

25th Reunion: Chief Marshal Overview and Selection Process

Chief Marshal Overview

The Chief Marshal, a member of the Harvard College class celebrating its 25th Reunion, serves as the honorary leader of all University alumni, representing the Class in the Harvard Alumni Day celebrations. This person will greet classes as they process into Harvard Yard, designate “marshal’s aids” to help with duties as part of the Harvard Alumni Association’s Happy Committee, and preside over the Chief Marshal’s Spread luncheon.

Serving as Chief Marshal of alumni during Harvard Alumni Day is a special honor and a longstanding Harvard tradition that dates back to 1899. The honor of selecting the Chief Marshal is delegated to members of the College class holding its 25th Reunion who are asked to select one of their classmates to serve in this role. The Chief Marshal role is separate from the Marshal roles on the Class Committee (although Class Committee Marshals certainly might be nominated to be Chief Marshal).

Chief Marshal Nominating Committee

Each July (at the start of the reunion year), the HAA College Alumni Programs staff liaison to the 25th Reunion Class will reach out to the 25th Reunion Committee leaders about the process for kicking off the Chief Marshal selection. This begins with an email being sent to the whole class seeking members to join the Chief Marshal Nominating Committee. This might involve inviting members of the class broadly to participate. The committee will meet twice during the early fall.

The work of the Chief Marshal Nominating Committee will be led by the Co-Chairs (note that this is different from the Chairs of the 25th Reunion Committee). The Co-Chairs are traditionally two members of other classes and these alumni have typically chaired the nomination process in the past.

Chief Marshal Nominations and Election

The Chief Marshal Nominating Committee invites nominations from the class.

The criteria are as follows:

- Contribution to one’s community and the larger society
- Success in one’s career(s), vocation(s), and/or avocation(s)
- Service and support to the 25th Reunion Class and/or Harvard University

While it may be unlikely that any one classmate would be exceptional in all three areas, nominees should demonstrate distinction in at least two of the three.

Classmates will be asked to submit recommendations in late summer along with thoughts as to why their nominee(s) would be ideal candidates, by completing a form that will be sent to the nominating committee.

The Chief Marshal Nominating Committee will then meet to discuss all nominees and work toward putting together a slate. Nominees will be notified before the slate is announced and to confirm their availability to participate in Harvard Alumni Day if they are elected as Chief marshal. In the fall the

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Nominating Committee will propose a slate of 10-12 candidates from all the nominees to the HAA Board of Directors during their fall meeting. The slate will then be reviewed and approved by the Board.

The slate of 10-12 will then be put to a vote by the 25th Reunion class. The election will take place online in January of the reunion year. Following the election, the winning candidate will be notified, and once they confirm, the other candidates on the slate will be told the results. Once all the candidates have been notified, the results will then be announced to the class and to the HAA Board of Directors at their winter meeting.

More information about recent Chief Marshals can be found at <https://alumni.harvard.edu/college/chief-marshal>.