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# Liskov, Harris to share new leadership position for faculty equity

September 7, 2007

Barbara Liskov, Ford Professor of Engineering in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, and Wesley Harris, Charles Stark Draper Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics and currently head of the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, have been selected to share the office of Associate Provost for Faculty Equity, Provost L. Rafael Reif announced on Sept. 7.

As associate provosts for faculty equity and as members of Academic Council, Liskov and Harris will focus on faculty diversity and gender issues across the Institute, including the recruitment, retention, promotion and career development of minority and women faculty.

President Susan Hockfield and Reif created the new Office of the Associate Provost for Faculty Equity a year ago to build on the efforts of the Faculty Diversity Council and to provide a strengthened, central MIT focus for matters related to faculty diversity and equity.

In making the announcement, Reif invited the MIT community to join him in thanking and congratulating Liskov and Harris as they take on the new joint appointment.

"I am confident that the Institute will benefit greatly from their experience and leadership in these areas, and very much look forward to working with them in these new capacities," Reif said.

Liskov's appointment took effect July 1, 2007. Harris' appointment will take effect Feb. 16, when he is scheduled to step down as department head.

Reif carefully considered the goals of faculty equity as they relate both to women faculty and to minority faculty since the new senior leadership position was established a year ago, he said.

"While recognizing that issues related to gender and race share many of the same fundamental concerns, such as optimizing the recruitment and retention of the most talented faculty, I believe that MIT's engagement of these important issues at this point in time will be best served by the joint appointment of Professors Liskov and Harris," he said.

Both Liskov and Harris have been MIT faculty members for over 30 years,

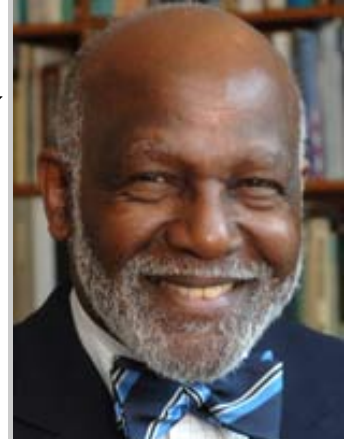


Photo / Donna Coveney

Wesley Harris



Barbara Liskov

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and each has served in leadership roles at the department and Institute levels.

Liskov has been co-chair of the Faculty Diversity Council, with Reif, for the past year, and she has had substantial experience working with the Gender Equity Committees of the five MIT schools. A member of the MIT faculty since 1972, she heads the Programming Methodology Group within the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and formerly served as associate head for computer science. Her research interests include programming languages, operating systems and distributed computing. Liskov is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Harris joined the MIT faculty in 1973. In addition to his duties as department head in aeronautics and astronautics, he directs the Lean Sustainment Initiative within the MIT Center for Technology, Policy, and Industrial Development. His principal areas of research include unsteady aerodynamics, rotorcraft acoustics, structure and propagation of strong shock waves in gas mixtures, and sickle cell pathology. Harris and his wife, Sandra, also serve as housemasters at MIT's New House residence hall.

He formerly served as the director of MIT's Office of Minority Education and held an appointment as a Martin Luther King, Jr. Visiting Professor at MIT. Harris has also served as dean of engineering at the University of Connecticut, and as vice president and chief academic officer at the University of Tennessee Space Institute.

A member of the National Academy of Engineering, a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and former trustee of Princeton University, Harris has spent much of his academic career building joint university-industry-government research and development programs, Reif said.

In the announcement, Reif thanked Harris for the distinction and integrity of his leadership of the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Dean of Engineering Subra Suresh will be announcing shortly a faculty search committee to identify potential candidates for department head of aeronautics and astronautics, Reif said.

*A version of this article appeared in MIT Tech Talk on September 12, 2007 (download PDF).*

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