**Annual Report to the Membership**

**2014 – 2015**

This was an eventful year for the community. We got off to an unfortunate start; a highly publicized incident early in Rush Week led to increased municipal oversight, additional social restrictions on our students, and the closure of one of our member chapters. At the same time, the community did outstanding work in many areas, including:

* The Panhellenic Council (Panhel) and Inter-fraternity Council (IFC) both introduced new programs to deal with difficult community issues, including hazing, drug and alcohol use, mental health, and sexual violence.
* The Living Group Council (LGC) expanded its board and significantly increased its engagement with the larger community, and especially with the AILG Community Relations Committee, with a goal of increasing the ILGs’ visibility on campus.
* Kappa Alpha Theta did their annual KATWalk to support court-appointed special advocates.
* Alpha Chi Omega created a public awareness campaign to highlight domestic violence.
* Sigma Chi comprehensively renovated and expanded their home at 532 Beacon Street.
* Zeta Beta Tau, Phi Kappa Sigma, Alpha Chi Omega, Nu Delta, and Sigma Nu all helped co-sponsor events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.
* Numerous FSILGs participated in fundraisers to provide support for and increase awareness of causes ranging from cancer research to innovation in Africa, collectively raising many thousands of dollars for these charities.
* Alpha Chi Omega’s Isabel Lloyd ’18 launched the “Tell Me About Your Day MIT” initiative to promote student mental health and support at MIT.
* AILG volunteers continued to work on implementing key parts of the FSILG Community Strategic Plan.

Perhaps the highlight of the year occurred when Panhel voted to extend an invitation to Delta Phi Epsilon to become MIT’s seventh sorority.

Some facts and figures about the community:

* 36 undergraduate FSILGs (25 fraternities, 6 sororities, and 5 ILGs), with a seventh sorority coming in fall 2015
* Total undergrad FSILG membership (Fall 2014): 2,026
* Total undergraduate FSILG occupancy (Fall 2014): 1,093
* 40 AILG member organizations

The AILG is led entirely by alumni and alumnae volunteers, with staff and financial support for its programs provided by the FSILG Office, the MIT Division of Student Life (DSL), and other MIT departments. In all, more than 70 alumni/ae volunteered for the AILG this year, not including the 200+ alumni/ae who volunteer for their own FSILG as corporation or advisory board members, officer mentors, chapter and risk management advisors, facility managers, and in other roles.

The AILG is managed by a 6-member board of directors, which provides oversight of multiple committees and working groups, including the following:

**Accreditation Committee**

A total of 27 reviews at 25 different FSILGs were conducted this academic year . The year ended with all organizations recommended for accreditation, although in four cases the Visiting Committee expressed one or more reservations to full accreditation. These organizations were found to need improvements in areas of governance, oversight, and recruitment. The assistance of experienced alumni volunteers (“reservation trackers”) and MIT staff is being offered to all organizations found to be needing improvement.  Five organizations recommended for accreditation were invited for a one-year review. In three cases the visiting committees wished to ensure recent improvements in internal programs and processes are successful and well-implemented, and in the other two cases, the FSILG office has requested an early review to address risk management issues observed by MIT Staff.

We summarized common Best Practices and Areas Needing Improvement at a Plenary meeting of the AILG, to be posted on the AILG Accreditation web page.  We continue to recruit new volunteers to be reviewers, but the Accreditation Committee itself would also benefit from new members.  The Committee deployed a rubric to provide uniform standards by which living groups are reviewed. The survey was developed over the past two years with help from the Division of Student Life, and was deployed for all but the first 4 of the 27 reviews conducted this year.  The Committee is studying the results to determine what adjustments should be made to the rubric and how to use it in routine reviews.  A full annual report on 2014-5 activity is in preparation and will be provided in the fall.

**Community Relations Committee**

The AILG’s newest committee begun operations last fall; it includes alumni, students, and MIT staff, and meets every 3 to 4 weeks.

* The Committee’s web page at <http://ailg.mit.edu/committees/community-relations/> hosts over two dozen articles on community contributions by MIT’s FSILGs
* Sarah Gallop of MIT’s Government Relations office has sponsored and encouraged outreach efforts to the Kenmore Square Business Association and other local stakeholders.
* The Committee is currently planning an “MIT Student / Neighborhood Welcome BBQ” for September 3 in the Back Bay West area.

**Education Committee**

The Education Committee formally reactivated in the spring of 2015. The first event was an alumni volunteer seminar focused on introducing alumni volunteers to the current student experience and also providing alumni/ae with a set of resources that they can utilize as they advise and support their students. The Committee also forged a new relationship with DSLx to explore new opportunities to share educational material using online learning platforms. The Committee is actively working to help create a framework for educating alumni in the areas charged to the Fraternity Culture Change Committee and is developing a pilot alumni mentorship program to be launched in the fall.

