

2018 Harvard Heroes Citations
Delivered by President Drew Gilpin Faust
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Alumni Affairs and Development

M. Trearty Bartley, Harvard's own Dorothy, you click your *crimson* heels together and bring new meaning to the phrase, "There's no place like home!" As director of the Alumni Travels Program, you connect alumni across continents and empower your staff so they can take on the world. You're proof that people make Harvard special—from the gates of Cambridge to the heights of Kilimanjaro.

Caroline Miller, despite Pinterest wisdom, you know it takes more than a donut wall and mixed-font signage to host a successful event. When Alumni Affairs and Development Events merged with FAS counterparts, your transition went off without a hitch—much like the alumni gatherings you manage all over the world. As an encouraging mentor, tireless troubleshooter, and patient teammate, not even *force majeure* can test your talents.

Harvard Business School

Kerry Herman, if there is ever a data mining Gold Rush, I am hitching my hopes to your wagon. Combining the contributions of faculty across three schools, you were essential to the successful launch of the Harvard Business Analytics Program. You traveled cross-country to film protagonist interviews, spun heads with your production logistics wizardry, and provided steadfast and speedy assistance. With your help, everything panned out just fine.

Kurt Piemonte, you're first chair in a busy orchestra that leads our MBA students to international careers. And, as an immigration expert, you help to reassure many people in a cacophony of questions surrounding immigration regulations—even if it means leaving the symphony on a Saturday to field a panicked call about a detained faculty member. Your calm counsel is music to the ears of anxious students and flustered colleagues.

Ramone Sharpe, like a point guard for the B-School operations team, you run plays on everything from purchase orders and invoice processing to vendor relations and event set-up. But you're never too busy to offer warm greetings and small kindnesses—like lending someone your only umbrella in a downpour. Whether you're rocking the Rock Center or hitting the Shad Hall hardwood, your teammates are thankful you're always there for the assist.

Office of the President and Provost

Elizabeth Ancarana, as assistant provost of faculty development and diversity, your commitment to treating faculty searches as a family affair helps us recruit and retain superior scholars. Whether you're forging connections for faculty partners and spouses or sourcing grants for dependent-care

costs, your unflagging efforts help faculty meet the demands of work and life. Thank you for tipping the scales in their favor.

Luis Duarte, your gift for pedagogical programming helps HarvardX reach learners in innovative ways. With enthusiasm and unmatched skill, you're creating a standard for time-tagged data to enable new ways of learning. And, your video annotation tool facilitates lessons in PredictionX, a multifaculty course on humanity's efforts to forecast the future. No omens or oracles needed: Your talent, efficiency, and good cheer will help to shape the digital landscape.

Jesus Romo Llamas, as Memorial Church events coordinator, you bring peace and ease to those around you. One day, that might mean running out into frigid temps to shuttle forgotten sermon notes back to their author. Another day, it might mean fabricating a moveable stand to transport a heavy baptismal font. No matter the occasion, you quietly transform the place to a sanctuary for each visitor. Your prescience and presence make MemChurch a "space of grace" for all.

Harvard Law School

Lakshmi Clark, there's no dissenting opinion: You create an environment where every student can thrive. As director of Student Affairs, you carefully counsel students to find the right accommodations and train staff on ways to support both access and achievement. Judging from the feedback, your dedication helps HLS maintain order.

Russell Keyes, if the Law School were a band, you'd be the cool, unflappable bass player. Whether you're tackling office moves and repairs, improving workplace ergonomics, or preserving critical documents, your work as building services coordinator keeps the school grooving along so smoothly that everyone misses a beat when you're away. Your legions of fans are glad that being a Harvard caretaker is your jam.

Campus Services

James Barbas, your Harvard Real Estate teammates and tenants marvel at your ingenuity for cost control and generosity with customer service, even when staffing changes lengthened your daily to-do list. Impeccable project management, a positive sense of humor, and a deep sense of pride in property, create curb appeal from Memorial Church to Loeb House and beyond.

Elizabeth Capuano, as advisor to international students and scholars, you help some of the world's brightest minds contribute to our University community. Admirers from many academic and administrative departments marvel at your lightning-fast responses to quickly changing immigration policies and your incomparable memory for individual issues despite a substantial caseload. You're building a global and inclusive Harvard, one visa question at a time.

