Harvard University New Ladder Faculty Institute 2022

JUDITH D. SINGER: I'm the senior vice provost for Faculty Development and Diversity, and I'm a professor of statistics at the Graduate School of Education. And I want to welcome you to the first in three years in-person New Faculty Institute. It is really terrific to have you all here. We're positively thrilled, both with your appointments, but also with your presence in the room this afternoon.
As I hope you've started to see, Harvard is a terrific place to have your career. You all made the decision, so at this point, you might as well look at it in the positive light. But you've got fabulous colleagues, fabulous students, terrific opportunities, and an environment in which I hope each and every one of you will thrive.

I'm going to turn the podium over to our provost, Alan Garber, who's going to make a few introductory remarks. Alan is a professor of more schools at Harvard than you can count on one hand. He has appointments in the medical school, the Department of Economics, the School of Public Health, and the Kennedy School. He is both a physician and a health economist and has been provost of Harvard now for 10 years. 11 years?

ALAN M. GARBER: 12

JUDITH D. SINGER: This is your 12th year. I'm a statistician, but I'm having a hard time with the counting thing. So we've asked Alan to come join us so you get a sense, from the leadership of the university, about how thrilled we are to have you and how Alan thinks about the university. And then I'll come back up and make some other opening remarks. So Alan, please come join us.

ALAN M. GARBER: Thank you, Judy. First of all, let me just welcome all of you. There is really no more important decision that any university makes than deciding about who all serve on its faculty. And you are an extraordinary group. And in the case of some of you, I know that at a deeper level than you may ever imagine. But it is a really remarkable group of people.

And I'm going to be very brief because I want to give you the chance to ask me questions. But I just want to give you a little bit of advice for if you're new to Harvard. And actually, many of you have been at

Harvard at some time in your past but in a very different capacity than you're in now. So you need to look at Harvard with new eyes. And I guarantee you, the perspective will be different than, say, when you were an undergraduate or grad student or something like that.

The thing that makes Harvard a remarkable place, in my view, is the absolute stunning excellence of its community, the people who are here. And we have tremendous physical resources, as I'm sure you're well aware. But it's really our people who make us special.

And what makes Harvard different from all but a few universities is excellence across a wide range of areas. And this is even true when you compare us to our peers in the Ivy League. We really try to be excellent across a set of fields that only a few other institutions actually strive to match.

Now, particularly for those of you who are junior faculty, you've probably been worrying about tenure since you got your PhDs or whatever your other terminal degree may be. And you will be under tremendous pressure to hunker down and do what you were told it will take to get tenure.
Now, what it takes varies across fields, and I'm not going to claim I can give you some broad advice about what it will take in your field. But I think you'll be missing out on a huge opportunity if you don't take advantage of what else is here in the university, and particularly the intellectual resources represented, in part, by the group around the tables here, people from a wide array of fields, totally different interests.

Part of what we try to do in the Provost Office is actually create opportunities for faculty to meet each other from across the university, people who would not meet otherwise. Now, I should say, truth in advertising here. I should disclose a little bit about my role as provost, and you will then understand why I have this perspective.

The provost is a relatively new role at Harvard. The modern provost role was created in 1992. So it's only existed for 30 years. And Neil Rudenstine, who was president, who started the provost role, explained to me, early in my time as provost, that he created the position because he wanted to have a way to nurture and support interfaculty initiatives-- that is to say, initiatives that cut across schools, across departments, and so on-- because they didn't have a natural home at Harvard at the time that he started. And he saw that this was increasingly important.

So in the 30 years since then, the role has expanded considerably. Like at other universities, the provost is the chief academic officer at Harvard. The deans report to the president and the provost. But the provost remains responsible for interfaculty initiatives and what we call affiliates. Now, if you want to know what they are, you can take a look at our website.

But there are about 30 interfaculty initiatives at Harvard. So these are the centers and institutes that are not solely based in schools. They include, for example, the Mahindra Humanities Center. It includes the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, the Mittal South Asia Institute. It includes the Harvard Stem Cell Institute.

And it includes our two newest institutes, which have generated a huge amount of excitement. And one of the leaders-- one of them is actually here. And those are the Kempner Institute for the Study of Natural and Artificial Intelligence-- brand-new institute-- and the Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability. These are formal structures that bring together people from across the university in ways that simply are not possible within a school structure alone. And they're very successful at doing that. The affiliates refers to some of these features of the university that you might say, cynically, just don't belong anywhere else. But it includes the largest university library in the world, the Harvard Library, the seventh-largest art museum, by collection size, in the country, the Harvard Art Museums. It includes the American Repertory Theater. It includes a well-kept secret, our Renaissance Studies Center on the outskirts of Florence, Villa I Tatti. If you're really nice, somebody may tell you how you can find it and how you can visit there.

