARTH FORUM II TRANSCRIPT

[CLICK HERE FOR TRANSCRIPT](#)



*Wildfires sweep Hawaii, photo from The Guardian*

[CLICK HERE FOR FORUM](#)

It has been a summer of deadly heat in Phoenix, torrential floods in Vermont, and apocalyptic wildfires in Maui. We are witnessing the destruction of so much of the Earth we love –the forests with trees that feed and shelter birds, and the oceans with deeply hued coral and fish. What can we do to save our planet from the ravages of climate change and the loss of biodiversity?

Last April 17 a distinguished ClassACT HR73 forum panel, “[Protecting Half Earth: Opportunities and Obstacles](#),” moderated by **W. John Kress '73**, Distinguished Scientist and Curator Emeritus at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, took on the question of how we might change course. Members included **Kiani Akina**, Environmental Science and Public Policy Student at Harvard College '25; **Jason Clay '73**, Executive Director of the Markets Institute for the World Wildlife Fund; **David Foster**, Director Emeritus of the Harvard Forest; and **Cristián Samper**, Managing Director and Leader for Nature Solutions, Bezos Earth Fund.

Together these five discussed ways to redirect our collective and personal lives as the crisis of the Earth deepens. They took their cues in part from the late Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson's vision of “Half Earth,” the idea that

protecting 50 percent of the planet's lands and seas is essential to safeguarding its biodiversity. The April forum was a continuation of the conversation begun the previous October 2022 at the ClassACT HR73 Forum "Conserving Biodiversity: From the Deep Sea to Mt. Everest."

The resulting conversation last spring touched on concerns ranging from transforming the wasteful production and consumption of food to honoring the role of indigenous communities and their cultural heritage in realizing "Half Earth." Those exchanges have been preserved in a draft transcript available below. Readers can find within it crucial questions like how to define protected landscapes as well as how governments, academic institutions and individuals can change the agricultural and dietary habits that are now responsible for at least one-third of greenhouse gas emissions. "How do we bring nature, wildlife and biodiversity back into farming?" asked Jason Clay.

Amid the apprehension the panelists all expressed some hopeful revelations. David Foster pointed out forested land in Massachusetts and the other New England states has doubled since the nineteenth century when forests were routinely felled for lumber and agriculture. Some of that regrowth of native trees and flowers has occurred simply because the land has been left to heal itself. Foster urged his listeners to "Embrace rewilding, nature's ability to take care of itself."

Inspiring us to change our lifestyles to save the Earth for those who will come after us, Kiani Akina spoke eloquently of the vision of kinship with the land that native Hawaiians cherish. "If we can create a societal shift that protects and embeds nature as a relative, and as a part of our identities, we can better steward land and protect diversity." Her fellow panelist Cristián Samper urged his listeners to support financially young scientists and environmentalists. Finally, he reminded them to "vote for the right people, get the right people in the right offices that are actually going to bring about this change, and get those people elected."

"This conversation among five environmentalists closely connected to Harvard was one of the most engaging, meaningful, and encouraging interactions I have ever been part of. The transcript should be read by everyone concerned with the future of our planet, our biodiversity, and our civilization."

(John Kress's hope for distributing the transcript)

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## REUNION RESULTS AND REQUESTS





### **Did you want more information about ClassACT HR73?**

During our gathering in June, more than 50 of our classmates and others learned of and wanted more information about our various efforts. We are thrilled at the prospects of new faces, perspectives and ideas. If you signed up to be involved during one of the symposiums at the Reunion, someone from ClassACT should have contacted you over the summer. If you have not received an email, call or text, please let us know at ....

ClassACT truly believes that each new member enhances and enlivens our organization and helps to achieve our goals.

### **Call for feedback and testimonials!**

Whether you just learned about our efforts, or have been involved since the beginning 10 years ago, we would love to get your feedback about ClassACT HR73. Please submit 2-5 sentences with your thoughts. What have we done right? What needs improvement? What path should we take over the next few years? Some of the comments we receive will appear on our website.