Deirdre Keady, your diligence and helpfulness are the bedrock for the business of Harvard's Capital Projects. As staff assistant, you oversee office moves, coordinate schedules, and manage meetings—across the hall and across departments. When initial work for the Smith Campus Center project was split between your department and the Harvard Planning Office, your willingness to support both teams kept the project on the right track—speedy Keady does it again.

Amanda Montoya, your conscientious work ensures ideal conditions for irreplaceable treasures from the Harvard Library’s special collections as well as a healthy and welcoming workplace. Staff across four Harvard Library departments sing your praises—for clean floors, shiny entryway doors, quickly cleaned conference rooms, and extra help with break room fridges. For all the love you pour into 90 Mount Auburn St., it wants you to know: It loves you back!

Patricia Prentice, while January’s historic bomb cyclone was impressive, it was no match for the whirlwind of customer service you generate. When a driver was stuck in the snow near your parking booth, you quickly grabbed a shovel—though no coat or gloves—and shoveled a six-foot path to freedom, and returned to your post before the driver could thank you. It’s this kind of unassuming assistance to others that makes *you* the bomb around here.

Harvard Public Affairs and Communications

Maile Takahashi, as director of community programming, you make our neighbors feel welcome at Harvard. You’re “all in” in Allston, where you embraced the trials of start-up programming, new staff, and a new facility for the Ed Portal. With every lecture, arts event, or family program, you enlist Harvard’s best ambassadors. Many are grateful for your constant reminder that “One Harvard” includes our neighbors, too.

Harvard Longwood Campus

Mark Cicchetti, you safeguard a precious resource of medical education—anatomical donors. It’s a critical task that few consider and even fewer could manage. As you guide your team through the intricate process, you’re the epitome of professionalism, sensitivity, and respect. You provide a full circle of care for donors and their loved ones—and give life to last wishes.

Emily Corcoran, you’re often first to address changing needs in the Department of Health Care Policy and to empower others to share in the success. You helped develop a new database to support the important functions of research compliance and data security and stepped up to be program manager for a new lab—all while making coworkers feel heard, supported, and respected. Colleagues admire your ability to lead from head and heart.

Laura DeCoste, as lead of development communications for the Medical School, you steered the launch and prolific progress of the school’s capital campaign, crafting texts and tactics for countless philanthropic presentations and publications. Colleagues consider you an encouraging advisor, dedicated director, and mastermind of messaging. We’re glad there’s an LD behind our MDs.

Molly Deschenes, you’re the point person for all things Dental Education, sinking your teeth into the logistics of major curriculum changes, onboarding new faculty, and coordinating course direction and scheduling. When an accreditation site visit approached, you spent late nights compiling all the needed documents and materials. Faculty and staff would give their eyeteeth for another one of you.

Don Gillis, as the Medical School’s guardian of energy, you’ve established green guidelines, mapped out mechanical improvements and sold stakeholders on sustainable systems. Your efforts

have led to a 21 percent reduction in greenhouse gases and a 17 percent reduction in water consumption—amazing feats on an urban campus anchored by energy-dependent labs. Your fingerprints are all over our smaller footprint.

Megan Halligan, you’ve been called the “glue” that binds Medical School data teams together. Whether devising a storage chargeback system, setting incentives for better data management, or leading daunting efforts to create a centralized online policy library, you bind people together with common purposes and uncommon skill. It’s no wonder your colleagues are so attached.

Leslie Howes, you are a case study in making a collaborative environment co-exist with stringent standards. You’ve fostered a cooperative culture among your staff and transformed the Office of Human Research Administration into an ally for Longwood Area investigators—all while maintaining standards high enough to merit an unprecedented perfect score on accreditation for the institutional review board.

Armand Inezian, you manage complex grants at the Harvard Chan School, but still manage to grant interns meaningful mentorship experiences. You’ve patiently walked numerous novices through the basics of budgeting and sponsorship compliance—some just to the end of the semester, and others all the way to jobs in grants management. There’s no ceiling amount on your kind guidance, and for that, your protégés are grateful.

Donardo Marcellus, your network engineering know-how keeps Medical School emails, data transfers, web searches, HCOM orders and tweets flowing freely. Patiently treating each request as a top priority, you’re always first to jump on a problem. Every day, thousands depend on you (even if they don’t realize it), and you deliver. You’re Harvard’s own Ticketmaster.