But seriously, I say all of this to point out that we're very much focused on bringing people together. And there is so much that you can gain from your time here, working within your own departments, working within the narrow confines of your discipline, so much more that you can gain by making connections. So we stand by to help you with that. And Judy's office is very, very much engaged in that activity.
So let me just say, again, how thrilled I am to welcome you here. I know that you are going to have a wonderful time at Harvard. And I also know that you're going to make the rest of us more successful by your presence. So thank you, and let me [INAUDIBLE].
[APPLAUSE]

JUDITH D. SINGER: Thanks, Alan. Thanks for taking the time. He's an extremely busy person. So thank you for taking the time. So I'd like to reinforce some of Alan's points with some data and my particular perspective on it, and then take time to have introductions around the room. But let me just make a few overarching points about the university, from my perspective.

I've been at Harvard my entire professional career. I did not go to Harvard College. I am a SUNY Albany graduate, with my bachelor's degree, and a product of the New York City Public Schools. I just want to write that. And echoing something that Freeman Hrabowski said yesterday, you should identify-- my parents were first-generation college students going to city college. So people can come to Harvard from lots of different backgrounds.

I started my academic career here in 1984 as an assistant professor at a time when you were told, assume you will not get tenure. It's an extremely unmotivating thing to say to a new assistant professor, but that was the Harvard of that particular day and time. The appointments were referred to as folding chairs. Mortgages-- you were advised to get adjustable mortgages. It was not a place that nurtured its early-career faculty.

One of the reasons I agreed to take this position-- and I forgot that Alan has been in his for 12, but I've been in mine for 15-- was to solidify the tenure track at Harvard, to make the tenure track be a key feature of this university for the sake of the university, for the sake of the future of this university. We were having a hard time attracting people, because there were lots of other good places to go. And so by moving to a tenure track, it was entirely enlightened self-interest. We wanted to make this a place that people could make their careers.

I've been here now a long time. I've been in the Provost Office a while. And a few observations, some of which echo Alan, some of which are a little bit different. One is the size of Harvard. It is enormous. We are, among our peer institutions, by far and away, at least among the private schools-- we are the far largest of any of our peer institutions.

And that's excluding the 12,000 faculty who are in our affiliated hospitals. So if you include them-- so all the hospitals downtown are also Harvard-affiliated and part of this institution. And many of the people there have faculty appointments. On the main campus and on the quad at the medical school, which is

the basic science and social-science departments, we have 1,500 faculty. That's a lot of people. About 1,100 are tenured, and about 400 are tenure track.

And one of the things that I want to call attention to is the increasing diversity of our faculty. This has been a deep commitment of the university, and in particular, of my office, in terms of changing the Harvard faculty to be more broadly representative of the talent that's out there and more reflective of the students that we serve.

Right now, if you look across the whole university, the representation of women is at an all-time high. A third of the faculty are female. People of color now represent just over a quarter of the faculty. But what really gives me hope is the people in this room. This year's entering class of ladder faculty-- assistant, associate, and full professors-- is the most diverse in Harvard history, by an order of magnitude.
To put some numbers on it, 50% of the incoming class are faculty of color, and 31% are members of groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education-- Blacks and/or Hispanics. There happened to not be any Native American faculty in this year's entering class. But 53% are women. This is the second year in a row that we've reached parity in the appointments of new faculty of men and women. It is not that long ago when this room would look very, very different.

And so it is the efforts of your colleagues and your departments and your schools, and yes, efforts on the part of the president and the provosts and the university, to change who it is we appoint, to look broadly in kinds of fields that we might have ignored before so that we have the Harvard of the future being the Harvard that we want to be part of, not the Harvard of the past.

If you look at these groups together, 76% of our incoming faculty are women and/or people of color. It is not that long ago when those numbers were in the single digits. So 76% is a rather large statistic, to me. And as Alan was referring-- and I'm going to put a name on it-- we're increasingly one Harvard.

So years ago, when Harvard's reputation is that it's, quote, every tub on its own bottom, each school does its own thing and is independent of every other school-- it is true that the budgets are set locally, but this is a much more collaborative institution. The interfaculty initiatives that Alan talked about is part of that. This event and other events that our office and other offices in the Provost Office will

sponsor will also be part of that. And I urge you all to come and participate in these events to feel part of Harvard.