**Facilities Committee**

The Facilities Committee continues to sponsor the very successful Safety Licensing Inspection (SLI) program and the Building Safety Facilitator (BSF). The BSF provides pre-inspections and a single point of contact for the municipal inspectors.

This year dealings with the Boston Inspectional Services Department (ISD) was much more challenging due to multiple student falls, large social events at fraternities, and media attention on ISD. The AILG Board, the Committee, and the BSF dealt with building occupancy, assembly occupancy, roof deck occupancy, lofts and bunk beds, and bed counts. The Committee is currently revising the roof deck occupancy calculation to complement the FSILG Social Events Policy.

The Committee’s members generally populated the Strategic Planning Theme 3 which developed a capital planning model, a property management responsibility matrix, a condition assessment scope and RFP. A subcommittee has been meeting with MITIMCo to rationalize leases for five buildings.

An emerging issue the Committee is now working on is Cambridge Health Department’s increased enforcement of requirements that houses have a Food Establishment Permit and professional or student cooks have Serve Safe Certification. We are working on arranging that training.

**Finance Committee**

The mission of the Finance Committee is to foster and share best practices for financial management of FSILGs, conduct the annual house bill survey, assist with financial seminars, and to develop financial initiatives as presented in the AILG Strategic Plan. This year the Finance Committee accomplished the following:

* House-Bill Survey. The Committee completed the prior year’s data analysis and published the results.
* Fund-Raising Seminar. The Committee coordinated with DSL and Alumni Association staff in presenting a capital campaign seminar in the spring.
* Capturing Total Operating Expenses. The committee discussed possible ways to capture all operating expenses, including both undergraduate and alumni corporation expenses. The goal is to build an accurate baseline characterization of total operating costs for an FSILG.
* Capital Improvement/Replacement Expenses. The Committee discussed capturing capital expenses to develop an even more accurate characterization of total costs for a living group. The topic and possible methods for gathering information requires further discussion.

* Comparative Rooming Costs Analysis. The Committee used MIT dormitory room costs and off-campus (apartment) cost data provided by the MIT Housing Office to analyze cost trends for non-FSILG rooming costs. The analysis indicates average 5% annual increase in dormitory rooming cost over the past three years and average 17% annual increase for apartment costs in Cambridge over the past ten years.
* FSILG Utility Costs Analysis. The Committee used 2012 EOG data to analyze cost per student and cost per square foot for heating, electricity and water utility expenses. Further historical data and analysis will be required to characterize trends.

For future discussion, the Committee would like to investigate management of House Reserve Funds – How do living groups manage financial reserves?

**Fraternity Culture Committee**

In response to the closure of two fraternity chapters in the past 16 months, the AILG Board charged an *ad-hoc* committee to study issues of specific concern to the MIT fraternity community and identify recommendations to support our students in a challenging social and political environment. The Committee, which includes alumni, student leaders, and DSL staff, spent several months in information gathering, learning from MIT’s experts on subjects of hazing, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual assault, mental health, and other negative behaviors or risk management concerns. It also learned about the many outstanding programs our students are already doing to address these issues.

The Committee is now developing initiatives to address these challenges, including the following:

* Completion of the FSILG Relationship Document, which will clarify and enumerate the mutual expectations that MIT, the AILG, and the FSILGs have for each other.
* Creation of new alumni training and education programs to help our alumni volunteers better support today’s fraternity members with current challenges.
* A program to encourage the creation of alumni “champions” in each chapter to role model and mentor our students in positive and healthy behaviors.
* A process for community intervention and support of an AILG member organization that may need assistance managing a difficult issue.

More detail on these programs will be presented at the September AILG Plenary meeting.

**FSILG Village Working Group**

With the current west campus master planning effort now under way, MIT has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future of its student housing system and what it will look like in coming decades. This opportunity, coupled with an increasingly challenging political environment in Boston, led a group of AILG volunteers to study whether the community would benefit by creating a new “FSILG Village” on or adjacent to the west campus. The Working Group undertook a broad survey of alumni and student opinion in the fall, and conducted more detailed focus groups in the spring. The Working Group has also been liaising with MIT leadership on this issue.

With MIT support, the Working Group will soon announce the creation of a committee of interested FSILGs to intensively study and develop the details of a possible village model.

