



**Daniel Vargas** *for President*

**Judy Lai** *for Vice President*

**Your money, your right!**

*We are committed to providing you with a Student Government that is truly transparent, representative and supportive of a diverse community.*

**Daniel Vargas (LLM '06, SJD)** | [dvargas@sjd.law.harvard.edu](mailto:dvargas@sjd.law.harvard.edu)

As an SJD representative on Student Government this year, I have witnessed Student Government spend hours on petty decisions such as t-shirt colors or number of drink tickets. What's worse, Student Government has recently adopted an anti-diversity measure and tabled a policy that is **not truly transparent**. Your money should not be funding decisions that do not substantively improve the quality of your HLS experience, let alone discriminatory ones.

In 2009, I was appointed as acting Minister of Strategic Affairs of Brazil. I oversaw a large staff and worked with numerous institutions and stakeholders to build a stronger, fairer and better country. **I can do the same for HLS as President of our Student Government.** As a Teaching Assistant, I am familiar with the way the administration works, which will help me more effectively represent your needs and interests.

Instead of cookies, I offer you my cumulative experience on state and student government. I offer you the opportunity to speak up and be heard. We're listening. Help us break through the barriers to build a Student Government that is truly accountable, transparent, diverse and representative. Let's build bridges between the various programs within our student community. One law school. One future!

**Judy Lai (JD '13)** | [ylai@jd13.law.harvard.edu](mailto:ylai@jd13.law.harvard.edu)

I am compelled to run for VP to create a Student Government that truly supports and represents student interests to the administration. Like Daniel, I believe that **transparency** is key to **accountability** in leading any organization.

I am currently the Treasurer of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association (APALSA) and am active in various other organizations, including HLEP and the Epicurean Society. This year, I led an effort to establish a new student organization and found the approval process to be non-transparent and discriminatory. More importantly, I found that the same unstated policy has also prevented other students from accomplishing similar goals and that **no one was speaking up for us.**

This experience represents the type of improvement I aspire to achieve: I want to reduce the red tape blocking your ability to create and run programs, initiatives and organizations efficiently. I am not afraid of challenging the status quo or fighting for your interests. You deserve to know what programs and policies your money is funding, and you deserve someone who will give you a voice. Coming to HLS was a dream for all of us: improving our experience here is our duty. Let's do it!

## Our Key Principles:

**1. 100% transparency.** We believe that all Student Government proceedings, including every minute and every dollar spent, should be publicly available to students immediately. However, Student Government has recently tabled “transparency” measures that are transparent in name only -- they exempt its current budget (please see the Record <http://hlrecord.org/?p=1196>; <http://hlrecord.org/?p=1387>), financial records and meeting minutes from public access. We want to change the direction to one of greater transparency.

**2. Commitment to Diversity.** We believe that all students can meaningfully contribute to the quality of our education, our social life, and our community, **if they are heard.** To truly fulfill its commitment to diversity, HLS should give voice and institutional support to students with new ideas to enrich the quality of our HLS experience.

However, Student Government has just approved a measure mirroring a recent DOS policy that bars future student organizations based on state, national, or regional identity. If retroactively applied, this policy would eliminate student organizations such as the Asia Law Society, SALSA, African Law Association, APALSA, Caribbean Law Students Association and the Texas Club.

We are concerned about the **precedent** that this policy sets and we're committed to challenging it. Without the opportunity to monitor or voice your concerns against such policies, what will come next? **Don't wait to find out -- vote on Wednesday, 3/7!**

## Our concrete commitments:

### Transparency

- Work with DOS to reduce the red tape and **streamline operations regarding student organizations** so that you can accomplish your initiatives more efficiently.
- Create **clear and objective criteria** for decisions affecting student organizations, such as funding allocations. If necessary, create a transparency committee to guarantee fairness.
- Communicate **material policy changes** to the student body. We have nothing to hide.
- Grant unrestricted **public access** to student government materials, including budgets, by-laws and board minutes. We're here to serve you, and we want you to know about what's going on.
- Establish a tradition of holding periodic **town hall meetings** where all students are invited to share their comments and concerns. We're here to represent you! So, speak up. We're listening.

### Diversity

- Facilitate discussion between student group leaders and the administration regarding **student body and faculty diversity issues.** We know this is important to you, so let us know how we can help.
- Push for **greater inclusiveness and diversity** in school policies and initiatives.
- Foster **cross-program collaboration** by jointly hosting events such as **International Night** and by creating opportunities for 1Ls, LLMs and SJDs to interact during orientation.
- Collaborate to make the **Global Legal Education Forum**, an international conference exploring the future of law and legal education, an annual cross-program event that draws upon the rich global experience of the entire HLS community.

## **We hear you!**

We will work towards achieving these concerns that you have raised:

- Push for additional **course offerings** that reflect student preferences.
- Set up an effective **book swap** process to give students local access to cheaper used textbooks.
- Publicize and expand our **outline bank** and unique **course evaluation database**.
- Seek a more user friendly format of **MyMail**. It's time to move to the 21st century.
- Provide **reusable cups** at multiple locations near the water fountains. Stay hydrated while being green!
- Keep the **free coffee** and **pub nights** coming.
- Continue to host **study breaks** and popular events such as the **Halloween Party**, and make sure that the venue can accommodate everyone.
- Continue the **shuttle buses or carpools** from HLS to Logan Airport for Thanksgiving, Spring Break and end of terms.