I couldn’t be more excited to have the opportunity to be running for the position of President of the Harvard Extension School Alumni Association (HEAA).

Our U.S. educational system is undergoing tremendous change in terms of the options available to students, the immediate need for skilled resources, and perception of value. HES offers a unique and flexible path to obtain skills at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This model is clearly a strong path for the future of education.

Having completed two distinct graduate level programs while working, I have a depth of understanding of how continuing education programs are delivered and where the value is to corporations and students. My first experience in the Columbia Business School Executive MBA was a balance of working full time and being in school full time.

The most compelling aspect of this program was the ability to apply material directly to business as it was learned and bring a deeper discussion into the classroom. This combination was indeed powerful and recognized daily from my management team. With a one-year-old and a three-year-old at the time, this was also a significant exercise in time management.

Harvard Extension was unique and different. I was able to construct a flexible program that allowed the selection of classes directly applicable to my work. Taking classes in law, journalism, technology, and negotiations across the university was ideal for me and my employer. It was a truly meaningful experience. For this second master’s degree, I found it equally impactful again to be working full time and applying skills weekly.

At the core of our experience are the ideals of elasticity and value, to create the most meaningful experience to students. Corporations should be chasing programs like HES, offering the ability to obtain a combination of remote and onsite experiences that offer true value while working and are global in nature.

Underpinning the HES platform is an incredible advancement in higher education technology and collaboration platforms that have progressed to a point where having students from all areas of the globe create an online classroom experience unlike any other.

My goals for my tenure would be to pursue the following:

1) Increase engagement of alumni networks by strengthening the ability to connect and sustain meaningful cohorts and relationships.
2) Uncover and expand linkages to industry contacts globally to the extent that they substantially improve career, business and societal impacts.
3) Pursue marketing and adoption into the broader Harvard community through increased awareness of alumni profiles and contributions.

In terms of applicable experience, I served on the advisory board of The Weather Channel during my seven-year tenure at NBC Universal. In this capacity I was an owner representative as our board was comprised of NBC, Bain Capital and The Blackstone Group which jointly purchased the company. I am also a recipient of the HEAA Emerging leaders award and am currently serving on the awards committee. My work history includes ten years at Accenture, three years at Cendant Financial and the past five years managing the U.S. media business for The Associated Press.

The global workforce is more dynamic than ever. People are working longer and require refreshed skills during their career. The HES offering is an important worldwide educational platform that has a bright future.