In 2001, when I took my first step ever into Harvard Yard through Johnston Gate, I was nervous. I almost turned around to make the hour and a half drive back home. Surrounded by the rushing crowd, with everyone seeming to know where they were going, I felt like an imposter. But, thankfully, I continued following the flow of people along the pathway, across the green, passing through the Old Yard into Tercentenary Theatre, making my way to Sever Hall. Within a few steps, there on my right, etched forever in mind’s eye, rose Widener Library. Its grand steps climbing high to its regimented columns. Its solemn stone facade gleaming in the light of the low late afternoon sun. That sight filled me with a rush of excitement that overcame my nervousness. In that moment, a new world opened up to me. Unimaginable at that time, I would go on in my program to work as a faculty aid /historical researcher for a NYTimes best-selling author, intern at the PMAE, and conduct research in one of the world’s greatest anthropological and ethnographic collections. After completing my program to earn my master’s degree, I would go on to a career I could not have previously envisioned in higher education advancement—one that ultimately included Harvard.

As a reunion volunteer with the Harvard Extension Alumni Association and an Associate Director with the Harvard College Fund, my connection to Harvard has only deepened since my first nervous step into Harvard Yard so many years ago. I have come to appreciate that Harvard is a place of tradition, yes, but also of inclusion and belonging. Those of us who chose the path of HES form a global community of individuals who strive for excellence, who thirst for knowledge, and who want to contribute to the betterment of the world.

With joy and exuberance, Reunion celebrates our community as no other event can. It celebrates all of us who share the unique bonds as HES alumni. It connects us with each other, with campus, and with all of Harvard. It reminds us that we have shared in the experience of a Harvard education, we have reaped the benefits of world class resources, the guidance of renowned faculty, and are forever part of Harvard University’s history.

As Director of Reunions, I look forward to partnering with HEAA administration and fellow HEAA BOD members to make our Reunion a truly memorable and meaningful event that reflects the spirit of HE alumni.