

Dean for Student Life

The Division of Student Life is a leader in providing exceptional living and learning environments for MIT students through a rich variety of opportunities that inspire academic achievement, innovative thought, leadership, and global citizenship. As an integral part of MIT's educational mission, the Division of Student Life fosters a safe, healthy, and supportive environment centered on well-being, a commitment to learning, and the development of critical skills for personal growth. We place serving students as the highest priority for our staff, programs, services, and facilities. We partner with others to create a dynamic campus community grounded in personal and group responsibility, fairness and respect, where individual differences are expected and appreciated.

New mission statement for the Division of Student Life
Adopted July 21, 2011

The past year saw the culmination of several historic changes to campus and student life at MIT, including the opening of Fariborz Maseeh Hall and the restoration of a quality House Dining program to the undergraduate residences. Amid these celebrations, the community also came together in sorrow and support after several student deaths. This report begins with a summary of these and other major events, followed by a description of notable projects, services, and accomplishments across the Division of Student Life (DSL) during the 2011–2012 academic year.

Accomplishments

Opening of Fariborz Maseeh Hall

In August 2011, MIT opened the doors of Fariborz Maseeh Hall as the newest undergraduate residence, after several years of renovations. The building (W1) is named in recognition of Fariborz Maseeh ScD '90, whose generous gift in September 2010 to expand the undergraduate student body galvanized the Institute's commitment to complete construction. For much of the previous century, the building was home to graduate students as Ashdown House. This architectural gem now houses more than 460 undergraduates at the center of campus, overlooking the Massachusetts Avenue Bridge, the Charles River, and the Boston skyline.

The opening went smoothly thanks to the hard work and dedication of staff from across the Institute, including DSL and the Department of Facilities. In parallel with the physical construction, a priority was to build the foundation for a successful living and learning community. Housemasters Suzanne Flynn and Jack Carroll and members of the Phoenix Group—a group of undergraduates who lived together for several years during renovations to form a seed community—led the development of Maseeh Hall government, values, culture, and other vital elements that helped the building open as a living, breathing community. Other tasks included selecting and training the Graduate Resident Tutors (GRTs) who would move into Maseeh Hall as mentors and supporters of the residents. Professor of mechanical engineering Cullen Buie and his spouse, Donielle Buie, joined the community as associate housemasters.

The west wing on the first floor houses a state-of-the-art, 350-seat dining facility. The Howard Dining Hall was named by, though not after, an anonymous donor whose generosity provided crucial support to keep renovations proceeding after the global economic downturn in 2008 halted most of the construction effort. “The Howard” is the largest dining facility at MIT and is open to students, faculty, and staff for all-you-care-to-eat dining. It offers the campus a place to gather and share meals, while helping to foster community at Maseeh Hall.

The Institute marked the opening with two special events. A community block party on September 14, 2011, brought thousands of invited students, faculty, staff, and others to Kresge Oval and Amherst Alley for a picnic to welcome Maseeh Hall to the neighborhood. On October 13, 2011, president Susan Hockfield joined 200 guests, including Dr. Maseeh, for a formal dinner in The Howard to mark the official dedication of the building and to celebrate the successful completion of the Campaign for Students, which raised more than \$578 million from some 48,000 donors to support scholarships, fellowships, education initiatives, and student life.

The New House Dining Program

When they returned to MIT last fall, nearly 1,800 undergraduates enrolled in meal plans ranging from seven to 19 meals per week—and contributed to a new sense of community built around dining that flowed through the residences when the new House Dining program opened its doors.

From 1992 to 2009, numerous MIT task forces and committees grappled with—but did not settle—longstanding frustrations and systemic problems with the House Dining program, the system of dining halls in four of the undergraduate houses (Baker House, McCormick Hall, Next House, and Simmons Hall). After the 2008 global financial crisis, the Institute-wide Planning Task Force charged the dean for student life with resolving the impasse and eliminating annual budget deficits of more than half a million dollars. In 2009–2010, the House Dining Advisory Group—a dedicated group of students and faculty housemasters drawn from the four dining communities, as well as representatives of the Undergraduate Association, the Phoenix Group, and DSL—developed a new program to revitalize House Dining. After a year of preparation, including selecting Bon Appétit Management Company as the vendor to operate the system, the new House Dining program opened last fall.

Along with the construction of The Howard Dining Hall in Maseeh Hall, the other four dining facilities underwent renovations to prepare for a new, robust dining plan that includes all-you-care-to-eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner for the first time in decades. Bon Appétit instituted a creative approach in which each dining hall offers a standard array of staples, such as salad bars, comfort foods, and grills, complemented by offerings unique to each house, such as a sushi station in Baker House or Indian food offerings at Maseeh Hall. The new program also includes kosher and halal options in each dining hall, with a dedicated kosher station in The Howard—marking the first time the Institute has offered a comprehensive kosher dining option.

