

Institute Events

The mission of [Institute Events](#) is to meet the information needs of the MIT community, campus visitors, and the public; to promote a sense of community within MIT; to orchestrate and advise on issues of protocol; and to support conferences and events that enhance MIT's role in the broader academic community. In academic year 2018, Institute Events is comprised of the Events and Information Center, the Community Services Office, and MIT Conference Services. The offices of Conference Services, Community Services, and several Institute Events staff are located on the seventh floor of Building E19; the Events and Information Center continues to welcome campus visitors at its location in Building 7-121.

The schedule and scope of Institute Events activities remained steady throughout AY2018, with the department supporting an array of mission-driven events and programs. In addition to the events described below, the work of Institute Events includes numerous activities on behalf of the president and other senior officers.

Institute Events staff included Gayle Gallagher, executive director for Institute Events and protocol; Ted Johnson, managing director; Joe Coen, manager, Events and Information Center; Rebecca Tyler, manager, Events and Communications; Lee Corbett, senior administrative and financial assistant; Kimberly Nelson, senior administrative assistant and scheduler, Samberg Conference Center; Rachael Weiner, Events and Communications assistant and coordinator of Special Visits; and Judith Zinker, administrative assistant I. The department is grateful for the support of Malcolm Jones '10 throughout the year.

Community and Special Events

During AY2018, Institute Events was involved in or directly responsible for public events, visits, and programs, which included the following:

- President Reif's convocation for incoming first years and their families
- Opening celebration for The Engine
- Compton lecture by Professor Ernest Moniz
- Community event honoring retiring ombudsperson Toni Robinson
- MIT's presence at the HUBweek 2017 festival site in Government Center
- Panel discussion following Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory Scientific Collaboration announcement
- Governor Charles Baker's Convening for Digital Innovation and Lifelong Learning
- Memorial service for Corporation member Vanu Bose '87, SM '94, PhD '99
- Memorial service and reception for MIT President Emeritus Paul Gray '54, SM '55, ScD '60

- Campus visit by Her Excellency Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of Croatia
- Winterfest, an end-of-term community social
- Killian Award lecture by Professor Richard Schrock
- MIT and the Legacy of Slavery, a community dialogue event
- MIT Quest for Intelligence initiative launch event
- MacVicar Day dinner
- Compton Lecture by cellist Yo-Yo Ma
- Visit by His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia
- A moderated conversation with Drew Houston '05 and Quentin Clark of Dropbox
- One Sustainable World Dance Parties
- MIT Presidential CEO Advisory Board meeting

May 2018 brought the return of the popular campus dance parties, which shifted focus this year from multiculturalism to sustainability. The One Sustainable World planning team developed the following guiding principles to steer the event: (1) Engage and empower members of the MIT community to commit to making lasting choices that advance the well-being and resilience of people and the environment and; (2) Educate attendees about the ways in which MIT research, community members, and current initiatives are creating a more sustainable future.

The One Sustainable World planning team opted to include an educational, content-driven component through the Sustainable World Lounge, coordinated by Professor John Fernandez and the Environmental Solutions Initiative team. Located in a tent on Kresge Lawn, the lounge housed demonstrations and displays by more than a dozen MIT research groups and individuals working on projects or initiatives related to sustainability. These included the Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences iGlobe; the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory's (CSAIL) self-driving Toyota Prius; and an interactive card game in which players tested their knowledge about energy usage.

The themes of the four dance party locations on campus all related to sustainability topics: atmosphere, oceans, energy, and earth + community. Several venues featured special performances by MIT student groups.

Atmosphere | Kresge Oval

- Special appearances by Sakata Afrique and MIT Tango
- Houston Bernard Country Band
- DJ played reggae, afrobeats, and Bollywood

Oceans | Johnson Athletics Center Ice Rink

- Music by the Cooper Williams Band (playing country) and Roomful of Blues (playing soul and R&B)
- Special appearance by Mocha Moves
- DJ fused K-pop, hip-hop, kwaito, highlife, and assiko

Energy | Rockwell Cage

- Mega DJ show in the Campus Night Club

Earth + Community | Killian Court

- Special appearance by MIT Mirchi and MIT Bhangra
- Music by the Jamal Sinno Arabic Ensemble (playing folk and contemporary) and Beantown Social Club (playing Latin and the sounds of Old Havana)

