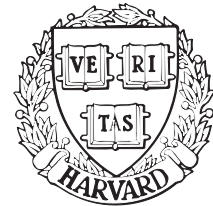


VPA Connections

Office of the Vice President for Administration
Harvard University

Connecting to Harvard, to work, to colleagues



Fall 2006

Arnold Arboretum • Faculty Club • Harvard Magazine • Harvard Real Estate Services • Harvard University Dining Services • Harvard University Press • Office of the Vice President for Administration • University Operations Services • University Planning Office

Connecting to Colleagues: Diversity Matters

Rethinking Political Correctness: Diversity Matters

Presenter: Robin Ely, Harvard Business School

Date: Thursday, November 2, 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Place: Harvard Faculty Club



Sensitivity to race, religion, and gender is a good thing. Too often, however, it is driven by fear of doing something wrong. Rather than walk on eggshells, managers can learn to develop more productive, meaningful relationships at work. Robin Ely is an Associate Professor of

Organizational Behavior at Harvard Business School. She investigates how organizations can better manage their race and gender relations, while at the same time increasing their effectiveness.

Book Group

The Darling

by Russell Banks

Date: Tuesday, November 14, 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Place: Holyoke Center Room 1009

Set in the 1980s, this is the story of American Hannah Musgrave, who finds herself in Liberia, a struggling country once conceived as the promised land for freed African American slaves. She finds work in a shabby medical lab that houses traumatized chimpanzees and forms a bond with them that is more meaningful to her than relationships with humans. She marries a government official, starts a family, and struggles as political unrest becomes the order of the day in her new home.

Book group continued...

In the role of narrator, the white, middle-class Hannah guides us through both her nation's struggle for identity and her own. As friends of Charles Taylor, the notorious warlord, she and her family become entangled in Liberia's civil war and eventually she must choose to abandon all she loves in Liberia or remain and face certain death. Banks brings the full weight of his storytelling genius and psychological perceptiveness to a novel as compulsively readable as it is eviscerating in its dramatization of cultural divides, political mayhem, psychotic violence, and profound alienation (adapted from *Booklist*).

Book Group

Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter

by Adeline Yen Mah

Date: Monday, December 18, 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Place: Holyoke Center Room 1009

Born in 1937 in a port city a thousand miles north of Shanghai, Adeline Yen Mah, the youngest child of an affluent Chinese family, enjoyed rare privileges during a time of political and cultural upheaval. Wealth and position were not sufficient, however, to shield Adeline from a childhood of appalling emotional abuse. Determined to survive and maintaining an enduring faith in family unity, Adeline struggled for independence as she moved from Hong Kong to England and eventually to the United States to become a physician and writer.

A compelling story of a girl's journey into adulthood, *Falling Leaves* is a testament to the human need for acceptance and understanding, a look at the harsh realities of growing up female in a family and society that kept girls in emotional chains, and an authentic portrait of twentieth-century China (adapted from book jacket).

Complimentary copies of the books will be sent to book group participants upon registration.

To register for a program:

Phone: 617/496-1072 • Fax: 617/496-1296 • Email: vpa_connections@harvard.edu

Connecting to Harvard

The Blackstone Renovation: Sustainable Living at Work

Guides: Thomas Vautin, University Operations Services; Maria Valgenti, University Operations Services; Leith Sharp, Harvard Green Campus Initiative

Date: Wednesday October 25, 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Place: Meet at 46 Blackstone Street, Cambridge (see below for transportation information)

Built in 1888 to produce electricity for Cambridge, the Blackstone plant was purchased by Harvard in 2003 to provide steam heat for Harvard and consolidated office space for UOS. Blackstone's recent renovation focused on sustainable design; it was implemented so successfully that Blackstone is being considered for a coveted LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold rating. Join us as we get an insider's look at the newly-opened building – learn how recyclable and renewable materials were used in the building design, how energy efficient systems were installed, and how a host of innovative touches make this a state-of-the-art “green” building.

Our program will include a guided tour through the building, as well as a question and answer period. During the Q+A, a box lunch will be provided to participants. Transportation will be available from Holyoke Center at noon, returning at 1:30 p.m.

Connecting the Past and the Present: A Visit to the Weissman Preservation Center

Guide: Jan Merrill-Oldham, Weissman Preservation Center

Date: Wednesday November 8, 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Place: Meet in the lobby of 90 Mount Auburn Street

Since its founding in 1636, Harvard University has amassed millions of books, manuscripts, prints, maps, disks and tapes, resulting in one of the world's largest collections of cultural materials. The value and singular nature of these materials requires a program of vigilant and far-reaching preservation. The Weissman Center devotes its efforts to the long-term survival of library holdings for students, faculty and scholars. The center manages a conservation laboratory where these treasures of extraordinary research and artistic value are preserved, providing a range of services to the libraries at Harvard. Join us as we glimpse into this fragile world of rare and unique holdings.

How Things Work at Harvard

Presenters: Susan Shefte, Office of the Vice President for Administration

Date: Tuesday, December 12, 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Place: Holyoke Center Room 571

What is the Corporation, and what does the Board of Overseers do? How is the endowment managed, and who decides how to spend it? How are budgets set? This program will unravel many of Harvard's mysteries in an hour. Learn about the relationships between the schools, Central Administration and Mass Hall, about how big decisions are made, and about how Harvard's finances work. Feel free to bring your lunch; drinks and dessert will be provided.

Connecting to Work

Better Communication for Better Results

Presenter: Andrew Cohn, Lighthouse Consulting

Date: Tuesday, December 5, 9:00 a.m. to noon

Place: Harvard Faculty Club

Does your communication style create barriers or open doors? Do you prefer to control the conversation or sit back and evaluate? Everyone has a natural approach to communication and given that there are so many styles, it is no wonder that we may be misread, misunderstood, or overlooked at work. You can develop your effectiveness by understanding the impact your communication style has on other people. This workshop will review communication concepts, and using group exercises, increase your one-on-one effectiveness and develop techniques to better shape the relationships with those around you.

VPA Connections is always looking for new ideas. Email your suggestions for books to read, Harvard offices to visit, faculty to speak and workshop topics to present. We look forward to seeing you, and your colleagues, at upcoming events!

To register for a program:

Phone: 617/496-1072 • Fax: 617/496-1296 • Email: vpa_connections@harvard.edu