Dining has often been a contentious subject for MIT, and the process that led to this new system was no different. Yet, despite concerns from some parts of the community that the new House Dining system would compromise dormitory culture or otherwise prove detrimental to the student experience, the new program impressed even dining skeptics with the quality and variety of its offerings and the positive effect on the campus community. The new meal plans have not only resulted in a financially viable system, but are also meeting the goals of building community and ensuring that students have convenient access to healthful, nutritious meals. In just its first year, the new House Dining program has truly improved student life at MIT—so much so that some say they can hardly recall what campus dining was like without it.

Sorrow and Support after Tragic Losses

The campus reeled this year after the deaths of three undergraduate students, prompting a deep and broad response from DSL.

In the immediate aftermath of these tragedies, staff from the DSL department of Student Development and Support offered critical assistance to the families, guiding them through the immediacy of grief and shock and helping them manage the complicated logistics that accompany such trauma, such as arranging travel and lodging, setting up meetings at MIT, and planning for memorial services.

DSL staff helped students and others in the Institute community grapple with the deaths in a variety of ways, especially within the residences. From the chaplains to the office of Student Outreach and Support (SOS) to housemasters, GRTs, and Residential Life Programs (RLP) staff, individuals from DSL offered support and consolation to anyone who felt affected by the deaths. Details of some of these efforts are included in the relevant summary sections below.

Chancellor Eric Grimson also formed a working group on student support in November. Along with faculty, students, and administrators from across the Institute, the working group included the dean for student life Chris Colombo, DSL staff, GRTs, and housemasters. The group met over the spring term to analyze the current support structure for graduate and undergraduate students, to discuss challenges that lead students to feel isolated or overwhelmed, and to propose ways to strengthen the campus environment for personal and academic success.

Banner Year for Athletics

Nearly 800 students participated in intercollegiate athletics this year, setting numerous records and reaching an unprecedented level of individual, team, and program success.

Men's and women's teams garnered an Institute-record 10 New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference Championships, while 13 teams were represented in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) National Championship competition. The men's basketball team set a new Institute record for wins in a season while advancing to its first-ever Final Four appearance in the NCAA Division III Championship Tournament. In other NCAA Division III competition, men's and women's swimming finished fourth and eighth overall; women's cross country finished fifth; and field hockey advanced to

the NCAA quarterfinals after setting a record for wins in a season. Teams ranked in the top 20 in the nation in their division, including men's water polo, coed sailing, men's basketball, men's volleyball, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's lightweight crew, men's and women's indoor track and field, women's outdoor track and field, and men's and women's swimming and diving.

MIT's scholar athletes garnered 88 All-America honors and a record 13 Academic All-America honors, while members of the MIT coaching staff were recognized nine times as conference/regional coach of the year. Once again, the MIT Athletics program ranked as one of the most successful overall varsity programs at the NCAA Division III level, with the Engineers finishing 11th in the final standings of the Division III Learfield Sports Directors' Cup released by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. It was the third consecutive year that MIT has finished 11th in the standings, matching the school's all-time highest finish.

Major Initiatives

The past academic year saw the completion of several DSL major studies and initiatives.

DSL Strategic Planning

DSL continued to develop its strategic planning process—the first for the division since 2007. Throughout the process, over 200 students, staff, and faculty have been engaged in a series of environmental scans and visioning exercises. Over 60 DSL staff took part through a variety of teams and committees.

Working with the guidance of MIT Human Resources staff, DSL has revised its mission statement, defined core values, and set its major strategic themes and initiatives. Several teams of DSL staff developed initiatives and activities for the division based around four themes: Foster Thriving Communities, Promote Innovative Technology, Steward MIT Resources, and Revitalize Our Facilities. The groups presented their findings at a June 2012 strategic planning retreat, and select initiatives and activities will be implemented in the coming academic year.

DSL staff also contributed heavily this year to the creation of the Fraternity, Sorority, and Independent Living Group (FSILG) Strategic Plan, which will assist the FSILG community's leadership—students, alumni, and staff—to position the community over the next five years to meet the needs of future generations of MIT students. In addition, the plan considers a much longer time horizon with regard to maintenance and management of the 38 independently owned or managed residential properties.

Residence Hall Security Committee

The Residence Hall Security Committee, convened in December in response to several security-related incidents in the dormitories, submitted a report to summarize its review of and recommendations for improving security in the MIT housing system. The committee included housemasters, students, and MIT staff who worked collaboratively to establish a series of recommended policies, procedures, and technologies to enhance the security and safety of the residential community.