Commencement

Commencement festivities began on Thursday, June 7, when 480 doctoral degree recipients received their academic hoods in a ceremony over which Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart presided at the Johnson Athletics Center Ice Rink. MIT welcomed Candis Callison SM '02, PhD '10 award-winning journalist and associate professor in the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of British Columbia Vancouver, as guest speaker. The 2018 Commencement Exercises were held in Killian Court on Friday, June 8. Guest speaker Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of Facebook, addressed more than 2,800 degree recipients and approximately 11,000 family members, alumni, and guests. The live webcast of Commencement via the MIT Commencement website attracted 31,302 unique viewers, with an additional 49,442 viewers via MIT's Facebook page, and another 76,000 via Sandberg's personal Facebook page.

Special visits

In fiscal year 2018, Institute Events made arrangements for—or coordinated with MIT International Activities to organize—visits from 17 groups comprising 167 official visitors from 41 countries (Albania, Armenia, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Latvia, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Palestinian Territories, Poland, Russia, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe); the 17 groups also included one delegation from the United States Defense Intelligence Agency. Of the 17 groups, 12 were from the government and five were academic in nature.

In late spring 2018, responsibility for coordinating official visits began its transition from Institute Events to Global MIT (International Activities), under the manager of external relations.

Projects

With the growth of Commencement in both ceremony length and guest attendance (due to increasing numbers of degree candidates), the Institute has reached a moment of decision in how graduation is handled at MIT. To guide future planning and inform potential solutions, Institute Events (on behalf of the Commencement Committee) spent the winter and spring 2018 engaging students, faculty, and alumni to elucidate community values in regard to Commencement. This fact-finding process is ongoing.

The Commencement online regalia ordering process for degree candidates (piloted last season) was further enhanced in spring 2018, as were Commencement guest tickets, which are now barcoded and replaceable if lost. Institute Events offers thanks to the Office of the Registrar, to Business Services and Technology in the Division of Student Life, and to the MIT Coop for the team effort to improve logistics of our graduates' experience.

Continuing its community education work, Institute Events hosted workshops in January, March, and April to share knowledge and practices related to audience and guest management. Combined, more than 60 MIT staff members from a variety of the Institute's departments, labs, and centers registered for the sessions, where they learned about managing audience expectations, event registration and communication tools, best practices for data management and guest communications, and considerations for smooth onsite operations. Held in Building E19, these small group sessions offered participants a chance to dialogue with one another and to share their own solutions to issues related to event planning and management. Workshops also introduced MIT event planners to several new caterers. In addition to the audience management workshops, Institute Events staff advised on event registration in a workshop held onsite at the MIT Alumni Association.

In July 2017, the MIT Events Calendar launched on the new Localist platform. Staff from the Events and Information Center assumed primary responsibility for administering the calendar, which included adding new users, troubleshooting and responding to user requests and questions, and selecting events to highlight on the calendar homepage's feature carousel. By the close of AY2018, more than 4,500 users had registered to use the calendar and nearly 5,000 events had been created. Events and Information Center staff continue to work with colleagues from Communications Initiatives and Information Systems and Technology to stay abreast of upgrades to the Localist platform and to communicate with calendar users about system upgrades and best practices.

Events and Information Center

Beyond serving as an information and welcome point for visitors, the Events and Information Center plays an important role as a central information source for the MIT community. Over the past year, the staff assisted with the registration of 2,156 employee events (of the total 3,308 Atlas-registered events that were held both by departments and by student groups) and 252 reservations for Infinite Panel poster displays in the corridor. In addition to answering and redirecting thousands of telephone and in-person inquiries, Events and Information Center staff distributed 66,049 pamphlets, brochures, maps, guides, and other publications (which include Commencement tickets). Institute Events maintained responsibility for scheduling requests for event space in the Samberg

Conference Center and booked 567 events (both single and multiday) that took place there in AY2018. Staff also continued to oversee scheduling of the Bush Room (Building 10-105), managing 332 reservations between July 2017 and January 2018 (with combined estimated attendance of 15,350) for that space. Use of the Bush Room was halted by the Building 10 window replacement project beginning in January 2018.

