A Ever-So-Brief Update for the Smith College Community

Welcome Back!

RICK RUBIN
Chair, Staff Council

I often have to take a reality check around the end of August because I can’t quite understand why friends and family with jobs outside of Smith aren’t as excited and anxious as I am. For them, September has no special meaning. It’s just another month of working, no different than November or June.

But for those of us who work at Smith, September can mark a month of new beginnings as fresh faces burst on the scene; faces of hope, excitement, fear, and anticipation. It reminds me of my years in school when every September brought new people and experiences.

That’s why I feel lucky to work at Smith, a chance every year to re-experience that invigorating energy that comes when students return to campus. Their optimistic attitude is contagious and reminds me that this is a time to experience new opportunities, to take on new challenges, and to make a new start … to do better. I encourage you to tap into the energy that each school year brings and use it to take on the daily challenges we all face. ♦

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Subcommittee Reports

COMMUNICATIONS Committee
The Communications Committee continues to seek ways to foster campus-wide communication, which helps to include all staff members and strengthen our sense of community. The committee is looking for ways to work with current technologies to ensure that we are enhancing—rather than limiting—our avenues of communication in contacting staff that do not have access to a computer. Another goal for the committee is to create a liaison list as another form of communication for when there are activities and other important changes/events on campus that affect staff.
– Karen LeHouiller
klehouil@smith.edu

NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS Committee
During the 2007-2008 term, Staff Council experienced several resignations. Because of this, the Nominations Committee will be in communication with Staff Council members to ensure they realize the importance of attending meetings and that they can make a difference at Smith College. The committee also wants to make sure that supervisors are aware of the Excused Time policy for staff who attend Staff Council meetings.
– Sandy Bycenski
sbycensk@smith.edu

PERSONNEL POLICY Committee (PPC)
Personnel Policy Committee alternates monthly meetings between a committee meeting and a meeting with Director of Human Resources Larry Hunt. At both meetings we discuss issues and concerns that are brought to our attention or policies that we think need to be revisited. This year we expect to discuss wellness for an aging work force and the “green” movement at Smith, including how staff can benefit from and help Smith be a better steward of natural resources. Other issues will be addressed as needed. You can contact any member of the PPC to get your concerns or questions brought to the committee.
– Jinny Mason
jmason@smith.edu

STEERING Committee
The Steering Committee is responsible for meeting to discuss issues and concerns brought forward by individual staff members. We also ensure that these issues are brought to and discussed with administrators and committees. Information is gathered from various segments of the college community for discussion at Staff Council meetings. This year’s Steering Committee looks forward to working on several new projects that will benefit all staff.
– Rick Rubin
rrubin@smith.edu

Staff Art Gallery

This summer we at the Chronicle were proud to debut the online Smith Staff Art Gallery! This gallery not only showcases the artistic talents (and achievements) of Smith Staff, but it also helps us see each other in a new light, to understand that—regardless of our roles here at the college—we are people with many other abilities and dimensions. The gallery is ongoing, so new work is always welcome. Submit digital photos or images of your artwork to Chris Gentes at cgentes@smith.edu.

We are also interested in developing a writers’ “gallery” as well, showcasing the poetry, fiction, and essay talents of Smith staff. To submit your work, please e-mail Ken Molnar at staffchronicle@smith.edu.

Staff Council Updates

–2–  SEPTEMBER 2008

THE CHRONICLE
DIVERSITY Committee
“Opening the Door to Class”
This year the Diversity Committee will focus on promoting awareness and dialogue around the issue of classism. Although, as a society, we are more aware of issues such as racism, sexism, and homophobia, issues of class and classism remain difficult to talk about. In addition to the complexities of class and classism, what also makes the conversation difficult is the lack of an established vocabulary for class issues.

We are partnering with Human Resources and Institutional Diversity to present two thought-provoking workshops this fall, each with a slightly different focus, to explore how position, rank, and grade at Smith, as well as our individual class backgrounds, play out and influence our work and work relationships. Different experiences give us different strengths and limitations as well as assumptions and expectations. As we learn about each other’s class stories and delve into hidden class dynamics, we hope to create more trust and the ability to deal more effectively with the dilemmas and challenges we face at work and in our lives.

Space is limited, so please register soon at [www.smith.edu/hr/hrdev_catalog.php](http://www.smith.edu/hr/hrdev_catalog.php).

Our facilitator is Felice Yeskel, one of the founders of Class Action, a local nonprofit group that was recently recognized by the American Psychological Association for its groundbreaking work on classism.

- Abida Adnan
  aadnan@smith.edu

ACTIVITIES Committee
There is a lot to look forward to this fall from the Activities Committee. We have a super group of staff, working together to plan a range of events both on- and off-campus. New members are always welcome. In fact, a number of our committee members are not actually on Staff Council. Check out our meeting schedule on the Staff Council Web site and watch for further details on the upcoming events in the sidebar to the right. Hope to see you at some or all of our events!

- Sabrina Marsh
  smarsh@smith.edu

Upcoming Class Workshops:

Opening Up Dialogue I: Exploring Class Dynamics Among Staff at Smith
Thurs., October 30, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Alumnae House Living Room
Lunch provided for the first 20 participants

Opening Up Dialogue II: Talking Across the Staff/Faculty Divide
Thurs. November 20, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Neilson Browsing Room
Lunch provided for the first 20 participants

Fall Fit 5-K
September 21, 1 p.m.
Road race and fun-run/walk.
[www.smith.edu/athletics/fit5k](http://www.smith.edu/athletics/fit5k)

Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m.
September 10, October 8, November 12, December 10.
Snacks and cash bar.
Campus Center Pub, lower level.

Dog Daze of Smith College
Saturday, September 27, 1-5 p.m.
Campus Center Carroll Room.
Prizes for pooches and treats for humans too!

Mountain Day Celebration
(Carol Christ to announce date)
Free pie and Staff Council-scooped ice cream for all staff.
Just outside Pierce Hall.

“Standards of Care,” A Play
Thu-Fri, October 2-3, 8 p.m.
$5
Written/directed by our own Toby Davis, come see the local premiere of a play about the realities of the transgendered community.

TV Studio, Mendenhall.

Culinary Institute of America Trip
Saturday, November 22
Bus trip, includes tour and lunch.

Third Annual Holiday Hoopla and Cookie Contest
Thu, December 4, 12-1:30 p.m.
Food, entertainment and fun.
Campus Center Carroll Room.

New York City Bus Trip
Saturday, December 6
Watch e-Digest for details.

More event details to come. Visit e-Digest & the Staff Council Web site: [www.smith.edu/staffcouncil](http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil).
### The New 2008-09 Staff Council Roster

**Those Who Help Make It All Fall Into Place**

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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**COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?** Write to us at our new e-mail address: staffchronicle@smith.edu!

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**September 2008**

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