

The Official Newsletter of the Ashdown Community

Message from the Editor

Dear Ashdown,

Student concentration has decreased on campus, a sign that finals are over !

In this issue we learn about the mission of the China Crossroads association from resident Rong Yuan. As the holidays near, Kristi Gundrum Kebinger from the Public Service Center tells us about some of the opportunities to give back to the community. In light of recent events, we also welcome another series of tips regarding residence safety, courtesy of Kristin O'Halloran at the front desk.

Happy Holidays !

Sincerely,

Anne-Raphaelle Aubry
Ashdown Newsletter Officer

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Contact the Editor

Please direct any comments or queries about "3am" to Anne-Raphaelle ("Anne") at aubry@mit.edu

China Crossroads - Rong Yuan



When China, along with the world, is at the crossroads on her way to future prosperity, we, at the crossroads of cultures, should think and act.

When you first arrived at Ashdown, did you ask yourself why there are so many Chinese students here? Did you know the majority of Chinese overseas students at MIT are among the “winners” - approximately top 0.1% from 10 million students - in China’s College Entrance Exam? Did you know nearly half of them came from one university which aims at producing students who can “work healthily for our motherland for 50 years”? We started our discussion by introducing these questions in the first *China Crossroads-Ashdown Housemaster Special Discussion Dinner* on October 12, 2011.

Established in January 2011 at MIT, China Crossroads is a student group that aims at facilitating communication between the non-Chinese communities and the Chinese community on China’s development issues. We pull students out of the busy labs and invite them to sit down together in a cozy setting and discuss various issues about China. Our discussions cover topics ranging from social trends to personal stories, and critiques of existing policies to comparative studies of leading practices in the world (see list of topics below).

Thanks to the generous support from Ashdown Housemasters, we had two discussions this semester at Ashdown with delicious Chinese cuisine on October 12 and November 16, respectively. In the two discussions, we focused on three groups of people, namely overseas students, migrant workers, and entrepreneurs. Huge in number, each of these three groups of people reflects a unique aspect of the Chinese society. Their personal development is closely related to the general economic growth of China. We were interested in knowing how to create a favorable environment in which they can create a prosperous future for themselves.

Previous Topic List

- ✓ Energy Policy – January
- ✓ Efficient Transportation: Congestion in Beijing (February)
- ✓ Impacts of Social Media (March)
- ✓ China’s Education System (April)
- ✓ The Increase of Soft Power (May)
- ✓ From Made in China to Created in China (July)
- ✓ Reflection on 7.23 Tran Crash (August, Sidney-Pacific)
- ✓ Overseas Student & Migrant Workers (October, Ashdown)
- ✓ Entrepreneurship in China (November, Ashdown)



*Discussion at Edgerton Student Dorm
- Impacts of Social Media, March 6th*

China Crossroads - Rong Yuan

For example, in the second discussion about entrepreneurship in China, we discussed three themes - Entrepreneurship Opportunities, Foreign and State-owned Firms, and Social Enterprises. Thirty participants were divided into three groups, each focusing on one of the themes. In the Entrepreneurship Opportunities group, we compared the popular companies in China and their counterparts in the US such as Facebook and Renren. Firstly, we analyzed the reasons why these Chinese start-ups have limited original innovation and have been adopting a 'technology following' strategy. We then looked at the possibility of a transition of China from the world factory to the owner of world-class brands. In the Foreign and State-owned Firms group, we listed the advantages and disadvantages of foreign companies versus state-owned companies in China. We debated over whether government intervention can always make the market-oriented economy more efficient. We also conceived an innovation path of Chinese companies and discussed how favorable policies and academic excellence can nurture the development of entrepreneurship in China.



Ashdown Housemaster Special Discussion 1 – Overseas Students and Migrant Workers, Oct. 12th

The role of developing countries in driving and shaping the world is becoming more and more significant. China, now the second-largest economy in the world, has spearheaded this paradigm shift. For Chinese students, China Crossroads is a platform to take a retrospect of their home country and conceive opportunities of connecting their own career path with China's development. For non-Chinese students who may not know much about China but would like to think big questions and make positive impacts to the world, China Crossroads is a platform to listen to different voices, generate collective intelligence, or simply make friends!