Community Services Office

The Community Services Office is home to the MIT Activities Committee (MITAC), Community Giving at MIT, the Quarter Century Club (QCC), and the Association of MIT Retirees. These programs aim to optimize the work-life experience for faculty, staff, students, and retirees by providing opportunities to engage in social, educational, and cultural activities that strengthen the connection between MIT and the members of its community. The Community Services Office staff provide vital support to Institute Events, assisting with the Investiture of Doctoral Hoods and Commencement, along with many other events and programs organized by the department.

MITAC had a remarkable year highlighted by the following achievements:

- The new website launched, offering online ticket sales for the first time; the website receives an average of 2,500 visits per month.
- New digital digests, comprising enhanced user capabilities and analytics, launched with the new site. Old subscriber data was reviewed and the growing list of valid addresses numbered 8,800 by the end of FY2018.
- Diane Tavitian, senior administrative assistant, and the program committee organized a Superheroes Ball, a stellar community event attended by 350 faculty, staff, and children in Walker Memorial (Building 50).
- With the leadership of events planning assistant Linda Olson, MITAC and the MIT Federal Credit Union continued its long-running co-sponsorship of a well-attended and enjoyable dinner dance.
- MITAC served 5,420 unique customers (12% increase compared to FY2017) who enjoyed substantial savings, estimated at nearly \$369,000 on tickets purchased (11% increase).
- The program's over 150 cultural and recreational events generated \$697,000 in total revenue (18% increase from FY2017 and most likely the highest total revenue in its history); 38,738 tickets were sold on campus, at Lincoln Laboratory, and online.
- Strong vendor partnerships resulted in the procurement of highly desirable tickets, including Celtics playoff tickets; 386 tickets were sold.
- MITAC broadened its outreach efforts through department visits and employee and student fairs and marketing collateral; and expanded its services to employees in remote locations, such as Haystack Observatory.

MITAC benefits from the participation of a program committee and a presidentially appointed advisory council. The program committee was led in AY2018 by conveners Shirley Entzminger (Department of Mathematics) and Alicia LaDuke and Maria

Nicholson (Lincoln Laboratory). Chaired by Professor Clifton G. Fonstad, Jr. (Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science), the advisory council provides guidance to MITAC on Institute priorities, policies, business practices, long-range planning, and the administration of the employee benefit program.

Community Giving at MIT is a charitable giving program that facilitates donations made by MIT employees and retirees to the MIT Community Service Fund and other health and human service agencies, including the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley. The FY2018 campaign raised \$349,000, an 11% increase from last year. Employee and retiree donors totaled 500 (a 15% decrease in participation); 88 employees donated in FY2018 but not last year and 249 donors continued their annual support through the sustainer program. Professor Bevin P. Engelward (Department of Biological Engineering) continued her leadership of the presidentially appointed steering committee.

Significant initiatives undertaken in FY2018 are as follows:

- The program continued its focused giving campaign to help fund a passenger van for the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House (MFNH) in Cambridge, MA. Fundraising included department donation challenges, a 50/50 raffle, book fairs, and the production of a video highlighting MIT's partnership with the MFNH. The MFNH purchased the van in the spring thanks to fundraisers and faculty and staff donations that raised \$16,000 and incentivized a \$30,000 grant from the Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund.
- Numerous collections were organized to benefit Cambridge and Boston nonprofits, as well as to assist hurricane relief efforts in Texas, Florida, and the Caribbean.
- Professor Engelward and the steering committee explored strategies to position the MIT Community Service Fund as the signature program of a focused giving campaign.

The Quarter Century Club (QCC) is composed of 4,358 active members, 82 of whom were inducted this year. Retiree Yvonne Gittens is the president of the QCC and leads the board of directors. The club organizes three annual member events and the induction luncheon, which honors new members and recognizes 50-year achievers. Significant initiatives undertaken in FY2018 are as follows:

- Two new recognition gifts were introduced: a glass bowl designed and crafted by the MIT Glass Lab and a beaver door knocker created by the Merton C. Flemings Materials Processing Lab at MIT.
- The board solidified membership eligibility criteria and the club's mission. The board also formulated a timelier system to notify employees of their eligibility to join the club. Beginning in early FY2019, faculty and staff will be notified when they reach their 25-year milestone on a monthly basis (instead of annually).
- A new website was designed and developed targeting launch in early FY2019.