This building is the Harvard Faculty Club. It's been closed for two and a half years because of COVID. And one of the reasons we wanted to hold this in this building was to have you-- it feels so Harvard in this building. The reception is going to be over in the East Dining Room on the other side. The club is not yet open for meals. Hopefully that will happen as COVID subsides a bit more. But it is open for events. And this old paneling-- they've taken down the pictures of the dead white men. This used to have a lot of pictures of dead white men around. They've put much more modern art, which is very nice. But we want you to feel part of this university and that you're really embedded in it.

The rationale for today's program is really that despite our different fields, with new faculty from every school at the university represented and at different career stages, we want to talk about how to establish your professional identity here and how to navigate your experiences as a faculty member here. Even if you've been in another university, which I've not been, people tell me there's no place quite like Harvard. And this panel will be facilitated by my colleague Elizabeth Ancarana in a minute.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: And I'm Elizabeth Ancarana, the assistant provost for Faculty Development and Diversity, in Judy's office. And it's my pleasure to join Judy and Alan and my colleagues in welcoming you to Harvard and here today for the New Faculty Institute.

We have two other wonderful Harvard faculty members at two different career stages. We have Dara Kay Cohen and Brandon Terry. Dara Cohen is a political scientist and professor of public policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. Her research and teaching interests include the causes and consequences of civil war and other forms of political violence, gender and conflict, and qualitative and mixed research methods.

Dara is the author of two books, Rape During Civil War, which examines the variation in the use of rape during recent civil conflicts, and Lynching and Local Justice-- Legitimacy and Accountability in Weak States, which draws on original survey and focus-group data collected in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Dara received her PhD in Political Science from Stanford University and an AB in Political Science and Philosophy from Brown University. Dara will focus her remarks on mentoring that she's found helpful, on managing one's workload, and managing one's work and life.

And then we'll also hear from Brandon Terry. Brandon Terry is the John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences in the faculty of Arts and Sciences and the co-director of the Institute on Policing, Incarceration & Public Safety at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research. A scholar of African-American political thought, Brandon is co-editor of To Shape a New World-- Essays on the Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and he's the editor of Fifty Years Since MLK. His next book, The Tragic Vision of the Civil Rights Movement-- Political Theory and the Historical Imagination, interrogates the normative and political significance of different narratives of African-American history in liberalism, radicalism, and Afro-pessimism through methods drawn from the philosophy of history, literary theory, and political philosophy.

Brandon earned his PhD in Political Science and African American Studies from Yale University, a Master of Science in Political Theory Research from the University of Oxford, and an AB in Government and African and African American Studies from Harvard University. Brandon will talk about getting settled at Harvard and in the Boston and Cambridge area and mentoring that he has found helpful to him.
So we'll start with Dara, who is a more recently tenured faculty member, and Brandon, who is an associate professor. And so about 15 minutes each. And then we'll have time for questions from you all for our panelists.

DARA KAY COHEN: Wonderful. Thank you. Hi, everyone. It's really a pleasure and an honor to be joining you here today. And I'll just echo all of our colleagues and just say a big welcome to this wonderful place, where you all work as well. A few additional biographical notes I just wanted to provide as broader context about where my comments are coming from. I started at Harvard in the fall of 2012, which makes this my 10th year, which is hard to believe, here at Harvard. This position that I'm in now was actually my second academic appointment. So I moved after spending three years at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota before I came here as an assistant professor.
I also had a baby when I was on the tenure track, my daughter Layla, who is now almost nine. She spent several years in the Harvard child-care system. And we lived in Harvard University Housing up until

about a month ago. So I'm happy to talk about any of those aspects of life as a faculty member here at Harvard during Q&A if that might be of interest or helpful.

So the first set of comments I wanted to make was about mentoring that I have found helpful. And there really are, I think, three types of mentoring that I found particularly useful over my years on the tenure track here at Harvard. Although, I will just acknowledge, at the outset, I think this will depend so much on one's career stage and the type of support that you're seeking and your discipline and your background and all of that. But I will just talk about three forms that I have found particularly helpful. And those are internal mentoring, external mentoring, and what I'm calling horizontal mentoring.
So in terms of the first one, internal mentoring, I was very lucky in a sense that the Kennedy School actually created a formal program of mentorship after my first year or so on the tenure track at HKS. It's a system of formally assigning a junior faculty member to a senior faculty member in their field. And it's actually an official form of service at the Kennedy School for which the senior faculty member is compensated through-- we have a complicated system of points over at the Kennedy School. So it's actually pointed service at the Kennedy School.