Mission of China Crossroads

- 1) to serve as a platform to exchange perspectives and bridge gaps in understanding China's development;
- 2) to promote critical and creative thinking toward mutual prosperity of China and the world; and
- 3) to build trustworthy friendship among students who care about the future development of China.

Feedback from one participant

I'm from China, so I feel very patriotic towards China. Also, there are so many dire issues that I really hope to address in the future by using my skills/knowledge and abilities - partially, out of a feeling of obligation to do something for others less fortunate.

China Crossroads will hold similar events during IAP and next semester and it will be our great pleasure to have you in our next discussion. Our events are open to all MIT community.

For more information, please check our website <http://chinacrossroads.mit.edu> and join us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/groups/21777961570597/>

Opportunities to give back – Kristi Gundrum Kebinger

There are many opportunities for MIT community members to be involved in community service this time of year. December's MIT Giving Tree program showcased the MIT community's generosity this holiday season. An upcoming IAP MIT Community Service Day is a great way to volunteer with local community organizations in January and this coming February will see the launch of the annual FSILG&D Community Service Challenge's race for the Service Cup.

MIT Giving Tree

The holiday spirit is alive and well at MIT this December. This year, through the MIT Giving Tree program, the MIT community provided gifts to over 560 local children affiliated with 12 local social service agencies (link to: <http://bit.ly/smEOuo>) in Boston and Cambridge. The Giving Tree allows participants to choose specific gifts for specific children based on their requests, making the gift-giving process a more personalized one for all. Currently in its 20th year, the MIT Giving Tree has participants aged 0-22 years and typical gift requests range from baby teething toys, to dolls and fire trucks, to necessities such as soap, deodorant and socks for young adults.

The MIT Public Service Center (PSC) partners with the MIT Panhellenic Association (Panhel) annually to administer this holiday philanthropy program. Panhel promotes participation among the Greek community at MIT and the PSC encourages MIT faculty, staff, alumni, undergraduate and graduate students, and spouses and partners to participate in this gift giving tradition.

On behalf of MIT, the social service agencies with whom we pair, and the families who have received holiday gifts, the PSC sincerely thanks everyone who participated for their generous donations. Please visit the MIT Giving Tree website (link to: <http://mit.edu/mitpsc/whatwedo/volunteering/programs/givingtree/>) for more information about this program.

There are many ways to continue involvement in community service during IAP and the spring semester.



Happy Kids



Service Cup Winners

Opportunities to give back – Kristi Gundrum Kebinger

IAP MIT Community Service Day

The MIT Public Service Center invites all members of the MIT Community to join in an IAP MIT Community Service Day on Friday, January 27, from 11am-4pm. Participants will lunch together at MIT, then head out into the Cambridge and Boston communities to volunteer with three local organizations.

Volunteers at the Greater Boston Food Bank will be inspecting, sorting, and repacking donated grocery products to be distributed to hunger relief agencies. At the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Center (a shelter for individuals struggling with addiction) volunteers will be painting the Center. Volunteers can also work with People Making a Difference, founded by one of MIT's own, Lori Tsuruda '89, on assembling Lego kits into DNA models that will be used by schools in the Boston area and across the country.

All members of the MIT Community are encouraged to participate in this Community Service Day. Public transportation fees to/from the service placements will be provided. Please join us by register by January 23 (link to: <http://bit.ly/uhhy2N>).

FSILG&D Community Service Challenge

The community service spirit continues in the spring semester with the kick-off of the FSILG&D Community Service Challenge. The Service Challenge encourages teams of fraternity, sorority, independent living group, and dorm participants to compete for the Service Cup over a two-month period February through April. Teams are encouraged to serve the community as a community.

In addition to helping community organizations and the populations they serve, participation in the Service Challenge certainly has its benefits for participants. Registered teams have the chance to win Service Cup winner bragging rights, publicity of team service undertakings, access to exclusive alternative spring break funding, \$2,000 in service implementation funding for the upcoming academic year, meaningful opportunities for team bonding, and an acquisition of knowledge about the local community.

The PSC would love to have a graduate dorm compete in the 2012 Service Challenge! Register your team by February 6 at 5pm (link to: <http://bit.ly/tcFOUG>). More information about the Service Challenge can be found on the PSC's website (link to: <http://web.mit.edu/FSILGDChallenge>).

We hope to see you at an upcoming community service event or program, but if the options discussed above do not meet your needs, don't despair! The MIT Public Service Center is available to meet with you to talk about your specific service interests and ways you can get involved in the community.