To gather information, the Security Committee toured four representative houses, reviewed written policies for residential staff, including desk workers, desk captains, house managers, and Nightwatch patrol, and analyzed current benchmarking data for peer and neighboring universities. The members also met with a broad array of stakeholders, from the director of housing, housemasters, and house managers to front desk workers, dormitory officers, and GRTs.

The report concluded that there is room to improve security in the residences, but that a one-size-fits-all solution would not work within MIT's distinctive housing system. Instead, the report called for further study with assistance from professional security consultants to help undergraduate and graduate communities identify house-specific security improvements throughout the system. Residential Life and Dining staff are currently working with security consultants to implement the recommendations made by the committee.

Review Committee on Orientation

In April 2012, the Review Committee on Orientation (RCO) released its report. The committee spent the past year conducting a comprehensive study, concluding that orientation should be an ongoing process that intentionally extends throughout the first year, not simply a weeklong event in August. The report also recommended that Residential Exploration should continue but with a renewed focus that better integrates with orientation.

Key recommendations that will be implemented for the Class of 2016 include adding a program that addresses academic integrity through a multi-pronged approach, including orientation and the First Year Experience (FYE) program at the beginning of classes; enabling international students to participate in all freshman pre-orientation programs and integrating international student orientation more fully into orientation; replacing the CityDays Serve-off with a community service day that engages the full MIT community during the academic year; and replacing the Tuesday evening event planned by the Student Life Orientation Programs and Experiences Committee with dormitory-wide community building activities planned and/or overseen by the Dormitory Council.

Notable Accomplishments, Efforts, and Events

In 2011–2012, there were notable accomplishments, efforts, and events in DSL in the following areas:

- Building and supporting community
- Leadership and student development
- Health, well-being, and support
- Administration, communications, and facilities

Building and Supporting Community

DSL builds and supports community on multiple levels. From a practical standpoint, the division manages nearly one-third of the Institute's physical footprint, including community spaces such as the Zesiger Sports and Fitness Center, the Stratton Student Center, and Walker Memorial. The Campus Activities Complex (CAC) processed 23,204 event space requests, with 13,662 of those becoming actual events, including 6,588 student group events, 6,732 department events, and 342 personal events. Events ranged from an MIT Energy Club lecture by Dr. Steven Chu, US Secretary of Energy; the Massachusetts Youth Poetry Festival; a speech by Nobel Peace Prize-winner Dr. Shirin Ebadi; the 100K Business Plan Contest finale; and the Fierce Forever 9 drag show.

CAC also supported a number of major, traditional programs including graduate and undergraduate orientations, Family Weekend, Campus Preview Weekend, and Commencement and reunion activities. The Coffeehouse Lounge Program was initiated in the spring term, with 14 musical events at night and a summer program of lunchtime concerts on the Student Center steps.

Two DSL offices—Residential Life and Dining, and FSILGs—offered significant support to student living communities this year. Staff from the MIT Housing Office met with student leaders in summer and fall 2011 to develop new procedures for the waiting list and housing switch lotteries. A new process was piloted in the spring 2012 term, allowing for a more efficient, transparent system that ultimately resulted in greater student satisfaction.

Nearly one quarter of MIT's undergraduates live in an FSILG. To strengthen this important community, the FSILG office hosted two national programs—Buy In or Get Out, and Recruitment Bootcamp. Staff also worked extensively to reinvigorate the Living Group Council, the independent living group (ILG) governing and advisory body, and brought new life and leadership into this previously dormant organization. In addition, DSL staff advised the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and the Panhellenic Association (Panhel)—the governing bodies for fraternities and sororities, respectively—in a transition to new governance structures and regulations. IFC unveiled new judicial committee bylaws, and Panhel instituted new regulations regarding recruitment recommended by the National Panhellenic Conference.

Service as a Community Priority

Service is central to MIT's mission, and DSL encourages and supports service to build community on campus. The Public Service Center (PSC) coordinates many of these efforts.

PSC's Community Service Work-study placed 129 MIT students in 54 different community nonprofit organizations or government agencies. Over the independent activities period (IAP), PSC presented its first Community Service Day for the entire MIT community. The 59 participating volunteers—including undergraduate and graduate students, staff, spouses, partners, and retirees—spent an afternoon working at either The Greater Boston Food Bank, People Making a Difference, or The Salvation Army Harbor Light Center.

In the spring, 15 teams representing fraternities, sororities, independent living groups, and dormitories participated in the second annual FSILG and dormitory Community Service Challenge. The Service Challenge culminated in an awards celebration, where Cambridge mayor Henrietta Davis, Chancellor Grimson, and DSL staff joined the participating students to celebrate service experiences. The Service Cup trophy was presented to The Number Six Club—the first ILG to participate in the challenge—for its work with the Italian Home for Children, a local facility for emotionally and behaviorally challenged children.

