

Vice President and Secretary of the Corporation

One of the Institute's four corporate officers, the Vice President and Secretary of the Corporation is responsible for MIT's communications, including the coordination of policy issues with the senior administration and trustees of the Corporation. The Vice President has management responsibilities for Government and Community Relations, the Events and Information Center, the Conference Services Office, the News Office, and Communication Production Services. Responsibilities include providing direct support to the President on communications and relations with internal constituencies; coordinating activities and communication among senior staff; and advising the President on policy issues. The secretary of the Corporation oversees the operations of MIT's board of trustees and its committees, including the 31 visiting committees that conduct biennial reviews of the Institute's academic and research programs.

This year brought profound shock and sadness to our campus as we experienced the horrific events of the Boston Marathon bombings and the subsequent shooting death of MIT Police Officer Sean Collier. The Institute community came together in the wake of these events with unprecedented expressions of mutual support, strength, and courage. Under the leadership of our newly inaugurated President L. Rafael Reif, the Office of Institute Affairs worked to make communications around community support efforts and subsequent memorial efforts as clear, consistent, and impactful as possible. Our efforts extended to national levels as United States Vice President Joe Biden, and other national and community leaders, visited our campus during this time to share our grief and offer gestures of support and strength.

Despite these events, the Institute began a new chapter of its history this year with the inauguration of L. Rafael Reif as the 17th president of MIT. In his inaugural address, President Reif outlined the guiding themes for his administration. He indicated that MIT must be a champion for basic research; it must launch and support Institute-wide initiatives to address the world's greatest challenges; it must advance a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship; it must realize its full potential as a university with global impact; and it must increase its efforts in the areas of race, diversity, equity, and inclusion. These highly ambitious themes were both articulated and pursued this year with the notable advancement of MITx and edX, MIT's advocacy for basic research in Washington, and the appointment of Edmund Bertschinger as MIT's first Institute Community and Equity Officer, among other efforts.

What follows is a report of the work of the Office of the Vice President and the Office of the Secretary of the Corporation.

Kirk D. Kolenbrander
Vice President and Secretary of the Corporation