

Institute Community and Equity Office

External events continued to impact the MIT community during academic year 2018 as they did in AY2017. In July 2017, MIT custodian Francisco Rodriguez—a man without US citizenship or permanent residency who had been granted yearly stays of removal and permits authorizing him to work in the United States—was detained by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and held in jail under threat of deportation. The MIT administration and community provided strong support for his case and he was released from detention more than five months later. In August, President Reif wrote an op-ed for the Boston Globe calling on the US government to protect Dreamers under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. The program was later cancelled but MIT continues to support its undocumented students. Also in August, a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia—attended by neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan members, and various other alt-right and hate groups—quickly became violent, many counter-protesters were injured and one killed. President Reif decried this hatred and evil in a letter to the MIT community.

These events motivated many MIT community members to stand up for diversity, equity, and inclusion. As a result, we had a record-breaking year of campus events and community engagement. The List Visual Arts Center held a series of events called List Projects: Civil Disobedience. The School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and the MIT Sloan School of Management held six events in the Mens et Manus America Initiative during the academic year on topics of major social, political, and economic interest. An MIT graduate student co-organized a major conference called Data for Black Lives in November 2017. Prominent outside speakers of color came to campus, including Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Shirley Ann Jackson, Lee Mun Wah, Hari Kondabolu, Cornel West, Ibram Kendi, and Claude Steele.

The [Institute Community and Equity Office's \(ICEO\)](#) major theme this year was to increase engagement in deep conversations about inclusiveness and equitability within the MIT community. This included a pair of early fall dinner and conversation events with more than 130 MIT faculty attending. One of the dinners featured discussions around such questions as: What is the climate for inclusion at MIT? How is meritocracy related to inclusion and diversity? and, What can MIT contribute to the national debate about freedom of speech on college campuses? These same questions were used in a highly successful community dialogue open to all in February 2018. Another ICEO community dialogue, held in April 2018 focused on race and racism in America. In December 2017, ICEO and the Black Students' Union partnered in a community dialogue on the status of student recommendations at MIT. Additional community dialogues were organized in partnership with MIT Police (twice) and the Disability Employee Resource Group. Additional events building awareness and understanding of disability inclusion were held by the Assistive Technology Information Center and other groups throughout the year. In April 2018 the second annual Day of Action was attended by several hundred members.

Black History Month (February 2018) was celebrated with a large number of well-attended events, including the annual MLK Celebration Luncheon featuring former NFL

football player Wade Davis; a lecture by Evelyn Hammonds on the marginalization experienced by women of color in STEM; the first of several events celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Black Students' Union in 1968; the installation of a black pride exhibit in Lobby 7, MIT's main entrance, in addition to the annual MLK Installation in the Memorial Lobby (Building 10); a symposium on the learnings from the [MIT and Slavery course](#) introduced by Professor Craig Wilder; the launch of a new [MIT Black History Project website](#); and many more.

This academic year showed an increase in events promoting LBGTQ inclusion offered by the School of Architecture and Planning, Women's and Gender Studies, the MindHandHeart Initiative, Prehealth Advising, LBGTQ@MIT, and the LBGTQ employee resource group. The Rainbow Lounge was moved this year from the basement to the second floor of Building 50 in a bright, attractive space. The culmination of progress this year on matters of gender identity was the announcement of a pilot project creating several all-gender restrooms in MIT academic buildings.

A total of 138 distinct events were listed in the diversity events calendar this year, more than double the number from three years earlier. The growing demand for such events and their good attendance (many with more than 100 participants) over the last few years shows that expectations about community are changing at MIT. In keeping with MIT's mission statement, community members "seek to develop in each member of the MIT community the ability and passion to work wisely, creatively, and effectively for the betterment of humankind." There is a growing confidence that we can have difficult conversations while learning from and showing respect to people of different cultures and social identities. What used to take place only in small safe spaces now takes place in large brave spaces. The cultural transformation called for in the [2015 ICEO report](#) is underway.

The national #MeToo movement calling out sexual assault and harassment in many professions, starting in the movie industry, anticipated a series of steps MIT took to address and prevent sexual misconduct. In November, President Reif wrote to the community calling attention to the issue of sexual misconduct at MIT and announcing that every member of the MIT community is expected to complete the sexual misconduct online training by the end of June 2018. [MIT's conduct and harassment policy](#) was updated and [a new policy](#) implemented on consensual sexual or romantic relationships. The Title IX office expanded its efforts to oversee a new [Bias Response protocol](#) for addressing incidents of bias and discrimination. The ICEO established a men's group for faculty and staff advocating for gender equity.