One important change in 2012 was the decision by RCO to remove CityDays Serve-off from orientation, marking the end of a 24-year tradition that introduced as many as 900 entering students and upperclassmen each year to the ethic of service at MIT, each other, and the surrounding communities. RCO did recommend that MIT provide an Institute-wide day of service; consequently, PSC is currently in the process of determining alternative ways to achieve similar effects.

Supporting a Diverse, Welcoming, and Inclusive Community

DSL staff also focus on ensuring a welcoming and inclusive community for all. In August 2011, La-Tarri Canty joined MIT as DSL's first director of multicultural programs. The Office of Multicultural Programs (OMP) helps students be successful, while providing advocacy, support services, trainings, workshops, leadership development, and culturally based programs. In addition, it cultivates opportunities for students to engage in meaningful dialogue and activities that will assist them in becoming change agents at MIT and beyond. OMP also advises the 67 culturally-focused student clubs and organizations, provides oversight for the Black Student Union and the Latin Cultural Center, and works closely with Asian student groups. This year, MIT's Multicultural Conference was held overnight for the first time. The additional time and workshops were extremely well received by the nearly 40 students and over a dozen staff and faculty presenters that attended.

The Student Activities Office (SAO) offers a centralized source of information and resources for women students at MIT. This spring, SAO created and implemented the MIT Women's Retreat to bring together a diverse array of women students from across the campus. On Friday and Saturday, April 6–7, approximately 40 women attended a dinner and series of workshops and discussions exploring what it means to be a woman at MIT.

Another SAO initiative, Women@MIT, functions to make students aware of the network of offices, departments, and organizations that exist to support and empower women students at MIT. Women@MIT also provides a number of events and programs that promote community building and engagement, including overseeing the Margaret Cheney Reading Room, a private suite for women overlooking Killian Court and a meeting place for women's groups and activities. SAO also reviewed its programming over the course of the year to pinpoint gaps, limitations, and challenges. Based on these discussions and feedback gathered from staff and students, the office will try out new ideas to begin tackling these challenges.

Religious Life at MIT

MIT has a broad and active religious community, representing many of the world's religions and served by the chaplain to the Institute and the MIT Board of Chaplains. In addition, more than 30 student religious groups are active on campus. From worship and service to academic and cultural activities, these groups contribute to the vibrant social and intellectual life of the campus in countless ways.

The MIT chapter of the Veritas Forum, with strong leadership from graduate students in the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF), hosted a panel discussion titled "Will Technology Save the World?" on March 9, 2012. An audience of 600 came to hear a conversation on technology, faith, and the future between two Christian and two atheist MIT professors: instructor for D-Lab (Development through Dialogue, Design, and Dissemination)–Health José Gómez-Márquez and professor of media arts and sciences Rosalind Picard, and professor of sociology and anthropology Susan Silbey and professor of mechanical engineering George Barbastathis, respectively.

The IVCF also hosted "Test of Faith," a popular film series on science and faith issues, with dinners to foster interaction between Christian graduate students and faculty. The MIT Baha'i Association organized its own film event, assisting MIT Amnesty International on a screening of the documentary *Education Under Fire*, which was held on November 11. This film documents the systematic denial of higher education to members of the Baha'i community in Iran by the Iranian government and the recent arrests and imprisonment of leaders in the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education.

Lutheran Episcopal Ministry (LEM) organized a two-pronged program: Encountering Other Traditions, and Liturgical Music Workshops. The series encouraged LEM members to learn about other traditions, to embark on a liturgical leadership journey, and to receive training in worship leadership styles and in how practitioners use music as a means of expressing and deepening their own faith and the faiths of their communities. The exploration of other faiths and liturgical practices ultimately challenged and clarified the members' own beliefs and practices.

Other chaplains and groups also strove to add to the intellectual and cultural life of the campus. The Hindu chaplaincy worked with the student group MIT Hindu Students' Council to hold informal talks and discussions on Friday evenings and to celebrate Hindu festivals throughout the year. The Addir Fellows Interfaith Dialogue Program and the Technology and Culture Forum hosted Miroslav Volf, founding director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, for a talk on religious pluralism in post-9/11 America. The Zarathushti community (also known as Zoroastrianism) welcomed eminent Zoroastrianism scholar Dr. Almut Hintze, from the School of Oriental and African Studies at University of London, for a special seminar on archaic and innovative features of Zoroastrian religious belief and practice and the growth of the Zoroastrian tradition.