And the idea is that you meet-- the two of you-- privately for maybe one or two hours every semester. And so my assigned mentor was wonderful. And I really benefited so much from these meetings with her over the course of my junior years. And in these meetings, we would talk about research progress and challenges that I was facing.

I guess I should back up and say, the Kennedy School is an incredibly multidisciplinary place. And so my faculty mentor, by design, was a fellow political scientist who was senior both to me at the Kennedy School but also senior in my specific discipline, which was particularly helpful.
So Kathryn Sikkink was the name of my mentor. She and I would meet twice a semester to discuss research challenges and progress I was making, progression through the complicated tenure-track process at the Kennedy School, the promotion process, which looked quite different here than the place that I had previously worked. And so that was really helpful to get to talk to someone about that once a semester.

We would strategize a bit about internal politics. The Kennedy School itself is much larger than a standard political-science department. And so the kinds of advice that I was able to glean from my

conversations with my mentor had to do with, for example, what meetings and what seminars were really important for me, as a junior faculty member, to attend, which people at the school I should really commit to trying to spend time with. So all of that, I found very useful for navigating what can feel, I think, like a very large and somewhat confusing place.

But I think the fact that the Kennedy School has really invested in this formal mentorship program and the fact that it was pointed service made me feel, as a junior faculty member, like I benefited a great deal from this time from a senior faculty member, and I didn't have to feel too badly about taking up such a chunk of time, because again, it was a form of formal service for my senior mentor.

I've also benefited from other forms of less formal mentorship. So I wanted just to highlight that. Some of these were very brief lunches. Others of them were longer conversations about research, both from my colleagues at the Kennedy School and then from other political scientists around the university.
So I think, as a junior faculty member, especially at a place that is as busy as Harvard can sometimes be, I had to ask to do those lunches and to have those meetings. But I was trying to think about this this morning. I don't recall a time, in my 10 years of being here, that anyone has ever said no.

So I have really benefited, in particular, from some of my senior colleagues, who I think take a great deal of joy and pleasure in meeting with junior faculty, who would say not only yes to meeting me for lunch, but ask me to send them a paper ahead of time and would come having read it and marked it all up. And so I think it's just a process of finding those people in your particular unit. And I'm sure they exist all over the university. But I really benefited from some of those folks at the Kennedy School.
The last form of internal mentoring that I have really enjoyed is something that developed over the years that I have been at the Kennedy School, which is called TALK Club. It stands for Talking About Life's Concerns, where Concerns is, of course, spelled wrong.

But it was developed, actually, as a kind of informal mentorship group for women-identifying and non-binary folks on the tenure track at the Kennedy School, inspired by one of our colleagues who actually passed away a few years back, Diva [INAUDIBLE], who was a wonderful sociologist. But she actually-- Diva-- had started a TALK club in her high school. And so in her honor, some of my colleagues decided to start a TALK club for us at the Kennedy School.

And the idea here is, it's a very small group of faculty who get together for breakfast or for lunch and just talk about all things relating to life at the university, primarily, since we come from all different backgrounds and disciplines. And that has just been a really lovely community that my colleagues created after Diva passed.

OK. The second form of mentorship I wanted to mention is external mentorship. I think it's often said, at least in the political-science world-- and it was often said to me-- that you should, as a junior faculty member here, seek to get tenure in your discipline as a whole, not only in your home unit.
And so for me, that often meant connecting with some of my colleagues and my dissertation chair and my committee and my former professors, all of whom I've actually kept in much closer touch with than I necessarily would have expected when I graduated from grad school all those years ago, to ask questions about strategizing over the job market or research questions that are really best answered by someone who's in your micro, niche corner of your field.
And so I've kept in very close touch with some of those faculty members as well. And I think, especially in a place like the Kennedy School, a professional, multidisciplinary school, I've also really benefited from connections with fellow political scientists in other units, most importantly in the Gov Department as well.

The last form of mentorship that I have found really helpful is what I'm calling horizontal mentorship. And this is a piece of advice I also give to our incoming graduate students in our doctoral program at the Kennedy School as well, which is that I'm continuously surprised by how important my horizontal connections are, including with my peers from my graduate program, all of whom are now also tenured at institutions across the United States and around the world, who are now leading journals and job searches and all sorts of things. So I think those kinds of horizontal connections are just incredibly important to one's entire career progression.