The William R. Dickson Retiree Education Fund continues to receive a solid number of applications. In FY2018, 21 unique applicants, including eight new applicants, were awarded \$9,180 in grants.

The Association of MIT Retirees continued its organization of membership, travel, educational, and social programming for the benefit of its 1,000 registered members. Nancy Alusow and Joseph Collins served as co-chairs of the volunteer advisory committee.

The Undergraduate Scholarship Fund, established by the association's leadership in 2006, raised \$11,406 through member donations in FY2018, the most since FY2014. The fund awards an annual scholarship to an MIT undergraduate student, with first preference for students who are direct descendants or family members of retired MIT employees. Eleven scholarships have been awarded since 2006, with \$38,240 awarded in cumulative scholarships and \$118,621 raised since the fund's inception. The association is a member of the Boston Area College and University Retiree Associations and the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education.

The Community Services Office staff members in FY2018 were Ted Johnson, managing director, Institute Events; Traci Swartz, manager, Community Services Office; Diane Betz Tavitian, senior administrative assistant; Linda Olson, Events planning assistant; Michael Philbrick, administrative assistant II; and Anthony Farrell '13, administrative assistant II. The office was assisted by three students this year: intern Vanessa Bellony (Cambridge Youth Summer Employment Program), and MIT first years Daniel Gonzalez Diaz and Claire Yost. The office acknowledges the valuable support of MIT retiree Virginia Lauricella throughout the year.

MIT Conference Services

MIT Conference Services (MITCS) provides logistical coordination and registration services to conferences, meetings, educational programming, and other events sponsored by MIT departments, faculty, and staff. In FY2018, the office supported 48 programs that yielded 17,673 participants. During the academic year, MITCS also coordinated 67 recruitment presentations for organizations interviewing MIT undergraduates under the auspices of the MIT Global Education and Career Development. In addition, the office served as the central booking point for the residence hall reservations of over 80 individual conference registrants and a cumulative total of approximately 500 youth group participants during the months of June through August.

MITCS supported recurring events that included the MIT Sloan CIO Symposium; the Deshpande Center's IdeaStream Conference; the System Design and Management Program's Symposium; the Industrial Liaison Program's 2018 Research and Development Conference; the Lemelson-MIT Program's EurekaFest 2018; and the MOOS Development and Applications Working Group, sponsored by the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Support was provided to Institute-wide events including the Annual MLK Celebration, The MacVicar Day Symposium, the launch event for the MIT Quest for Intelligence, and the annual poster session for the Office of the Executive Vice President and Treasurer.

MITCS collaborated with many departments, centers, and labs on special events and professional, international conferences both on and off campus, including the Symposium to Celebrate the Legacy of Mildred Dresselhaus; the 2018 Engineering Mechanics Institute Conference, sponsored by the MIT Concrete Sustainability Hub; the Robotics Science

and Systems Conference, sponsored by MIT CSAIL; the Digital Health and NeuroTech Conference, sponsored by the MIT Media Lab Program in Media Arts and Sciences; the Transactive Energy Systems Conference, sponsored by the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science; and the Data for Black Lives Symposium, sponsored by the Institute Community and Equity Officer, Office of the Provost.

Coordination services were again provided to a number of outside summer youth activities, including the Sutton Trust US Programme, sponsored by MIT Admissions; the National Geographic Student Engineering and Robotics Expedition, sponsored by the MIT Media Lab; and the Lead America Engineering and Robotics Conference, sponsored by the MIT Community Outreach Education and Engagement Core.

Conference Services staff members during AY2018 included Cathi Levine, director; Eva Cabone, coordinator; Meghan Westcott, Events senior associate; Caroline Livingston, Events assistant; and MIT retiree Virginia Lauricella, temporary Events senior staff. Darlene McGurl joined the office as financial assistant, the position formerly held by Sudha Cheruku.

Gayle M. Gallagher
Executive Director for Institute Events and Protocol