Letter from the UA President and Vice President

Undergrads,

We hope you had a great summer and are happy to be back on campus. We look forward to representing you and improving student life during the upcoming year. Here are our plans for the beginning of the school year:

- Maintain or increase funding for student groups
- Expand the Student-Faculty Dinners program
- Working with DUE to implement an online registration system for the spring

But we need your help. There are several ways to get involved. If you are generally interested in student life issues, run for Senator. If there is a particular issue that you are passionate about, apply to join a UA committee. If you want to serve as the student voice on a particular issue to faculty and administrators, apply to join an Institute Committee. If you are a freshman and want to plan events for your class, run for 2014 Class Council.

If you are interested in an elected position, come to the UA Elections Meeting on Friday Sept. 3rd at 6:30pm in the Student Center Coffeehouse. Information about elected and appointed positions will also be available at ua.mit.edu.

Best wishes,

Vrajesh Modi, UA President
Sammi Wyman, UA Vice President

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UA Elections

Interested in representing your living group as a UA senator? Want to represent your class by being on the class council? The UA will be having elections very soon!

As a senator, you are responsible for setting policy and directing the Executive Branch of the UA to enact changes for the benefit of the Student Body. Each member represents roughly 160 constituents of a living group.

The Class Council is a group of students that represents their class in planning events and making decisions to facilitate a better learning and social environment, forming a more unified class spirit.

If you are interested, please attend the information sessions (listed under “Upcoming Events”). Election packets will be due Sept. 13, followed shortly by online and paper ballot voting.
Summer DSL Search Committees

Search committees function as the Institute’s key quality-assurance mechanism for new hires in senior-level administrative positions. The Division for Student Life convened two search committees this summer to identify candidates for the positions vacated by Karen Nilsson and Jed Wartman. New administrators in both roles will have an expanded set of responsibilities, with the Senior Associate Dean for Residential Life and Dining position (as the title indicates) adding campus dining to its portfolio and the Assistant Dean & Director for Student Leadership and Engagement Programs becoming empowered to coordinate leadership programs across DSL.

Each search committee was charged with evaluating an initial pool of candidates to provide a short list of finalists based on a series of phone and on-campus interviews. MIT community members with a direct stake in the business of the role—for example, housemasters, an undergraduate and graduate student, senior-level DSL admins, and a representative from the Association of Independent Living Groups (AILG) participated in the Senior Associate Dean search. In addition to serving on the committees, undergraduates participated in student-oriented interviews during the candidates’ on-campus visits.

The search committee for the Senior Associate Dean submitted its recommendation to Dean Colombo last week, and the committee for the new Assistant Dean finished its final interviews this week. We should expect to meet both of the new administrators later this Fall.

Written by:
Jonté Craighead
Speaker of the Senate

Student-Faculty Dinners

The UA Student Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), a committee devoted to working on advising, GIRs, major/minor declarations, academic violations, and other policies with faculty, has been working hard on one of MIT’s popular programs: Student-Faculty Dinners.

These Student-Faculty Dinners, as Chair of SCEP, Liyan David Chang describes, are “a program that brings together students and faculty,” allowing 3-6 students to take a faculty member of their choice out to a restaurant for dinner, even reimbursing up to $25 per person—funded primarily by the Student Life Fee—in hopes that the students will engage in interesting and insightful discussions with their professors. Last semester, SCEP funded dinners for 81 faculty members and 304 students.

As a supplement to good relations with faculty members and the current advising system, these Student-Faculty Dinners have been very successful. Replies from both students and professors claim they have engaged in lovely and intriguing conversations. SCEP is hoping that many more students will choose to participate this semester so that the program may expand successfully.

If you are interested in being a part of this program, just sit tight for now! Updates, including ways to sign up, will come shortly once the school year starts.
Online Registration

The UA has been discussing with the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (DUE) in order to start an Online Registration program, as opposed to our standard carbon copy Registration Forms. Mr. Brian Canavan of the Registrar’s Office comments: “Input from the Undergraduate Association, coupled with MIT’s initiatives to convert paper processes to digital formats, has resulted in a project which will explore the feasibility of eliminating paper registration forms. Details about the project will be refined in the coming months.”

The UA has already been working on raising funds and creating a solid timeline. In addition, a project manager has been identified, and the UA and the DUE will be working on pulling a team together for this initiative. The DUE has promised to work closely with the UA and to keep students involved in the process.

We hope that Online Registration will be ready for the Spring 2011 semester. More updates from the UA regarding this Online Registration system will follow over the next few months.

Winter Location for Produce Market

Started in March of 2009, the MIT Produce Market has been providing students with more nutritional options by selling affordable fresh fruits and vegetables. This stand is run by the Russo’s, a company that has won top honors in Boston Magazine’s 2007 Best of Boston Contest for Best Produce. It’s been held weekly every Tuesday from 12pm to 6pm at the East Campus Courtyard.

Last winter, due to the cold Boston weather, it was moved to the TSMC Lobby on the 1st floor of the Stata Center. Recently, however, a new art piece was installed in the TSMC.

Due to the positive response from, though, students, the Market will most likely stay in Stata! The Campus Activities Complex (CAC) is considering ways of reconfiguring the TSMC setup to protect the artwork, so there is still some planning to be done. Updates from the DSL and the UA are sure to follow soon.

Renovating the Infinite Corridor

Over this past summer, MIT completed the first of a multi-phase project of renovating the Infinite Corridor in order to modernize the look and create a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

Though constricted by the budget, the walls have been repainted and unified millwork has been applied to the Corridor. A variety of bulletin boards, display cases, and historical/artistic displays have also been removed and replaced with standard size display cases and tack boards. The ASA will be allocating tack board spaces to student clubs and activities. We anticipate that all the renovations for this phase will be completed by Friday, September 3rd.

In the near future, we can look forward to electronic displays. Later, we can anticipate brighter lighting and more vibrant color schemes. By the end of this project, MIT hopes to bring a whole new modernized look to our hallways.
Fred Fest III

Fred Fest III, occurring at night on Friday, Sept. 24 in the East Campus Courtyard, is the largest outdoor, annual concert event at MIT, happening for its 3rd year in a row. Its main purpose? Simply to welcome the new students to MIT and to introduce them to the best music in the New England area.

This year, it will be hosting three bands that are “the verge of break out national success,” as quoted from Joseph Graham, one of the organizers of this event. The first is NYC’s Flying Machines, a band that has appeared in “Rolling Stone” and “Filter” Magazines, taking a last stop at MIT on their nationwide tour. Air Traffic Controller, nominated by MTV for a Video Music Award, “Best Break Out Artist,” and listed in the “Boston Music Spotlight” as one of the top 5 bands will also be rocking at Fred Fest. Finally, The Luxury, the 2009 Winners of The WBCN Boston Rock N Roll Rumble and nominated for a 2009 Boston Music Award “Best Live Act,” will be there as well, the very band that opened for Coldplay last summer.

The concert will start at 7pm, and is free to the MIT and WMBR communities. To find more information or to watch a live webcast please visit fredfest.mit.edu. The concert will also be broadcasted live on MIT Cable (HD Version: Channel 62.1; SD Version: Channel 36).