Leadership and Student Development

The various offices and programs that make up DSL play a vital role in the educational experience for students. From the residential communities to athletics and recreation to clubs and activities, DSL strives to give students opportunities to develop and grow as individuals and to prepare them in ways that integrate with their classroom-based learning. A reflection of this commitment is the six leadership consortiums organized this year by SAO. These consortiums brought together faculty and staff from across the Institute who are involved in leadership development to share knowledge and encourage collaboration.

Within SAO, DSL made several major advances this year in leadership development programming for graduate and undergraduate students. SAO instituted MIT L.E.A.D. in the fall to provide comprehensive and accessible leadership training to students and organizations. The program offers robust content to appeal to results-oriented MIT students but encourages an à la carte approach to accommodate busy schedules. L.E.A.D. consists of four parts: (1) *Lead*, an online repository of training, documentation, and videos; (2) *Engage*, a speaker series featuring MIT faculty, alumni, and staff; (3) *Act*, ongoing opportunities for students to connect with one another and to delve into topics relating to leadership; and (4) *Develop*, targeted workshops scheduled regularly over the fall and spring terms.

SAO also oversees the Alan '73 and Terri Spoon Community Catalyst Leadership Program (CCLP), which celebrated its fifth anniversary this year. The program pairs junior student leaders with alumni and other “coaches” for a yearlong exploration of the skills and qualities that are the foundation of effective leadership. Pleased with the program’s growth and impact, the Spoons marked the anniversary by funding CCLP for another five years—and increasing their annual commitment to support the program’s goals. CCLP will expand its reach in two areas: integrating a sophomore component and a senior project to extend the experience beyond the junior year, and forming an alumni group to encourage networking for participants after they leave MIT.

Students encounter opportunities to learn and grow as leaders throughout DSL. The MIT Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender office holds an annual leadership retreat in Provincetown, MA, and this year the retreat had its largest attendance to date: 41 students and 12 staff and faculty came together to strengthen the LBGT community and cultivate diverse leadership. The FSILG office hosted, in collaboration with the New England Greek Leadership Association, the New England Greek Summit in October, a one-day multi-campus leadership conference attended by over 100 students from the Greater Boston area.

DSL staff also reach out to student positional leaders to help them develop the skills needed to provide effective direction for their organizations. RLP facilitated several workshops and retreats for the resident hall executive boards. At these events, students were able to focus on leadership skill development, community impact, and the importance of community inclusion and involvement. Students were also engaged in activities and exercises in which they defined ways to strengthen and continue the positive traditions and practices that enhance their living community and the MIT

community. SAO set up a recurring lunch for treasurers from the Graduate Student Council, Undergraduate Association, Dormitory Council, Club Sports Council, and Finance Board. The lunches provided an opportunity for these financial leaders to discuss financial matters that affect student groups, to create an interorganizational communication system, and to provide SAO with a forum to present and vet financial policies and procedures.

Charm School, now in its 19th year, is a program that has become a full-fledged community event. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni come together every January for a day of mini-workshops on topics that include professional development (such as “Networking with Older Alumni”), communication (“How to Make Small Talk”), and life skills (“Basic Budgeting”). In February, Charm School was featured on the national television program *CBS Sunday Morning*, which highlighted the program’s history while debunking the notion that MIT students are simply geeks and nerds.

Fostering Success in the Residences

In August 2011, DSL officially implemented the First-Year Experience (FYE) program to offer guidance to students as they navigate through their first year at MIT. Focusing on the specific needs of MIT undergraduates, FYE offers a variety of events and programs that help all first-year students connect with their classmates and gain awareness of the numerous resources available for help and support. The FYE office helps students manage their time, reduce stress, and meet new people as they transition socially and academically into the MIT community.

Within the residences, FYE partners with housemasters, GRTs, and area directors to help students adjust to communal living. An FYE committee also gathers insight and feedback from a committee drawn broadly from staff, faculty, and students from SAO; SOS; FSILGs; Think-Inspire-Motivate Talks (TIMtalks); MIT Housing; MIT Libraries; and Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming. Other efforts included faculty-student lunches covering topics such as failure, study habits, and the best ways to communicate with professors; a monthly newsletter sent to the Class of 2015 introducing topics such as decision making, healthful eating, library resources, and emotional support contacts; and a highly successful stress and wellness fair, in October, with MIT Medical, Community Wellness, MIT Activities Committee, and Bon Appétit.

The Residence-based Advising (RBA) program supports the transition to living and learning at MIT by providing academic resources within the residential community. This year, Maseeh Hall became an RBA dormitory alongside Next House, McCormick Hall, and New House. All first-year students in RBA residences are part of small groups guided by a faculty or staff advisor and a Resident Associate Advisor, an upperclass student who lives in the residence to answer questions and provide support. Last year, RBA hosted over 50 programs in the various houses with a focus on the three major goals identified through FYE: academic engagement, sense of belonging, and personal growth.