**Information Technology Committee**

Accomplishments this year:

* Next Generation Wireless was the Committee’s major project for this past year, in partnership with MIT’s IS&T department and major financing by the IRDF. All but three FSILGs are now part of the campus wireless network and are enjoying top performance on the new high bandwidth 802.11AC standard. The new IS&T support agreement includes all functions noted in the current BNS agreement, plus network monitoring, security, and replacement of failed units.
* Completing Fiber Upgrades. In December, 2013 all Boston FSILGs were connected via a high-speed fiber optic network to campus. At the time, there was not a feasible path to the 2 Brookline houses and pika. Now, however, MIT has let a contract to connect these three remaining FSILGs via fiber. Work is expected to be completed by late summer, and once the new fiber is operational, the three can also be converted to Next Generation Wireless.
* Paid Webmaster for the AILG Website. The IT Committee worked with the AILG Secretary to draft a job description for a paid webmaster, which is now a reality.

Next year’s projects:

* Central Telephone Numbers. In the coming year, the Committee will be working on a central, easily configurable MIT phone number assigned to the Community Relations Committee, as well as MIT numbers assignable to and configurable by each FSILG. These all can be readily forwarded as desired.
* Alumni Net Contact. Besides an undergrad net contact, each FSILG is encouraged to have Alumni Net Contact, to understand the rudiments of the network. To identify your Net Contact, please use the [Alumni Contact Update Form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-LyX64kXetxKHV5DogbaTG_lPM-VcOwX995n_P1Gq2g/viewform) at <http://studentlife.mit.edu/fsilg/resources>.

**Insurance Committee**

The Insurance Committee continues to work with Holmes Murphy (formerly Willis Fraternal Practice) to provide liability and property insurance to the AILG and many of our members.  The existing insurance policies were updated and renewed on April 1, 2015.  General and Excess Liability insurance are purchased by 24 members, Commercial Crime insurance by 25 members, Directors and Officers insurance by 20 members, Commercial Property insurance by 31 members, and Boiler insurance by 29 members.

**Independent Residence Development Fund**

Operations of the IRDF are managed by the MIT Treasurer’s Office in consultation with two alumni committees: the IRDF Board of Allocation (loans) and the IRDF Grant Advisory Board (grants). After a fabulous 50th anniversary celebration a year ago, the IRDF began its second half century serving our FSILG community with several impressive milestones. Here are a few:

* The IRDF has a record of $15.5M in low-interest loans outstanding.
* The largest project grant in IRDF history was awarded as part of Phi Beta Epsilon’s ambitious renovation of their magnificent house at 400 Memorial Drive.
* Over $490,000 has been awarded so far this fiscal year for a total of 36 Educational Operating and Safety Grants.
* The IRDF financed the fiber optic connection and next generation wireless network projects for our member houses. The program is almost complete, with the final three houses expected to be completed by the end of summer.
* We have a new IRDF brochure, thanks to the staff of the MIT Annual Fund.

**Thanks to all of you who support the IRDF.** We will need its resources to continue the physical renewal of our community. If you have not made a gift to MIT in the past 12 months, please do so and designate at least part of your gift to the Independent Residence Development Fund. Your participation is important.

**Other Initiatives**

In addition to the committees’ work, the AILG Board of Directors undertook the following other activities this year:

* The Board cosponsored and participated in the work of the FSILG Social Events Committee, which developed a new events policy in response to Boston ISD concerns.
* AILG Vice Chair Alice Leung led a renewed effort to connect our student communities with the MIT faculty.
* Working with the LGC, the Board studied ways to enhance the visibility of substance-free independent living groups.
* In consultation with DSL, the Board will be working on an initiative to revisit the current MIT policy prohibiting the creation of “local” or independent organizations.

**Acknowledgements**

The AILG Board of Directors would like to thank the following persons and organizations for their assistance this year:

* Dean Colombo, Dean Humphreys, and their DSL and Residence Life staff, for continuing financial and staff support of AILG and FSILG community programs.
* Bob Ferrara and the FSILG Office Staff, for everything they do to advise and support our student communities.
* The MIT Campus Police, MIT Medical and Mental Health, and MIT Student Support Services, for keeping our student communities safe and healthy.
* Kevin Milligan, and the MIT Treasurer’s Office, for its support of the IRDF and its programs.
* Scott Klemm and the Board of Directors of the FSILG Cooperative Inc. (FCI), for their partnership and assistance.
* The Living Group Council (LGC), Panhellenic Council (Panhel), and Inter-fraternity Council (IFC), for their leadership of our student communities.
* All alumni volunteers, without whom the AILG and FSILG communities would not exist.

**Thank you for all you do to support your FSILG and the MIT community as a whole.**

Respectfully Submitted,

The Association of Independent Living Groups Board of Directors

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