Email Kristi Gundrum Kebinger at volunteering@mit.edu for details. Thank you to the MIT community for its community service contributions!

Resident Helpful Information – Kristin O’Halloran

The second installment in a series of helpful tips !

Focus on Safety and Security

Building Access / Security

You must use your MIT ID card for building access. If you already have an MIT ID card, you must have the House Manager, Denise Lanfranchi, activate the card for you. Her office is located in the main corridor as you enter the building from the lobby. You can also email her (dlan@mit.edu) your full name and the card number and she will be able to activate it with this information as well. **DO NOT** hole-punch any MIT ID (you can ruin the chip inside and de-activate the card).

Security: Ashdown House takes the security of the building and the safety of its residents/ employees very seriously. You play an important role in this regard, please be mindful when entering any door or gate of Ashdown, that you do not allow anyone to piggyback (follow) your entry. This is how non-residents most easily gain entry and violate the building’s security.

Front Desk Coverage

A desk worker is on-duty 7 days a week, 8am-midnight. **You must return and/or borrow items from the desk during those hours only.** After that time, a security guard covers the desk. The only time there may be nobody at the desk is when the security guard is doing her/his rounds of the building which can take 1-1.5 hours. If you find you are waiting longer than 1.5 hrs, you may call Facilities from the phone in the foyer of Ashdown (mounted to the white pole) at x31500 and they will be able to help you.

Locking Room

The apartment doors are locked using a “button” on the inside of the door handle. You depress the button and turn to the right. This will ensure your door will be locked as you leave the room (or for when you are in the room and want the door locked). ****Test the door, from the outside, to make certain you have locked it properly (**have your key with you!).**

Spare Key

Ashdown does provide a spare key if you have managed to lock your key inside your room. You should provide a picture ID and must return the key as soon as you have gained entry to your room. If that or any key provided to you by the Ashdown is lost, there is a \$25.00 Housing fee charged to your account.

Resident Helpful Information – Kristin O’Halloran

Guest Policy

Residents are responsible to maintain their own guest list on-line by going to the Ashdown website, under “View My Info”. A resident can add up to 5 guests at one time. Each guest’s name is automatically deleted after 30 days from date of entry. ***Please let your guest know to carry a picture ID so the front desk can confirm their identity.***

If a visitor is NOT on the guest list, the resident **MUST** come to the lobby and escort the visitor into the building.

No person will be allowed entry into the building without either being on the guest list (w/picture ID available) or with an escort by a resident.

Overnight Guest Stipulations

Three-Night Stay: A resident may have an overnight guest for up to three nights. Out of courtesy, if you have a roommate(s), you should let him/her/them know who is coming and for how long.

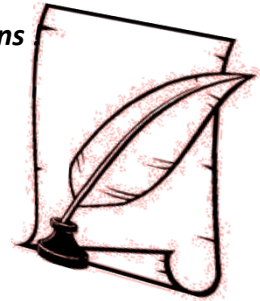
Extended Stay (> three nights): If your guest is staying for more than a three night stay, you must contact the House Masters, Terry and Ann Orlando and request an extended stay. Again, if you have a roommate(s), s/he/they should be given the information regarding who is staying and for how long once permission is granted.

Citizen’s Corner: Submission Guidelines

NEW: AMC Ticket or 10\$ Amazon Gift Certificate for unsolicited submissions

Do you have a flair for writing?

Do you have an experience you would love to share? A cause you want to speak out for? An event you would like publicized and reported?



The ears of Ashdown are thirsting to hear your story!

The “Citizen’s Corner” is a section of “3am” aimed at reflecting the lives and perspectives of Ashdown residents. All Ashdown residents are invited to contribute, and all kinds of material are welcome. In the past, we have received everything from overseas exchange program stories to essays about environmentalism. We are especially keen on the views of international students comparing the way of life (in terms of culture, atmosphere, education system etc.) here to the ones they were used to.

Guidelines in a nutshell:

- Submissions should be between 100 and 1500 words.
- No politically sensitive, religiously sensitive or pornographic material.
- Pictures to accompany text are welcome.
- Email title: “3AM SUB: <title of submission>”.
- Email Anne-Raphaelle Aubry (“Anne”) at aubry@mit.edu.