Hands-on and Experiential Learning

The Hobby Shop and PSC each offer students an opportunity to work on independent projects, apply their skills in hands-on scenarios, and gain real-world experience that complements their classroom instruction. This year, the Hobby Shop partnered with several academic programs in this regard. A new freshman advisory seminar titled “Crash Course in Engineering,” developed in collaboration with graduate student Ilan Moyer, offers students hands-on experience building and then improving the design of a three-axis computer-controlled platform. The class’s first computer-numerical-control machine was adapted to write and draw with a pen, and students designed a more robust second machine that could engrave wood with a class-designed spindle.

The Hobby Shop also aided in MIT’s partnership with the Singapore University Institute of Design (SUTD). Professors from SUTD who are on campus take a “Teach the Teacher” class in the Hobby Shop to learn the building blocks that have shaped the MIT community—a process the visiting professors have nicknamed “the drinking of MIT’s DNA.” Through the Hobby Shop, the professors worked with laser cutters, water jets, and other advanced wood- and metalworking equipment while developing hands-on skills, teamwork, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The program was enthusiastically received by SUTD faculty, and will continue next year.

This kind of collaborative approach is a hallmark of PSC, which continually strives to reinforce service as a central theme of MIT’s mission. PSC undertook a variety of initiatives this year to encourage undergraduate and graduate students to look beyond the classroom—and beyond the campus—for opportunities to learn and make an impact. PSC fellowships enabled 52 students to serve in 18 countries and five states over the past year.

PSC and the MIT Edgerton Center launched a new initiative to improve science and engineering education in middle schools throughout the US. The Middle School Science Initiative also enables MIT alumni to play an active role in improving science education in communities by recruiting schools and donating funds to enable their participation; PSC then recruits MIT students to be trained in Edgerton Center hands-on science curriculum and sends them to the schools to demonstrate the curricula to teachers and their classes during IAP. Through a shared grant from Mohammed Abdul Latif Jameel ’78, PSC worked with D-Lab and the International Development Initiative to launch a new initiative to further technology dissemination designed to alleviate poverty in developing countries. The work included a speaker series on scalable technology dissemination and collaborative support for students doing fieldwork internationally.

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE)–PSC internships program, begun this year, provides opportunities for students in CEE to engage in public service through internships during IAP. Three students in the first cohort of CEE–PSC interns worked in Ghana with Pure Home Water, a nonprofit project founded by Susan Murcott, a senior lecturer in CEE. Interest also remains high for Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP)–PSC Career Development Internships, a summer opportunity for graduate and undergraduate students in DUSP. PSC also collaborated with DUSP on placing students for summer work-study positions.

Developed in conjunction with last year's MIT150 celebration and built on the success of the IDEAS (Innovation, Development, Enterprise, Action, and Service) Competition, the IDEAS Global Challenge offers a window into innovation at MIT and invites students, faculty, staff, alumni, and their collaborators to identify and address community development challenges through innovation and collaboration in communities around the world. This year, 81 teams began the Global Challenge competition cycle, representing approximately 400 MIT students and collaborators. Of these, 37 teams entered the final round of submissions, and 10 teams were awarded a total of \$72,500 in implementation funding. Three additional teams each won \$1,500 from the online Community Choice Vote, which garnered over 5,000 votes from around the world.

The Global Challenge is evolving into an important incubator for students interested in social entrepreneurship and service-oriented innovation. Among this year's winners were teams focused on providing Indian rural retail shops with access to technologies that can improve their customers' lives; developing software and web hosting to areas recovering from disasters, allowing communities to transform the goodwill of others into action; equipping sunglasses with a portable, fast, and inexpensive diabetic retinopathy screening device; harnessing the power of the Lagos, Nigeria, urban community to reclaim the environment from unmanaged waste; and creating a low-cost, adjustable prosthetic socket for the developing world.

Health, Well-being, and Support

Health, well-being, and support for graduate and undergraduate students are always priorities for the dean for student life, but this year's student deaths and the chancellor's working group on student support brought an additional focus to these efforts across DSL.

DSL took several steps to strengthen its outreach through the Dean-on-Call system. Dean-on-Call provides emergency response to students from 5 pm to 9 am on weekdays, and 24 hours per day on weekends and holidays. Last year, the on-call system responded to 642 incidents (from June 10, 2011, to June 10, 2012); the most frequent incidents were medical transports, mental health issues, alcohol-related transports, and requests for student well-being checks. Although the system involves a network of responders, including MIT Police, MIT Medical, Student Support Services, and other staff, DSL has a central role. DSL staff make up two-thirds of the primary responder team members and half of the secondary response team members. By providing feedback and on-site support, DSL has been able to inform the best practices for emergency response procedures and protocols, provide better communication to house teams, and offer holistic support for students in crisis through the collaboration with its various campus partners.

