

# Affirmative action admissions programs struck down as unconstitutional

## Schools illegally used racial preferences for students

The Supreme Court ruled Thursday to block affirmative action in two closely watched lawsuits against Harvard and the University of North Carolina (UNC).

The cases, initially brought by a coalition of students, prospective applicants and their parents in 2014, challenged the universities' use of racial preferences during the admissions process.

"Harvard's and UNC's admissions programs violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment," the Supreme Court ruled in a 6-3 decision in the UNC case and a 6-2 decision in the Harvard case, which Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson recused herself from.

Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the majority opinion, joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett.

"A benefit to a student who overcame racial discrimination, for example, must be tied to that student's courage and determination," Roberts wrote. "In other words, the student must be treated based on his or her experiences as an individual—not on the basis of race."

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