Alison McQuown, pivoting effortlessly from planning large-scale meetings and coordinating complex schedules to crafting sensitive communications and managing major projects for the Harvard Chan School’s Dean for Administration, you took charge of a complex project that moved more than 200 people among three buildings. You’re simply McQuown-derful.

Megan Peavey, your commitment to excellence helps things move along swimmingly in the Genetics Department fish room. Your innovative and precise work ensures the facility exceeds operating standards as students are welcomed into the flow of life at the lab. You never fish for compliments, though many say your contributions have elevated the lab’s status and improved the lives of the animals and people around you. Your dedication is off the hook!

John Yong, helping sort through mail isn’t your job, but it was a small act that meant so much to a nervous new staffer. As assistant director of finance in the Environmental and Occupational Medicine and Epidemiology Program, a complex research portfolio and constant deadlines keep you busy. But not too busy to mentor grant managers and financial assistants, offer advice, answer questions or...sort mail. Your goodwill and wisdom remind colleagues they can’t go wrong with Yong.

Financial Administration

Matthew Boudreau, your update to one school’s financial reporting tool became what colleagues called “a life-changing” improvement for financial and research administration offices across the University. The TLX Macro enables the review, analysis, and modification of financial transaction

logs. Even though it was outside the scope of your responsibilities, you built the best possible solution.

Andrea Sexton, as Director of Policy and Compliance in the Office of the Controller, you embrace change and inspire others with your thoughtful energy. When refilling a key staff position, you recognized the need for more leadership in another area of your department. Instead of tabling the hard work of rethinking the whole, you structured the group for greater collective success. Working better, smarter, and more effectively is always your policy.

Harvard Graduate School of Education

Shavonne Noble, aptly named, you graciously and generously support Programs in Professional Education in any way you can. Coworkers call you the unofficial cross-team liaison, enthusiastic Tuesday morning meeting-runner, and the department's walking Google. In the early days of the Certification in Advanced Education Leadership program, you took on the responsibilities of testing the sites, handling participant communications and other online program maintenance beyond your already full load. OK, Google—be like Shavonne!

Sarah Timmins, room-scheduler extraordinaire, you ensure that the School of Education's full dance card is always in order. For the past 12 years, you've sashayed your way through more than 24,000 annual event requests with unparalleled grace. Some call you an "angel" and "miracle worker" with a "magic wand"—apt compliments for your ability to find much-needed event space in what would otherwise be sold-out situations. It's obvious you have all the right moves.

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Tiffany Blackman, from the helm of Pre-Award Services, you steer busy research crews through a sea of complex funding agreements and high-risk collaborations. Even in the choppy wake of a failed proposal or sudden loss in funding, you calmly navigate the straits to protect the University and advance its research efforts. Managing technical logistics and myriad personalities with an even keel, your expertise with complex federal award proposals and ongoing grants keeps FAS research afloat.

Sally Donahue, you are among Harvard's greatest assets—an accolade that is truly merit-based. Nearly two decades of your committed leadership of financial aid at Harvard College have opened our gates to thousands and thousands of deserving students. Despite the intense demands associated with managing our world-renowned Harvard Financial Aid Initiative, you've never stopped disbursing your legendary warmth and kindness. Stafford, Perkins or Pell —none have aided students as well as Donahue.

Christian Franco, with modest resources and a sliver of time from your regular responsibilities, you revolutionized Continuing Education's online learning. Your exhaustive testing, documentation, and consideration of classroom pedagogy make online courses feel like they're on campus, and your development of a portable video kit now makes it possible to livestream 99% of Continuing Education's online courses. In allowing a highly diverse group of students to participate by simply raising a hand, you've elevated distance learning.

Renate Hellmiss, if pictures are worth a thousand words, then you help Harvard life scientists tell endless stories. Your energy and creativity as director of scientific graphics for molecular and cellular biology helps faculty, students, and postdocs report their results, garner grant funding and land journal covers. Whether you're working on graphics, poster production, the departmental website, or a graphic skills class for scientists, you're the hard-working hidden figure behind Harvard's figures.