Throughout the year, several priorities emerged for ensuring that students have the information and perspective to overcome challenges at MIT. One goal was to increase awareness of student support resources so that individuals understand where to go for help. DSL coordinated a poster campaign, called MIT Together, to promote awareness,

to destigmatize asking for help, and to demystify support resources in order to lower the barrier for reaching out. The highly visible posters—with taglines such as “Q. Am I a failure if I need help to succeed at MIT? A. Not if it helps you succeed,” and “A personal problem is like a p-set. Both are easier to solve when you work with someone else.”—were distributed throughout the academic complex and in the undergraduate residences. The campaign will be expanded and extended into the coming year, including a full website with student-generated content encouraging students to seek help when feeling isolated or overwhelmed.

PSC contributed to this effort by funding and advising a group of students to create TIMtalks. With a theme of Think-Inspire-Motivate, TIMtalks are a live and online platform for students to share stories of initiative, success, and failure. After months of planning, a well-attended inaugural event was held on May 16, featuring opening remarks from Chancellor Grimson and short talks from five graduate and undergraduate students on impostor syndrome, the challenges for women in science and engineering, and turning certain failure into brilliant accomplishment. TIMtalks promises to be a very successful enterprise—videos of the talks posted online gathered more than 7,000 views in just the first two months—and future events are being planned for next year.

The newly unified Office of Student Outreach and Support (SOS) (see Administration section at report’s end) worked to respond to issues and student needs. SOS provided assistance for students during and following hospitalizations or injuries and supported 34 families of students undergoing a crisis. Support included short-term lodging, transportation, and resource referrals while students were treated and stabilized in area hospitals.

SOS staff also reached out proactively to educate students, inform faculty and staff, and prevent problems. The When Support Gets Personal program offered professional development training for MIT faculty, staff, and administrators. Staff collaborated with MIT Medical to advise and guide Active Minds, a student organization dedicated to removing the stigma associated with mental illness, and to train over 50 students in Question, Persuade, and Refer, a program that offers insight into how to recognize that someone may be contemplating suicide and how to respond.

Every year, efforts to improve student and campus health and well-being extend across DSL in a variety of ways. This year RLP, in collaboration with MIT Police, offered Rape Aggression Defense (RAD), a for-credit course, to first-year women. Held in McCormick Hall many times throughout the year for the entire residential community, the 12-hour course provided basic information on personal safety, awareness, risk reduction, and avoidance. RAD also teaches practical defensive techniques that require no special skills, with the opportunity to test these learned skills on a real person during a simulated attack. SOS coordinated the screening of *America the Beautiful 2: The Thin Commandments*, a documentary about the obsession with diets. This program involved collaboration and coordination with award-winning filmmaker Darryl Roberts and local and national experts on eating disorders.

The Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation (DAPER) also plays an important role in campus wellness. This year, 88 percent of the student body was active in DAPER programs and services. MIT Recreational Sports also partnered with MIT Medical's Get Fit program, an annual 12-week event for the entire Institute community that encourages healthful habits and exercise. By offering over 30 free programs and 20 outreach events to student groups, dormitories, FSILGs, and staff, MIT Recreational Sports helped increase participation in 2012 to more than 3,300 individuals.

Hazing and Alcohol Education

Another significant effort that extended across DSL involved education on hazing and alcohol. The FSIGL team played a prominent role on hazing this year, hosting a community-wide discussion involving an array of departments, coordinating a series of webinars on hazing prevention, and hosting a visit from Kim Novak, a national hazing and risk management expert, who spent a week working with students, alumni, and staff. The FSILG team also continued to strengthen the Chapter Alumni Risk Management Advisors program—an initiative that brings alumni into fraternities and sororities as a resource and guide for the chapters and their student risk managers—with a special emphasis on hazing, preventing sexual assault, and the alumni role in risk management.

Over the course of the academic year, 76 individual students completed the Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention with College Students (BASICS) program. Students are referred to BASICS either as a result of an alcohol-related medical emergency or because they were identified via the freshman alcohol survey as a moderate- or high-risk alcohol user. With leadership from the Community Development and Substance Abuse Center (CDSA), DSL addressed issues of hosting and alcohol safety awareness for the larger community.

