



**For Immediate Release**  
**Monday, October 29, 2018**

**Contact: LDF Media**  
212-965-2200 / [media@naacpldf.org](mailto:media@naacpldf.org)

## **Harvard Students and Alumni Testify in Support of College Admissions Policies That Foster Diversity**

BOSTON –Harvard students and alumni will testify in federal court today in support of the university’s ability to consider race as one of many factors in its holistic admissions process.

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. ([LDF](#)) and local counsel [Sugarman Rogers](#) are representing four of the witnesses—three current students and a Harvard alum—who will testify about the integral role of race in their identity and the vital importance of racial and ethnic diversity in the Harvard educational experience.

“This lawsuit is a thinly veiled attempt to dismantle a decades-long effort to foster racial and ethnic diversity at Harvard College, which for generations was reserved for the wealthy and white elite,” **said Jin Hee Lee, LDF Senior Deputy Director of Litigation.** “Our clients’ testimonies today will demonstrate beyond a doubt that one’s race continues to shape a person’s lived experiences and ignoring that key element in the lives of students of color would be a disservice to them when considering their “whole person” in their college admissions applications. Race-consciousness—not race blindness—is necessary to acknowledge the structural inequities that continue to exist in our communities, but also to embrace and celebrate the wonderful diversity that our country has to offer.”

The court will hear the testimony of students **Catherine Ho**, Co-President of the Asian American Women’s Association, **Madison Trice**, Political Action Chair of the Association of Black Harvard Women, **Cecilia Nuñez**, Vice-President of Fuerza Latina, and Harvard graduate **Margaret M. Chin, Ph.D.**, co-founder and Board member of Coalition for a Diverse Harvard. They are representing 25 Harvard student and alumni organizations that filed amicus briefs condemning this lawsuit and issued the following statement:

“We are sharing our personal stories and Harvard experience in court today in solidarity with our fellow classmates and alums who believe as we do that our race

is one of many factors that colleges and universities have the right to consider in admissions policies. It's a privilege to speak on behalf of our fellow classmates and alums who want to see more diversity and inclusion on our campus.”

LDF is a leading voice in the decades-long struggle for equitable college admissions policies, from its early efforts to desegregate colleges and universities throughout the Jim Crow South to its recent advocacy on behalf of Black students as amicus curiae in [Fisher v. University of Texas](#). In *Fisher*, the United States Supreme Court ruled against Edward Blum, the engineer of the Harvard lawsuit, reaffirming the Court's longstanding position that given the critical importance of diversity in higher education, universities may consider race as one of many factors in admissions decisions.

Read the LDF brief and declarations from Harvard student and alumni organizations [here](#).

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*Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.*