Charles Hickey, despite a black hole of facilities tasks, Charles keeps things at Harvard College Observatory moving at the speed of light. Colleagues say his hustle and perseverance always shine, whether managing construction or renovation, coordinating observatory nights and the Cambridge Science Festival, or saving important equipment from damage during a summer power outage or a historic flood. Though astronomy work is in the heavens, he's the star on earth that makes it all possible.

Krista Lester, teammates say your leadership of the Social Science Administration Support Group is fueled by clear vision, good judgment and kindness. You're also a famed pinch-hitter, taking on interim roles in several social science departments to oversee annual budgets and performance reviews as well as the recruitment, selection, and training of new hires. Supporting six academic departments and more than 130 faculty members could be a tough game, but you always knock it out of the park.

Jessica Matteson, for the Sociology Department's students and researchers, you're the smooth operator responding to 411, 311 and 911 needs every day. A counselor and confidante to students from admission to commencement, you connect with others to build a strong community. You know who might want to apply for a specific grant or who might be struggling and in need of guidance, reaching out with warmth and wisdom. They're grateful you're on call in William James Hall.

Jack Megan, the University community sings—and dances, acts, sculpts and paints—your praises. It's an appropriate accolade for the Office for the Arts director and ArtsFirst maestro who has kept the beat for nearly two decades. You're the Jack of all arts, improvising through challenges as you orchestrate the appearances of top talent from across campus and across the world to entertain and enrich our community. There's no upstaging your aesthetic.

Emily J. Miller, for students struggling with silent storms, you are there, umbrella in hand. As Title IX coordinator for the College, you've reached undergraduates with online sexual assault and harassment training and increased awareness of critical campus resources. Talking students through highly sensitive and emotionally fraught experiences requires superlative interpersonal instincts and heroic strength. Thank you for parting the clouds to help find a path forward.

Michelle Monestime, after a decade of service to other fortunate Harvard departments, you've brought your characteristic thoughtfulness and dependability to Research Administration Services. In less than a year, peer reviews are gushing about your greatness. From finances to personnel to office operations, you're known for discovering new methods of encouraging professional growth and streamlining workplace processes. Your incredible expertise and compassionate support make your colleagues exclaim, "Eureka! Michelle's got it!"

Stephanie Nasson, you've been the source of calm reassurance for many during the "Aurora" of three new financial systems in FAS. Faculty and staff "Concur": It's because you make the

difficult achievable and deliver customer service with a smile—even if it means calling someone at home on a Friday night to provide an impromptu tutorial on filing reimbursements. For your endlessly patient training and explaining, you're OBI—one beloved innovator.

Sarah Razor, the Mahindra Center for the Humanities is where the humanities mingle, and you know how to throw a great party. From author lectures and musical performances to panel discussions and lunchtime series, you carefully coordinate unique experiences for the University community, raising the profile of the humanities. Students, fellow event coordinators, and Nobel Prize winners alike raise a grateful toast to your talents.

Gregory Tucci, anyone who can develop and teach a popular undergraduate chemistry course, advise students, and bake peach pie worthy of the Derek Bok Center Golden Spatula Award must boast a perfect arrangement of atoms. You've made chemistry approachable and fascinating for students—many of whom seek your counsel because, like any good chemist, you have all the solutions. Faculty, staff and students agree: your patience and commitment are cooler than any liquid nitrogen demonstration.

Anu Vedantham, your interim leadership of the Cabot Science Library renewal produced dynamic events that allow students to collaborate, socialize, and study in an inspirational, high-tech space. The update has sparked a new understanding of the nature of a library as a place where discoveries take place through interactive learning. Though temporary, your touch has yielded a lasting legacy.

Harvard Library

Amy Deschenes, in what seems like three clicks, you've established Harvard Library's User Research Center as a preeminent user experience—or, UX—lab. Like a good user interface, you've been intuitive, responsive and flexible—combating challenges with innovative solutions. Your expertise and enthusiasm navigate everyone toward better online experiences. At a time when it can be easy to use a template and call it done, we're thankful “you do UX.”

Barbara Meloni, you wield the power of primary sources. As the longtime public services archivist at the University Archives, your careful stewardship and guidance to researchers from around the world brings the past into the present every day. And you're equally welcoming to students new to special collections, making the Archives an exciting educational resource to support original research and deeper understanding. Clio smiles upon you.

Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study

Ruth Hill, in four decades as Schlesinger Library's oral history coordinator, your personal narrative has an amazing arc. As one of the godmothers of the renowned Black Women Oral History Project and several similar projects, you've helped other women tell their stories and immortalized their experiences as well. Add to those feats the encouragement of cross-school scholarship and the mentorship of generations of librarians and archivists of color and you have a tale for the ages.

Harvard Kennedy School

Michael Maguire, associates call you extraordinary, tenacious, patient and amazing—appropriate praise for the mastermind behind IT infrastructure for Executive Education at the Kennedy School. In a multi-year process, you've created and implemented system upgrades for everything from curriculum management and program evaluations, to participant ID creation and tuition collection. Who needs MacGyver when we have Maguire?

Rashida Nisbett, your typical day as payroll manager means deftly maneuvering the comings and goings of a large, complex faculty and staff workforce, and then carefully consolidating key details to ensure accurate accounting and pay – with no room for error. Despite all that serious number crunching, you're still known as one of the most cheerful, customer-focused people at the Kennedy School, managing special requests and providing expert guidance without missing a beat. Rashida aficionados are grateful you're always on the money!

Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Susan Forrest, it's no small feat to host an event that includes students, faculty, deans of two schools, myself, plus a very important benefactor and his family. But you pulled it off, with great success. As director of events for SEAS, you've masterfully managed the logistics, stagecraft and diplomacy for countless program launches, conferences and celebrations, including the school's 10-day, 10th anniversary fete last fall. Your savoir faire makes for great gatherings.

Graduate School of Design

Pilar Raynor Jordan, you map out payroll and travel logistics for hundreds of Design School students each semester with fortitude, integrity and grace—an ability that “activates the space” around your desk. For more than a decade, your tireless work has helped students traverse the globe and use their Design School education to build a better world.

Harvard University Health Services

Angela Sigal-Poock, as a University Health Services nurse, you've become a caring ally for transgender patients and many people to be greater participants in their own health management. You've also taken the initiative to deepen your own education on transgender healthcare, learning from fellow clinicians and sharing your knowledge and expertise at Harvard in-services and beyond. You truly embody the Health Services mission to heal, care and educate.

Harvard University Information Technology

Sharon Bayer, your expert guidance has advanced the systems and services essential to the work of Harvard Library. Most recently, your talent for organizing many moving parts was indispensable in the shift of library servers to the cloud. You skillfully unite technologists and

librarians with patience and wisdom. Anyone can get through a project “like a boss.” Your admirers are grateful you handle things like a leader.

Paige Duncan, in just 14 months, you’ve led the successful design and implementation of a critical new IT application that manages the lifecycle of FAS faculty appointments, including faculty reviews, offers, professorships and searches—or FROPS. Your unfailing attention to the end user’s perspective resulted in an efficient and intuitive application and overwhelmingly positive feedback from the Office of Faculty Affairs. Thanks to you, FROPS is tops!

Ventz Petkov makes things easier and a little more secure at Harvard. His technical talents have helped improve Active Directory security and contributed to an online chat and collaboration system connecting more than 500 employees. In his own time, he lent his skills to a crowdsourcing rescue website that offers disaster relief. We’re glad this Hero uses his superpowers for good.

Harvard Divinity School

Beth Flaherty, you’re an expert at the exegesis of financial aid texts. As the Divinity School’s director of financial aid, your scrupulous stewardship has helped test the scholarship budget against enrollment and tuition projections. And your wisdom about policies and laws is paired with patience and care for students. They appreciate your calculations and kindness as you help them find financially feasible paths to the divine.

Harvard University Police Department

Denis Downing, as head of the dignitary and special events team, you keep high-profile happenings safe and secure with tact—and good humor. From pre-visit planning meetings and security walk-throughs, you anticipate and respond to each notable’s needs with courtesy and respect. If Joe Biden heads into a crowd of students to chat or Mark Zuckerberg needs a safe escort from the stage, you’re the VIP for the VIPs.

Harvard Human Resources

Jim Gotimer, you champion professional development to enrich your benefits service center team and encourage the highest levels of service for faculty and staff who email, call, and walk in by the hundreds. Your day-to-day support inspires your crew...and, apparently, motivates them to write poetry, of which I’ll read an excerpt:

“Our boss is Jim. We like him.

When Open Enrollment is here, and the calls we all fear

Our boss Jim is always near...”