In February 2018 the new Social Justice Programming and Cross-Cultural Engagement (SPXCE) Intercultural Center was opened in Building W31, providing a new home for the Office of Multicultural Programs and LBGTQ@MIT and increasing the space available for intercultural community programs.

During this academic year, a newly created Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee of the Graduate Student Council launched a peer-to-peer Department and Classroom Inclusion Initiative to help students assess and improve the climate for inclusion in their graduate programs. The MindHandHeart Initiative launched a Department Support Project with a

similar goal of helping department heads to advance a healthy, welcoming, and thriving climate in their departments. The Office of Minority Education launched The Standard, a group to support the success of male students of color.

In March 2018, MIT staff hosted and participated in a one-day summit meeting of the Leading for Change Consortium, a group of 25 Massachusetts colleges and universities committed to identifying student and employee diversity best practices through uniform and transparent use of data, institutional benchmarks, and reflective practice. In this consortium, MIT learns as much from community colleges and public universities as it teaches them; there are no college elites in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Similarly, at the end of the spring 2018 semester, 12 MIT staff and faculty members participated in NCORE, the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity, gathering ideas that will help take our community and equity efforts to the next level.

In February 2018, MIT News Office provided an update on progress toward the Black Students' Union recommendations made in December 2015. In June 2018 the ICEO released a [Recommendations Scorecard](#) summarizing progress on a total of 177 recommendations from nine reports starting with the 2010 Report on the Initiative for Faculty Race and Diversity.

Progress continued on the publication of data about the climate for inclusion at MIT. The ICEO and Office of Institutional Research collaborated to produce a publicly accessible [Climate Dashboard](#) summarizing the experience of community members selected by their role, gender, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity based on data from AY2013 and AY2017 quality of life surveys. Inclusion of two surveys separated by four years shows the change in climate for different groups at MIT. The ability to simultaneously select two identity characteristics (any two of male/female gender, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation) fulfills the recommendation from the 2015 ICEO report that survey analysis should examine intersections of multiple social identities. This dashboard, combined with [demographic and retention/advancement data](#), provides a powerful tool for assessing progress toward the ICEO mission of advancing a respectful and caring community.

During AY2018 MIT hosted five MLK Visiting Professors and Scholars:

- Professor Kimberly Juanita Brown (Mount Holyoke College), hosted by the Program in Women's and Gender Studies and the Literature Section
- Garnette Cadogan (Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University), hosted by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
- Professor Anita Hill (Brandeis University), hosted by the Research Laboratory for Electronics
- Duane Lee (MIT), hosted by the Department of Physics
- Professor Kenda Mutongi (Williams College), hosted by History at MIT

Professor Kimberly Juanita Brown organized the Sonic/Scenes Symposium in April, a conversation with and between members of the Dark Room: Race and Visual Culture Studies Seminar, a working group of women of color scholars and artists whose work

gathers at the intersection of critical race theory and visual culture studies. Professor Anita Hill organized a series, the Gender/Race Imperative, inspired by the current and future impact of Title IX in higher education. All MLK visitors were appreciated not only by their host departments, but by the broader MIT community, who participated enthusiastically in the monthly MLK Visiting Scholars luncheon series.

Additional ICEO activities during FY2018 include the following:

- Provided unconscious bias training for search chairs in the School of Engineering as well as departments in other schools
- Advised several department heads, school deans, and other leaders on matters of diversity and inclusion, department climate, and managing abrasive conduct
- Advised the Committee on Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response
- Co-sponsored, with the Office of Multicultural Programs and others, the sixth annual Multicultural Awards Banquet in May 2017
- Advised leaders and research staff of Lincoln Laboratory Division 5, STEM faculty at Framingham State University, and university-wide faculty of LMU Munich on building inclusive departments
- Served on the American Institute of Physics National Task Force to Elevate African American Representation in Undergraduate Physics and Astronomy (TEAM-UP)
- Served on the American Astronomical Society Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion in Graduate Astronomy Education
- Represented MIT at the Harvard Summit on Excellence in Education dedicated to student diversity, inclusion, and academic success; the Ivy Plus Reimagining Pathways to the Academy project dedicated to improving faculty diversity; and AAAS SEA Change workshops dedicated to STEM faculty and student diversity, inclusion, and success
- Served on the Astronomy and Astrophysics Visiting Committee for the University of Toronto
- Sponsored the travel of several MIT staff members to attend national conferences and trainings on topics of diversity and inclusion

In April, MIT announced that the current ICEO officer would be stepping down and would be replaced by another faculty member next year. In June, the outgoing officer briefly summarized the accomplishments of the last five years.

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