

Housing

Summary Statement

The Department of Housing has completed another successful year with major changes and advances to ensure that we stay on target with our mission and high standards for residential facilities. In Housing, advancements and new processes have been the highlights of this year as outlined below. The practice of incorporating student leadership and student interns into processes of employment searches and project work has been an asset to our changes in Graduate and Family Housing and has been the springboard for our work on feasibility studies of potential new on-campus housing.

Housing has worked closely with the Division of Student Life (DSL) Shared Services group, and Financial Services in particular, to develop the overall Housing budget as well as to manage significant budgetary constraints and challenges that Housing has experienced with the incorporation of the debt services, most notably for the new buildings, Sidney-Pacific, NW30, and Simmons Hall.

Highlights of the Year

McCormick Hall students brought forth an idea to Housing for a special initiative to bring wireless networking to the public spaces in McCormick. This project was completed and launched a more extensive partnership with Information Services and Technology (IS&T) for a program to bring wireless networking for all of our undergraduate residence halls. The initial phase of this project started by providing coverage to all of the public spaces in each undergraduate hall that do not have wireless service. A new computer room was also added in Ashdown House.

Water booster pumps have been replaced in Buildings W4, W61, and W84.

Working with IS&T and MIT Cable, Housing recently started the first phase of the network infrastructure upgrade project, and completed the renovation/upgrade of both the East Campus and Bexley Hall network infrastructures. This upgrade meets the demands of a faster network within the Housing system. Housing has also worked on and completed two front desk enhancements at NW10 and NW61.

Housing has completed a number of capital maintenance projects this year, including:

- Window replacement: W1 (third phase)
- Waterproofing/masonry: E55 and W61
- Bathroom renovations: 62-64, W1, W51, W61, W70, and W71
- Plumbing/mechanical renovations: W84, 62-64, and W61
- Paint program: all residence halls
- Front entrance/front desk renovation: NW10 and NW61
- Housemaster apartment renovations: W7, W13, W51, 62-64, W61, W4, W70, W71, NW61 (including a full kitchen and bathroom renovation), W84, and NW86

- Electrical upgrades: W1, W7, W13, W51, 62-64, E55, NW10, W61, W4, W70, W71, NW61, E2, W79, and NW86
- Carpentry renovations: W85, E55, W1, NW10, W5, NW30, W84, W7, W13, W51, 62-64, W61, W4, W70, W71, NW61, E2, and W79
- Stairwell/flooring resurfacing: W13 and 62-64
- Lighting upgrades: W61, W1, W85, and NW10
- Elevator renovation: W1, W51, and W85
- IS upgrades: W51, W61, W70, W71, and NW61

Operations developed and implemented an advertising campaign to help our residents become more aware of their connection and responsibilities regarding security in their living areas. Housing worked closely with all our desk workers on the importance of their role in security and updated and rewrote the Housing Desk Manual.

Housing continued to work with students and the Environmental Program Task Force (EPTF), improving recycling efforts in the residential system. In many of the buildings this year, our students took a leading role in the community-based program Stuff-Fest, which collects clothing and food for the homeless. Our second year of recycling efforts for mattresses measurably exceeded our first year. Housing also had some success in the first year of participation in EPTF's program to recycle computer monitors.

This past winter, with its extremely cold temperatures, tested the operational skills of our Housing staff with a number of frozen and broken heat and sprinkler pipes. The Eastgate apartment building was hit hardest with a number of freeze-ups and floods. In fact, emergency action plans were set in motion on the coldest night of the year because of a fractured main heating pipe. Thankfully, we have emergency systems in place, and the pipe held until it was repaired in the morning.

All freshmen were housed in one of the 11 on-campus residence halls. Freshman housing assignments were made via an online lottery, in which freshmen entered their preferences in June or sent in the paper form (all but four freshmen entered preferences via the online lottery). Assignments for 1,027 freshmen were posted to the housing lottery website in July. Ninety-seven percent of students received an assignment in their top three preferences. Baker received the most first-choice preferences, followed by Burton-Conner, MacGregor, and Simmons. Fifty-seven students were in crowded rooms; the buildings with crowds were Baker, Burton-Conner, New House, and East Campus. Freshmen arrived knowing their residence hall, room, and phone number.

Undergraduate Housing ran a second lottery—the Orientation Adjustment Lottery (OAL)—during Orientation for students who wished to change their housing assignment; 841 student were eligible to participate (Residential-Based Advising Program participants in Next House and McCormick are ineligible for the OAL). Students had the opportunity to rank up to four alternative residence halls; this is a change from 2002. In 2002, students could rank only up to three alternates. Of the 841 eligible students, 706 entered the OAL; 506 chose to retain their building assignment, 200 requested a change of assignment, and 110 received a new assignment. Of the 110 students who received an alternate assignment, 64% received their first choice, 22%

received their second choice, 10% received their third choice, and 5% received their fourth choice.