But I wanted to mention one form of horizontal mentorship, in particular, that I instituted during the pandemic that I thought was really helpful. I went up for tenure in the academic year 2021, which was an incredibly stressful time, I'm sure, for all of us, given the pandemic and everything that was going on around us, made extra stressful, in my particular case, for going up for tenure at that time, living in a small apartment with a six-year-old child, et cetera.

And so I was feeling particularly isolated because my entire life, as was all of ours, was online at that time. And so I brought together a group of six women in my subdiscipline of political violence in the political-science world. And we started having monthly meetings, which, at the time, were primarily for us to read each other's work, because I was feeling like all of those opportunities to get feedback on our research had disappeared in the early stages of the pandemic.

And that group of six women has morphed into this really important horizontal mentorship group where, even though the pandemic has reached a new phase and we have a lot more in-person connections now than we did at that stage, we're all at very similar stages of life. Almost all of us are parents to young kids. We all work at research universities. All of us are now newly tenured.
And so we still do present research as part of that group. But I have found it just immensely helpful to have this group of people who aren't at Harvard, who are at other places, at similar career stages, to share experiences and talk about the kinds of things that we are all facing.
All right. So to transition to the second topic, which is, I think, formally about managing workload and work-life balance, although I did veer a little bit into some of living in Boston and the pleasures of one's faculty position as well-- I do feel a little bit funny about giving advice on work-life balance, because I am not good at work-life balance. And I think if I look back over the course of my 10 years at Harvard, I think this balance was particularly off when my daughter was youngest and also in the maybe year or two before I went up for tenure.

So I think, in my own experience, rather than seeking work-life balance all the time, at every particular moment, for me, it's been a balance over time, where I have very intense periods and then try to come back to something that feels a little bit more balanced, in terms of my personal life and my family life. So my personal goal has always been to find this balance across the longue durée rather than in any one particular moment.

But some things that I mentioned that I found useful, again, just coming from my perspective as someone who had a baby in my second year here on the tenure track-- one thing that I found was really helpful, or really important, to getting my research done was to really create dedicated time for research so that I could also create dedicated time for family and personal projects, because I found these things were leaching into each other in a way that wasn't particularly helpful.

So in my particular case, that meant finding reliable, consistent child care, because like, I'm sure, many of us in this room, we don't have local family-- my husband and I-- that were able to pitch in and help. So one of the ways that we have done this is through using some of the many wonderful resources that we have available to us as faculty here at Harvard.

So we have used, for example, a lot of the faculty dependent care resources that are available to us, including things like the ACCESS Scholarship program, the university's care.com membership, the Harvard Student Employment Office, all to hire occasional babysitters, emergency babysitters, regular sitters that would come for part of weekend days in order to carve out time to be productive while balancing teaching and having a baby.

On the more fun, personal-aspect side of things, I also just wanted to say, the flip side, of course, is making dedicated time for non-research-related activities. So just some brief advice I wanted to offer, some thoughts about echoing some of the things that were said earlier, is that I think it's important just to take time for oneself and to really take advantage of living in such a vibrant place as Boston and Cambridge.

One of my pieces of advice that I often give to new faculty is that-- these are very specific pieces of advice. But one is that there's Outings & Innings, right? This email that we sometimes get about things going on around Boston. There are just a ton of really amazing tickets and fun things to do through Outings & Innings for Harvard affiliates, often in extremely good seats. So I just wanted to give an example. This past summer, my nine-year-old daughter, my husband and I went to go see Lady Gaga at Fenway Park. And it was in incredible seats. It was probably one of the highlights of my daughter's nine years. It was just an amazing thing to do. We've gone to see The Nutcracker and ended up in seats in the third row. My mother-in-law came with us that time, and it was the first time she had ever been to the ballet. And she was weeping. And so there's a lot of just incredible things going on around Boston. And I think it's important to experience a lot of those.

For me, also, I think part of the work-life-balance thing has been finding a non-work-related goal or hobby. And for me, in particular, that has been running. I am really bad at running, so I don't run because I'm good at it. But I run because it's just a very satisfying thing to do, where unlike, sometimes, with one's academic work, you can really trace how you're getting better at something over time. You

can see progress and reaching of goals. And so that's been really fun for me. And I have colleagues that have joined book clubs and other things, have taken cooking classes, things that aren't related to research that can really help you have more of a balance.

