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Supreme Court Rules Against Affirmative Action in College Admissions

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In a major decision whose implications that will ripple across American society, the U.S. Supreme Court declared race-conscious admissions policies at Harvard and the University of North Carolina (UNC) unconstitutional, thus denouncing the use of race in university admissions. The ruling marks the end of Affirmative Action, which has been used by the nation's most prestigious schools as a way to ascertain campus diversity.

The 6-3 decision, delivered on Thursday, necessitates a significant reshaping of admission criteria across American higher education.

In his ruling, Chief Justice John Roberts, supported by Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett, argued for the cessation of all forms of

racial discrimination. He stated, "The student must be treated based on his or her experiences as an individual—not on the basis of race."

The court's three liberals, however, dissented. Justice Sonia Sotomayor, joined by Justices Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, argued, "The Court ignores the dangerous consequences of an America where its leadership does not reflect the diversity of the People."

Critics, such as Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, have decried the decision, suggesting it represents a significant setback for racial justice. However, others, including former President Donald Trump, have applauded the decision as a win for America.

Historically, the 14th Amendment ensures equal protection under the law by state agencies, including public universities. The court has generally allowed racial preferences only to redress specific acts of illegal discrimination. However, a limited exception has existed for 45 years, specifically for university admissions. The ruling strikes down this exception, revoking race-conscious admissions at Harvard, UNC, and similar institutions previously justified under the umbrella of educational mission and diversity.