Submit your comments to: [classacthr73@gmail.com](mailto:classacthr73@gmail.com)



### **HEALTHCARE WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

A small subset of the Healthcare Working Group met and discussed ten different topics of interest to pursue as the group's main project for the upcoming year. The conversation was lively and informative as we welcomed several new members who brought their passion and expertise to bear. The subgroup will expand to include the rest of the committee and will be broken down into six teams around the most popular proposed initiatives. The plan is to decide on at least one project and commence work by mid-October.

The topic areas include:

- Pandemics/Vaccines
- Global Health Issues
- Aging Issues
- Inequities in Healthcare
- Mental Health Issues

- Reproductive Issues

We are always looking for ideas and feedback, so don't be shy if you have any thoughts, **whether you are currently involved in ClassACT HR73 or not. Please email us at: [classacthr73@gmail.com](mailto:classacthr73@gmail.com).**

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### HAVE YOU DOWNLOADED THE HR73 MOBILE APP YET?

Access ClassACT HR73 from the palm of your hand! Search upcoming events, volunteer for ClassACT or one of our Bridge Projects, watch a forum recording, register for a symposium, read a past bulletin, locate contact information for HR73 classmates, even donate funds – all these options are now accessible through your cell phone, smartphone, or tablet.



Use the camera function on your smartphone or tablet to scan the QR code above – it will know if you are an Apple (MAC/iOS) or Android user – and follow the instructions to download, install, and open the ClassACT HR73 app.

If you are already a member on the ClassACT HR73 website, log in to the app with the same username and password that you set up for the website. If you are unable to log in to the app, try logging into our website, [classacthr73.org](http://classacthr73.org) first. If that doesn't work, send us an email at [classacthr73@gmail.com](mailto:classacthr73@gmail.com) and we'll help.

If you are a new user, you can register on either the app or the website and be registered for both.

Classmate **John Noran** worked tirelessly for over a year to make the app easy to use, informative and visually pleasing. However, it's still a work in progress! We've tweaked a few things and added photos over the summer. We welcome feedback, both positive and negative. Any suggestions regarding its features, graphics or its "user friendliness" would be appreciated. Please contact us at [classacthr73@gmail.com](mailto:classacthr73@gmail.com).

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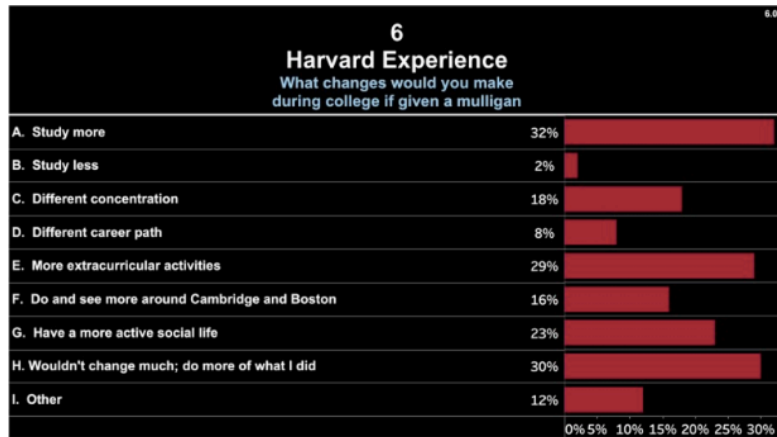
### AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

The Class of 1973 survey was sent to all classmates prior to the reunion. Asking about everything from demographics to hobbies to the Harvard experience, it provides insight into our classmates, both funny and poignant.

Now, every month we will send out aggregated, anonymous results to one question from the survey so you can see how you stack up compared to your classmates!

This month's question:

*What changes would you make during college if given a mulligan?*



\*If you would like to view all the aggregated results, click [here](#).

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### 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.](#)