Along with that, just two more things I wanted to highlight. I think, for us and our family, having-- although we have many friends who are affiliated with Harvard, it's also, I think, been really important to get out of the bubble. And we have lots of friends that have nothing to do with Harvard, who also aren't academics-- my husband isn't an academic-- but have lots of non-academic friends. And that can just be a relief sometimes, I think, to talk to people who aren't also on the tenure track. So that was helpful for me.

And then finally, one last micro thing I wanted just to share is that one stress-management thing to do-- and I didn't discover this until a few years after being here-- is this incredible resource that we have on campus called the Center for Wellness, located in the Smith Campus Center, where faculty can get acupuncture and massage for actually very reasonable prices. And that's something that I have periodically done when I have felt like I was getting far too many migraines or tension headaches and needed help with that. So those are my initial thoughts. And I look forward to hearing questions. Thank you.
[APPLAUSE]

BRANDON TERRY: Well, first, I just want to echo what's been said. Welcome. I hope that the beginning of the semester has not been too overwhelming and that you're finding some time to enjoy being here. It's an honor to be-- I remember being at my New Faculty Institute and dealing with a thing that Alan talked about a little bit, which is having one experience of Harvard as an undergraduate and then being tossed into something so radically different and trying to find my bearings. So I was really grateful for this. And I hope it'll be enlightening for you all.

I was going to start with mentoring stuff. But I think, because Dara has done such a phenomenal job of laying out some of these things, I just want to echo some of the things that you've said about getting settled here in Boston. I've been in Boston a really long time. I came here when I was 17 and basically have only been gone about four years in between. So I know the city really well. I know Cambridge really well. And I love Cambridge. I love this campus. I love Harvard.

But the number-one advice I can give you is to really try to enjoy the broader community. Like, get out of the bubble. Get into Boston. Do interesting things. I tend to find, the people who don't have a good time here are the people who only stay in Harvard Square the whole time, right? They only eat at the same three restaurants. They only go to the activities that are sent in the Harvard newsletter. It's like, just get out of the bubble and see some things.

But what does that really mean? For some of us, that means living outside of Cambridge. I have never lived in Cambridge. I lived in Dorchester for a very long time, down in the Southeast part of Boston. The fact that the tech industries are doing so well makes it that many of you won't live in Cambridge. It's gotten a lot more expensive to do so. Some of y'all are fine. But many of us are living in other parts of Boston.

And it's been, I think, really exciting. You're meeting different kinds of people. You're seeing other parts of the city. You're getting some of the distance from work that helps underscore, structurally, a work-life balance. I think you're going to get a flood of information coming in. Just at this front end, really try to go through these things that they give you about housing, about dependent care, because the housing support is phenomenal, right?

The Coldwell Banker associates, the people that they're putting you in contact with-- the housing office here-- are just really, really great for those of you who don't have a lot of experience navigating the home-buying process or trying to seek out real estate. Tom Scarry has now retired, but he could go on my mother's mantelplace in a photo because he was so helpful to our family throughout that process. We also have an employee-assistance service that they've sent around the number for. I find them helpful for any number of things. I found my child's daycare through them. I found mental-health resources through them. I found elder-care resources through them. They are just a team of people who will track down things and call on your behalf-- things that you just feel overwhelmed and you don't have enough time to do. The employee-assistance program is really remarkable for that.

Judy's office has been incredibly supportive of those of us with children. I have two children, one that's six and another that's 19 months, crazily, on the tenure track. But they're there. And we've needed help trying to find child care and get support for the very, very expensive child care in Boston.

And the accessed funds were really crucial to our family. As I said, the employee-assistance program helping find places with spots. The existing Harvard daycare system is now set up so that faculty have priority, and that's been really helpful for many of my colleagues.

So I just, again, encourage you to take advantage of that, even the dependent-care funds, which help you get some of the money back that you spend on dependent care. And that could be for children or older folks or folks with disabilities that you have as dependents. I think a lot of people don't know that. But that's part of it as well.

Outings & Innings is incredible. It not only includes just one-off tickets for the plays that come to town-- Broadway in Boston, the ballet, the Celtics games, the Red Sox games, the Bruins games, Harvard, Yale, things like that-- it has these one-off tickets, but it also is a clearinghouse for just discounted passes and tickets to things that you might go to on an ordinary weekend.
So always has discount movie tickets, always has discount amusement-park tickets, always has discount things for-- they even have discounts for getting your car fixed at Sullivan Tire. I just used this, like, three weeks ago. I needed an oil change. So all of these things are at your disposal because Harvard has so much buying power, collectively, they're able to bring these things as benefits to the faculty. And you should avail yourselves of them.