CDSA collaborated with FSILG staff to implement the Party Safe program, which provides education on ways to reduce individual, group, and environmental risk associated with holding events with alcohol that are specific to FSILGs. CDSA also worked with RLP staff to create a social host training program for the undergraduate residences based on Party Safe to educate students on ways to reduce individual, group, and environmental risk associated with holding events with alcohol; prepared minimum response guidelines for both GRTs and community members, with support and review from the Office of Student Citizenship (OSC) and RLP; and collaborated with DAPER staff to review current programming and plan new initiatives that support NCAA requirements related to alcohol and other drug education.

Administration, Communications, and Facilities

Over the past several years, DSL went through a period of restructuring in response to strategic decisions by the dean for student life and in reaction to the global financial crisis. This year, some minor adjustments were made to fine-tune the DSL administrative structure.

This year has been one of significant transition in the SOS office. The office was established in summer 2011, bringing together three previously distinct offices: CDSA, OSC, and SOS. With this transition there were also significant personnel changes. Judy Robinson joined the staff as associate dean for SOS in September. In January, Don Camelio joined the staff as director of CDSA, and Christy Anthony was hired to serve as director of OSC. Sharon Snaggs Gendron, serving as assistant director of SOS, was moved to the SOS staff in September, creating a complementary and talented outreach and support staff. Currently, a search is underway to hire a new assistant director of conflict resolution.

All the units in Residential Life and Dining—renamed in recognition of the renewed importance of the House Dining program to DSL operations—were moved to one location, W59. The new suite was renovated to create a more efficient, service-oriented space. DSL also made facility upgrades to four undergraduate dormitories during summer 2011: Bexley Hall (W13), Random Hall (NW61), Next House (W71), and New House (W70). Facilities closed during renovations. In collaboration with the Department of Facilities, the fire alarm and suppression systems were upgraded and replaced in New House, along with the complete replacement of the cooling towers and chillers. Next House renovations were earmarked to end the downward slide of facility maintenance by upgrading the front desk to include new mailboxes, upgrading all 28 bathrooms, installing light sensors, and upgrading the courtyard landscaping. The game room and aerobics room were upgraded as well, and a new conference room was created in a vending alcove space.

DAPER also oversees a number of campus facilities that stretch across the campus, from the MIT Sailing Pavilion to Briggs Field. Major renovations this year included a \$2.6 million renovation of Jack Barry Field, including lights, fencing, and netting systems. Two successful fundraising drives led to major renovations for DAPER: the \$1.5 million installation of floating docks at the Sailing Pavilion, and a \$335,000 renovation of the Fencing Room. Each facility has been greatly improved by the project and is better able to serve students, faculty, and other community members.

DSL is working closely with the Information Services and Technology (IS&T) office to ensure adequate network capacity linking the FSILGs in Boston and Brookline. For the near term, each of the 27 FSILGs currently served by IS&T's commercial link was offered the option to upgrade, at its own expense, its bandwidth by a factor of 10. Eleven FSILGs have elected to increase their connection in this manner. The upgrade cost per FSILG is significant but will be 75 percent reimbursed by Independent Residence Development Fund annual educational operating grants.

Given that bandwidth requirements continue to increase at a rate faster than the decrease in the cost of commercial offerings, there is a compelling need for a longer-term solution. With DSL assistance, IS&T is engineering a long-term solution to connect these FSILGs—at significant capital expense—directly to the MIT fiber ring within 18–24 months.

Communications

DSL has made a significant effort to improve how it communicates with the MIT campus and external communities. A major priority has been to introduce two efforts to provide students the information they need through clear, organized channels. In October 2011, in collaboration with the Office of the Chancellor, the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education, and the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education, the Student Life and Learning Digest was launched, a monthly email newsletter sent to all students with updates on the undergraduate and graduate experience at MIT. The format and content reflect input from focus groups of graduate and undergraduate students, and the newsletter has been very well received so far. To accompany the effort, the communications officers from the three offices collaborated to create a new Student Life and Learning resource page. This site is linked from the MIT homepage and organizes the list of offices and services available to help students with their academic, administrative, and personal needs.

DSL Communications has made an increased effort to publicize DSL programs and events. A new DSL news blog has led to a dramatic increase in the number and range of stories about student life. Staff across the division, from Residential Life and Dining to PSC to DAPER, published more than 100 articles on programs, news, and events during the past academic year. Moreover, DSL Communicators ensured that these efforts were shared via the MIT News site, the Alumni Association, and other outlets.

In addition, DSL vastly expanded its photographic archive using a combination of staff and freelance photographers. The effort included the creation of a student life photo archive and the sharing of images within the division and with Institute offices that include the MIT Athletic Association, Admissions, MIT News, Resource Development, Campus Production Services, and the Office of the President. The result has been a broad and deep celebration of student life and learning at MIT that is shared with the campus, alumni, and the public.

Costantino Colombo
Dean for Student Life