



September 2005

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AAGEF Upcoming events

Tuesday, September 13th, 2005

Jean-David Levitte, French Ambassador to the USA, will be the guest speaker of the next Association des Amis des Grandes Écoles de France (AAGEF) meeting.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear our ambassador talk about the current transatlantic relations and how the future looks!! Special price for ESSEC USA Alumni \$15. Please join us! (see Events column for more details)

Wednesday, October 5th, 2005

SAVE THE DATE!! For an exciting Coaching Panel with Anne-Laure Gilard, co-founder of Leaders in Motion and VP Communication at ESSEC USA.

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 - **Location:** TBD

ESSEC USA Community

Alain Barbet, ESSEC 1980, is appointed President and COO of Pernod- Ricard USA

Alain shares his experience with us in this month interview. Congratulations on your new position Alain!

Job Forum

Ready to relocate

Looking for a position in New York

I am 2001 ESSEC graduate with 4-year experience in management consulting. I am interested in pursuing career opportunities in the U.S, preferably in New York City. I would be very interested in any opportunity that would allow me to apply my experience and multi-cultural skills in a global environment.

[See resume and cover letter](#)

Contact: [Isabelle Millat](#)

Job offer

France Telecom in New York City: Associate Manager, Business Development, Fixed Internet and Multimedia Services Group

Analyze trend in North American residential telecommunications market; write research reports; contribute to newsletter and other publications. Bachelor degree required, Master or Grandes Ecoles diploma a plus + 2-3 years in telecom strategy, marketing or consulting.

[More info](#)

Contact: [Yolanda Hurtado](#)

France Telecom in Herndon, VA: Network and Sourcing, Head of Purchase Americas

Develop and communicate knowledge about market trends, analyses process efficiencies, recommend saving plans, review contracts.

[More info](#)

Contact: [Yolanda Hurtado](#)

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AAGEF Upcoming events

DON'T MISS IT!!

Tuesday, September 13th, 2005

Jean-David Levitte, French Ambassador to the USA, will be the guest speaker of the next AAGEF meeting.

"Transatlantic Relations: Where do we stand?"

Location: French Consulate in New York
934 Fifth avenue, between 74th and 75th street
Time: 6:30pm

Registration: \$15 for AAGEF members, \$20 for non-members

Registration only through [Acteva](#) website:
www.acteva.com/go/grandesecoles

[More info](#)

ATTENTION: For security reasons only duly registered participants will be given access to the building. Registration is to be made on line and will close on September 12 at 1:00 p.m.

Other Events

Wednesday, September 7th, 2005

ESSEC Miami Chapter gathering

Please join us for a drink!

Location: Café Segaffredo on Lincoln Road, Miami Beach

Time: 6:30pm

Contact: [Ovidiu Sofronia](#)



Interview of the Month: Alain Barbet, newly appointed President and COO of Pernod-Ricard USA

Tell us about your background and current job. What are your responsibilities?

I will soon change responsibilities. As of September 1, I will become the President and COO of Pernod Ricard USA, after having been the CFO of Pernod-Ricard North America for the last 3 years. Pernod-Ricard USA is now a leading player in the Wines and Spirits industry in the US, after Pernod-Ricard completed on July 26 its USD 14 billion acquisition of Allied-Domecq PLC. To our own portfolio of premium brands, Chivas, Martell, Wild Turkey, Jameson among others, we have now added wonderful brands such as Stolichnaya Vodka, Malibu, Kahlua, and many others. I look forward to helping the company maintain and expand its very successful track record, which has made the US the most important subsidiary for the Groupe.

Why did you decide to come live in the USA and stay here?

I have been living in the US for the last 20 years. My presence here started as an experiment at a time when the economy and society in France seemed to be stuck in neutral. The US provided an opportunity to do a lot more and to be given extended responsibilities early on. It has always been the case since and my upcoming change of role reinforces the seemingly unlimited professional opportunities that the US offers to people who work hard and are willing to take risks.

What advice would you give to ESSEC graduates who would like to come to work here?

May sound like a cliché but I believe it is still true: Be ready to face the world. The Essec diploma may open a few doors but it will be up to you to make it happen. The best people are here to compete, with visible rewards as the way to distinguish winners and losers. But intelligence, hard work, a genuine will to take risks will be rewarded. Love the country, love the people, don't view the US with a franco-centric outlook, and success will follow.

How do you think your ESSEC background helped you to be where you are?

The diploma opened doors when French companies interviewed me. It has also helped me through the network of alumni here in the US and around the world. But the Essec culture is unique, and interestingly enough many graduates find their way at Pernod-Ricard. It celebrates individuality, entrepreneurship, results and not theory. I find that a lot of Essec have these qualities, and furthermore they are serious without taking themselves seriously.

What do you consider as your role in the ESSEC family?

As an ex-President and treasurer of the US alumni association and a board member today, and despite some pretty heavy professional constraints, I try to give time and modest advice to the association, in particular to Anne Stone, our President, whose dedication to the cause of our school has been and continues to be extraordinary. I also favor resumes of Essec graduates when the professional fit is good, as employees or interns. Finally, as much as possible, I speak of Essec as the definitive leading business school in France and probably in Europe. I also continue to contribute financially to the association, as our competition around the world and in the US in particular is so much better equipped to make itself known.

How do the US consumers in your industry perceive the French brands?

We really don't have large French brands in the US, except for Martell Cognac. Martell's French character though is not the most important feature. It is not consumed because it is a French product, but because Cognac is seen much like Scotch or Vodka: a taste, an image, more than a country of origin. Our two flagship brands however, Pernod and Ricard are seen as very French and consumed by connoisseurs and Francophiles. Their volumes are not very large for the US market, though growing steadily. Finally we have acquired 2 wonderful brands of French Champagne in the Allied Domecq portfolio, Perrier Jouet and Mumm, which draw their success from the uniqueness of Champagne, an appellation unique in the world and synonymous of celebration, affluence and "joie de vivre" in the US and around the world. With Mumm Cuvée Nappa, the California house of Mumm, our premium portfolio will be a great luxury challenger in this segment.

Thank you Alain and congratulations on your new position!

Other Events

Starting Tuesday, September 13th, 2005
Start-up Booster seminars - San Francisco
French American Chamber of Commerce

The main goal of this 6-week seminar is to provide a series of workshops where high-caliber experts of the French American Chamber of Commerce act as mentors. They will assist individuals interested in improving/acquiring business and entrepreneurial skills. They will also help develop attractive business plans for professional investors and/or budget holders within a larger organization.

In addition, the winner of the competition will get a cash prize to help get started with his business.

The workshops start September 13th, 2005.

[More info](#)

Contact: [Olivier Poissonier](#), Chapter leader for the San Francisco region

Contact the ESSEC USA Chapters:

- [Chicago](#) – Damien Zinck
- [Miami](#) – Ovidiu Sofronia
- [Los Angeles](#) – Stanislas Debreu

- New York – TBA
- [San Francisco](#) – Olivier Poissonier

Thank You

Please feel free to send me your questions, comments or suggestions.

I hope you enjoyed reading this Newsletter and look forward to seeing you at one of these events.

Best regards,

[Blandine Aujoulet](#)
ESSEC USA Newsletter Editor