They also, I think-- built into your ID is free admission to many of the local museums-- Museum of Fine Arts, Institute for Contemporary Art. These things are wonderful, especially for your family. And many of your families will come to have an ambivalent relationship to Harvard as you work so hard. And bringing them these benefits really helps. Look at what I've been able to provide for you.
It's a great way to get out and see parts of the city that you wouldn't otherwise see and things that [INAUDIBLE]. Like, right now, the Obama portraits are at the MFA, and they're doing a great exhibition on Life magazines, photo archives. And just getting down there to see those with the family is really wonderful.

Another thing that's been really important for me in Boston is being part of the civic life of the city. I know Harvard has very global ambitions. And many of you have global scope to your research. And I think that's amazing. But there are things that matter here locally and that are a part of the place you live and that will affect your day-to-day life. And people need you nearby. People need you for

community service. They need you for the public life of our metropolitan area. And being a volunteer or someone that's active in those ways has been, again, a very enriching part of my time here. So as you heard, one of the things I work on is the political philosophy of Martin Luther King. And there was an effort here to memorialize Martin and Coretta Scott King with a giant memorial in Boston Common. I joined that effort really early on. And through a lot of the conversations I had with folks and work we did together, this has now grown to a massive civic effort that is beyond just the statue. It's creating gathering space for the community, a rich fabric of intellectual exhibitions for areas of the city that don't usually get access to the kind of conversations and intellectual life we have here all the time. That was just a thing I happened to fall into because I was looking for a way to get involved in the city. And I've gotten to meet everybody from the mayor to the governor to the senators to local activists, and share with them the work I'm up to and hear about the things that they're up to and enrich my classes and scholarship because of it. So whatever that happens to be for you all, I really encourage that to be a part of getting out of the bubble and into the broader community.

Last thing I'll say, and particularly for any of you who are from warm-weather places, you have to take Boston on its own terms, all right? Sometimes California people come, and they just are too cruel. They only want to do the things that they used to do. Try to push yourself out of your comfort zone and take up the apple picking. Try that. Try skiing. Try ice skating. Go to the pumpkin patch. Do the quintessential New England things. Some of them, you'll find a bit bizarre. You may only want to go to the cranberry bogs once. But some of them, you'll really find exciting and make into a new part of your life. And I really think it's important to take a place on its own terms. So I encourage you to do that.

Last thing on getting settled in Cambridge, Boston, Harvard has done a lot to think creatively about leaves-- research leaves. That can be a difficult thing, though, for families. And one of the things you should think about before it comes right up to your time to do the leave is having serious, reflective conversations with your family about what that's going to look like, whether that means you'll stay here, whether that means you'll go to another place and try to visit at Princeton Institute for Advanced Study or Stanford Center for the Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, whatever.

Having those conversations and getting prepared for what that means for subletting your children's school situation-- I found that that was one thing that really, I think, was a big obstacle for us in trying to navigate and is a piece of advice I wish I had had right at the beginning. So I thought I'd say that.

I'll say a couple of brief things about mentoring. I love the typology here and cannot improve on it. So I will just add a couple of asides. So the place can feel overwhelming. There's no way to get around that. It can feel intimidating and very idiosyncratic. Just the language that people use-- your undergraduate students snicker at you when you say major. [INAUDIBLE] no, it's a concentration. That could just feel like, man, do I even know what's going on here?

And this is one of the reasons I think it's just really important to talk about mentoring. The mentoring is what helps you find your bearings. And it helps you figure out the best decisions for you to make, given your values, given your commitments, given your goals, to get through the tenure process or to get through the process of becoming acclimated to becoming Harvard faculty. Each of us faces a lot of unknown unknowns. And good mentoring helps fill in some of that fog about, what is it that I don't know that I don't know, right?

So how do you find a mentor? Some of us will be assigned a faculty mentor by our departments or units. I think that's the best. But you should think about whomever, in your department or beyond, you might connect with or admire, because I think a lot of junior faculty, in particular, come in with a mindset that's very much like a dissertation-advisor mindset, that I want the mentor that's narrowly in my specific field or that's closest to my specific field.

And when that works, it can be great. They can tell you where to publish or what grants to apply for, what conferences to go to. But I really want to push you not to think of mentorship in such a narrow way. First, as Alan mentioned, meeting other people can change and improve and extend your research. I didn't come here as somebody who was specifically focused on the question of incarceration and crime and public safety. But through relationships I've built with other scholars, that's become a central part of my research agenda.

