me pot stickers. If people want to pursue a vegan diet, HUDS’s goal is to make it easy. If someone wants a double burger off the grill, that should be an option, too. Martin hopes that, in time, some of the double-burger fans will perhaps make it a double Beyond Burger—a plant-based patty that resembles the real thing.

Consumers’ decision-making ultimately depends on what they know, and education is central to HUDS’s mission. Students who don’t know what a Beyond Burger is will be less inclined to try one. If they are made aware of where the dining halls’ squash comes from, they have learned something about local sourcing and the energy use inherent in the food supply. A lot of that education is done through the Food Literacy Project, HUDS’s food-education initiative, which employs a student from each House as a fellow. The fellows, along with the program’s manager, host more than 100 events a year on campus, from guest lectures and discussions with chefs to cooking classes and farm tours.

Part of teaching students is exposing them to what the options are; another is giving them a voice in the process. HUDS first introduced Beyond Burgers in Annenberg, where students were asked to try them out and decide whether they wanted to see them more often. Most said yes, and the burgers are here to stay. When Davidson hears requests for items not on the menu, he sometimes pitches the proposal to other students, because a static budget means that they have learned something about local sourcing and the energy use inherent in the food supply. A lot of that education is done through the Food Literacy Project, HUDS’s food-education initiative, which employs a student from each House as a fellow. The fellows, along with the program’s manager, host more than 100 events a year on campus, from guest lectures and discussions with chefs to cooking classes and farm tours.

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Students have also played a vital part in Food for Free, a food-recovery program that donates food to community groups throughout the Greater Boston community. Four days a week after dinner, students pack any unused food into individual meal containers; it is then shipped across the Boston area. In 2015, the program’s first year at Harvard, HUDS donated approximately 55,000 pounds of food. The 2017 and 2018 totals were slightly above 25,000 pounds each—a decrease Martin attributes to better-planned and more efficient meal production. When the program worked at Harvard, HUDS employees let other institutions know how to integrate it into their own dining programs, said Food for Free executive director Sasha Purpura. “They’ve brought people in and met with them to talk through how it works and why it’s safe, how it is not a significant hit on staff time…and their willingness to share has successfully encouraged others to begin the food-donation program.”

In their HUDS roles, Martin and Davidson try to be more proactive than reactive. Davidson recalled the challenge the dining halls went through in the fall of 2011 when student activists campaigned for cage-free eggs. HUDS ultimately obliged, costing the program an additional $100,000, according to former assistant vice president for campus services Ted Mayer. Today, HUDS uses the Menus of Change Initiative as a roadmap for improvements, trying to make adjustments with its vendors continuously, pushing for a plant-forward menu with more humanely treated animal products before there is external pressure to do so.

“It sounds really simplistic and silly, but I’m really into the stuff that works,” said David Havelick, sustainability manager at the Office for Sustainability, which works with HUDS on its long-term food vision. The University can go all-in on veggie burgers, he points out, but if no one eats them, there’s simply more wasted food. He recalled a time when the University tried going meatless one Monday—only to see meat consumption triple the next day.

HUDS doesn’t foresee any time limit to improving its environmental footprint. It has seen how its initiatives have worked out at Harvard and other schools, and it hopes to keep building on its work. “I think we’re beginning to recognize that food is sort of a universal medium for conversation, for discussion, for learning,” Martin said. “No matter what your area of expertise or interest, you have the capacity to engage the system and make it better.”

Educating Educators

Bridget Terry Long had the good timing to become dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) on July 1, 2018—the same day that the education-minded Lawrence S. Bacow assumed the University presidency, making for a powerful potential partnership. In fact, her timing was dual: she assumed her new responsibilities 18 months before the school’s centennial year, in 2020. That presents a natural occasion to celebrate its past and reflect on its future in an era, she said in a late-April conversation, when people are “desperate to improve education, address achievement gaps, and make better policy.” Educating the professionals who can help effect such changes lies at the core of HGSE’s mission. Enhancements in how it does so are likely to be at the core of her tenure.

Long, who earned her Ph.D. in economics from Harvard in 2000 and joined HGSE’s faculty then, helped lay the foundation for her
By “reinventing” its teaching, HGSE can deliver “what educators need to be most effective.”
She joined him last September during his visit to Pontiac and Detroit, Michigan, underscoring Harvard’s engagement with communities far from the coast (see harvardmag.com/bacow-michigan-18). By its very nature, HGSE is training graduates who are already on the ground in such places (Detroit’s new school superintendent is an alumnus and, Long noted, “one of my students”).

“You could pick almost any place,” she continued. For example, alumni are at work in school systems in rural America, a new focus of interest, analyzing how students in relatively isolated, small communities, with limited resources, can succeed as learners. “Hey, we’re there,” she said. “This is what we could build from. We’d love to do more.”

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG

News Briefs

Faculty-Dean Denouement

During the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) meeting on May 7, President Lawrence S. Bacow was asked his views on the turmoil at Winthrop House, where student protesters had loudly sought the ouster of their faculty deans, Ronald S. Sullivan Jr. (who had decided to represent movie producer Harvey Weinstein in the criminal proceedings concerning his alleged sexual assaults and harassment involving many women) and Stephanie R. Robinson. Bacow said he would respect the “locus of authority” responsible for making such decisions: in this case, the deans of Harvard College and of FAS.

Those authorities made their decision known on May 11, when College dean Rakesh Khurana advised the Winthrop community that the faculty deans “will not be continuing” in that role after their current term ends on June 30, 2019.

Having previously initiated a review of the “climate” within the House—a review Sullivan was quoted as calling racially biased (see “Coming to Terms

Illustration by Mark Steele