Housing staff refined the Guide to Residences. Housing also worked with Residential Life Programs and the Dormitory Council to produce a CD showcasing the 11 residence halls and five cultural houses. This CD accompanied the guide.

The Senior Segue Program was offered to rising seniors for the third year in a row in an effort to help manage crowding issues in undergraduate housing; 79 undergraduate students took advantage of the opportunity to move into Graduate Housing for their senior year with guaranteed housing for their first year of graduate school at MIT.

Summer 2003 housing assignments for undergraduate students were made via a lottery, giving priority to students who were academically involved. All students who applied for summer housing received it. We continued to work with Conference Services and the Alumni Office to plan and organize housing assignments for conference guests and for alumni returning at Commencement for Tech Reunions. The complete summer housing data is as follows:

Summer Housing Data

MIT Students	
Full summer	802
Half summer ^a	32
Tech Reunions	
Singles	80
Doubles	83
Total spaces	246

^aThe half-summer housing option has been eliminated; however, a June 30 departure option was offered to graduating seniors.

	No. of programs	No. of students/guests
Special department	11	425
Department	14	474
Conference	5	530
Summer professional	45	55
Affiliates	103	1,290
Total	75	2,667

Approximately 60 percent of MIT's graduate students who requested on-campus housing received it this year. The Graduate Housing Office continues to evolve and improve the many new systems implemented last year. The new online assignments, as well as the license, sub-license, and advertising material received extensive evaluation, and, as a result, several important refinements were made. Specific improvements to the waiting-list system, sub-license system, and lottery systems increased overall efficiency and fairness, and, most importantly, extended the range of service we provide to our graduate students.

As part of the Graduate Housing Office's continuing mission to improve and enhance customer services, we published the Graduate Housing Guide, an extensive online guide to programs and services related to graduate housing at MIT. The publication has been well received, and it has proved very useful to both new and continuing graduate students alike. A new roommate-matching procedure was also introduced this year to help house governments effectively pair students together in comfortable living arrangements.

All of our rental postings are online, and the office continues to assist 10,000+ affiliates per year in both locating local housing and resolving any difficulties associated with living off campus. A new website was developed to allow local property owners and real estate agencies to submit their rental information electronically. This new website has been well utilized and is quite popular with advertisers.

The rental market is currently a "buyer's market," meaning there are far more rentals available than potential tenants. Due to this downturn in market, our office is able to provide a greater number of rental postings and housing options for students to consider.

As required, MIT completed a City of Cambridge Annual Census of students, staff, and minor children living on campus.

New Initiatives

The Department of Housing will work with the Department of Facilities and IS&T to migrate to Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing (SAP) for the work repair tracking function previously provided through Maximo.

A special project involving a team of iCampus undergraduates is under way. This iCampus team is developing a house front desk system to enhance front desk operations.

The elevators in W1, W51, and W85 are currently being replaced. The focus at this time is to complete elevator renovations with little or no impact on the day-to-day activities of the current residents.

Planning for capital projects to be completed in FY2005 has been finalized. The plan includes the following:

- Window replacement: W1 (ongoing)
- Bathroom renovations: W1, W51, 62-64, E55, W61, W71, and W84
- Kitchen renovation: W85
- Plumbing/mechanical renovations: all residence halls
- Electrical upgrades: all residence halls
- Carpentry renovations: all residence halls
- Entry renovation: East Campus (Walcott entry)
- Complete heating system replacement: Eastgate
- Paint program: all residence halls
- Housemaster apartment renovations: 62-64, W51, and W5
- Elevator renovations: W61, W4, and W71

New initiatives to support Environment, Health, and Safety (EHS) requirements in Housing include comprehensive EHS training for all operations staff, implementing local EHS inspections by Housing to ensure compliance, and commencement of a program to recycle used fluorescent lamps to meet hazardous-waste handling requirements.

The Housing Office, in close consultation with DSL's Administrative Services, and the deans for graduate students and student life, will continue to improve budget forecasting and fiscal responsibility. One of our central goals has been to study and reduce losses from vacancies. Several of our system's improvements are targeted at this problem and the initial results are positive. This is a challenge we will continue to study and address. We will also study and review our family housing facilities and policies during the coming year.

Housing Staffing Changes

- New hire Alicia Allen Hunt, assistant director, Graduate and Family Housing
- Transfer from the Office of the Dean for Student Life, Jennifer Connolly, administrative assistant, graduate coordinator
- Matthew Moskwa, student summer intern

Karen A. Nilsson
Director of Housing

More information about Housing can be found on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/housing/>.