I think many of the obstacles you'll face won't be narrowly in the terms of your research. Many of you are already quite good at your research. The things that will surprise you and the things that will be real difficulties are going to be things you don't expect. There'll be things about teaching, about administrative responsibilities, about your work-life balance. And you'll want to know about how your colleagues handle choosing a school for their children or how they navigated a particularly time-intensive part of their career right up where they're about to go into submitting the tenure file. Those

are the kinds of things you'll want to know from people. And you'll have to have those preexisting relationships to do that, to ask those questions.

And for most of you, I think the most important piece of advice a mentor will give you is when to say no. Now, I'll give you one free piece of advice, which is, don't say no to Judy. But your real mentor can give you a bunch of other advice about who you can say no to.

Our campus has a really busy life. So there's talks all the time. There's guests coming in. People want you to come to dinner. They want you to come to this. They want you to join this committee. Your students are the most ambitious students in the world. They're going to want letters of recommendation for every fellowship that there is. You've got a public profile just being at Harvard. So people will contact you when things happen in the world and ask you to come on TV or give commentary to the newspaper or do this or do that.

That's a lot. That's a lot. And having somebody you can forward these things to or call really quickly or text really quickly just to say, is this a thing I should do? What are the implications of me choosing to do something like this? That is utterly crucial, because again, you have unknown unknowns. You don't know what it's like downstream, right? And a real mentor can have conversation with you about your values and goals so that you can slot those decisions in according to those values and goals.

One caveat, I'll say-- and I'll wrap up soon-- is that even good mentors will sometimes have the tendency to give you advice that essentially amounts to, say no to everybody but me. It's hard to know if you have a mentor like that, on the front end. But if you find that your mentor, over time, is making requests of you that are so onerous that you're feeling derailed from your goals or that you think that you can never say no to them, that may not be the best mentoring situation, all right?
And it is tricky because you want to do things for people who are helping you. But if the relationship starts to feel like it's tilting in that way, it may be time to try to pull back some and find other mentorship.

Last thing I'll say-- and we can open it up-- is, good mentors will direct you to resources or support you might need for unforeseen events, all right? And this is one reason to start early and get a relationship going, because you don't know what might happen.

I was in the unfortunate position of my daughter being born with a really serious illness and my mother having a stroke at the same exact time. So I'm in the hospital for my daughter when I get the news that my mother has had a stroke. And this is, I think, two or three weeks before the semester is about to start. And I just am utterly just overwhelmed, perplexed about, what am I supposed to do?
And to be able to have existing relationships that say, OK, you're going to be fine. This is who you need to talk to. We are going to help advocate on your behalf. This is how you get the support that you need, family medical leave. This is how you get the support for resources you might need to weather this particular difficult moment in your life-- and people to help explain to other colleagues about what you can do right now and what you can't-- that can only happen with a pre-existing relationship, right?
So it's just very important because you never know. And I hope nothing like that happens to any of you. But you want to be prepared for things that are unexpected. And that means regular check-ins with your mentor. That means coming to them, asking for advice.

That's a great way to start a mentoring conversation. Not to say, hey, can you be my mentor? But look, let me get some advice on this thing, and letting it build out, thinking of them as whole people, so not only asking them to read your papers, but thinking of things that they might like to do with you outside of the university. William Julius Wilson and I used to go to a lot of Celtics games, right? That was his thing. And it was a joy to attend those things and ask him a lot of questions in that lower-pressure environment.

But I'll stop here. But just thinking about building that relationship so that as things come up, you have a set of-- a support network that can help you navigate them. Thanks.
[APPLAUSE]

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Well, that was very informative, both of you, Dara and Brandon. Thank you so much for your remarks. Before I open it up to questions, just an FYI, where my colleague, the other Elizabeth, Elizabeth Knoll, works on faculty appointments and all things related, my portfolio focuses on all things related to your work and your life and managing both, for faculty, so everything that Dara and Brandon mentioned specifically.

If you have any questions or just need help navigating dependent care, the child-care scholarship funds, the campus child-care center system, to which faculty have priority and have-- we've been very

successful with that the past four or five years. Any faculty member who applies for an open slot receives an offer for at least one slot. So you found that, as you mentioned.

If you have questions about schooling, elder care, housing, dual career support-- so that means supporting partners and spouses in their career-development pursuits-- I work with a lot of faculty partners in that endeavor. So we're happy to help. I guess my point is, if you have a question, and you don't know exactly where to go, you can always contact me or Judy or Elizabeth or one of us in our office. And we will definitely point you in the right direction.