



## **Undergraduate Association Monthly Report**

October 2017

### **President**

**Sarah Melvin**

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### **Past Month:**

We started off the year meeting with President Reif to discuss some of our goals for the year, including more accessible student support resources, improvements to first year academics, and increased political engagement on campus. This past month we have been working with the Graduate Student Council (GSC), Society for Women Engineers (SWE) and the Senior Class, along with DSL, to restructure funding for student organizations and activities. In our discussions about funding, we also decided to set aside funds to ensure events on campus are accessible to all students, regardless of their ability to pay.

I have also been working with UA Council and the Committee on Education to develop guidelines for academic advisors. Included in our recommendations is a better matching system to pair advisors and advisees, better training for advisors, and more engagement from advisors. We will be presenting these recommendations to Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz later this week. We have also been working with Ian Waitz to develop a spring course that will give students the opportunity to redesign first year academics.

I have been working closely with the Student-Administration Collaboration Committee as they compile a report on the closure of Senior House and put forth recommendations to prevent similar outcomes in the future. In addition, I have met with the new Associate Dean for Student Conduct to discuss improvements to the Office of Student Conduct and Committee on Discipline procedures.

### **Current Projects:**

In addition to continuing these projects, I have started working on a proposal for a centralized wellness center on main campus that would bring together student support resources including S<sup>3</sup>, VPR and Student Disability Services, along with a satellite office of Mental Health and Counseling.

Last week, I met with officers from Class Awareness, Support, and Equality (CASE) to discuss current and proposed initiatives to support low income students, including the ability for students to receive meal swipes and winter clothing from S<sup>3</sup>. We discussed issues around the costs of summer internships and the financial burden faced by students on leave. We also

discussed how financial pressures affect the major and internship choices students make, and I hope to gather data on this issue.

**Vice President**

**Alexa Martin**

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Past Month:

This past month I have been working with Jon and Sarah to restructure student life fee and career fair funding. We worked with the GSC, SWE, and Senior Class Council as well as VP Nelson to develop this restructuring. Moving forward we will have a system for high-need students to get free tickets to any ticketed events. We will also be separating career fair revenue from any student group funding which will lead to a more representative and diversified career fair.

I have also been working with faculty and other students to implement the on demand safe ride system. After we hear back from the NABB Executive Committee, we will then go to the BTM to get final approval. We are hoping to have this pilot sometime before the end of the semester.

Internally in the UA we held our annual Fall Retreat at the MIT Endicott House. At the retreat, committee chairs and council members were able to meet each other, go through a leadership and unconscious bias training, and discuss various topics for the coming year.

Current Projects:

I am currently working with Peter Cummings and John McDonald to develop an online system for students to be able to donate unused guest passes. We will then hold a campaign to spread awareness of this system and to let students know if they are lacking any necessities, they can go to S<sup>3</sup> who can give them meal swipes and anything else they may need. We are also working on negotiations of a new dining contract, which will likely include a dining dollar system and meals that expire semesterly rather than weekly.

I am also working with other students, faculty, and Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz on a first year experience core team to develop a course for the spring that will think critically about and redesign the first year experience for students. Students will work on teams and engage the entire community in this endeavor.

Our next Cabinet + Operations Meeting will be held in Random at 5:30pm on Thursday, November 2nd. Dean of Student Life Suzy Nelson will be attending and this meeting is open to the public!

**Chief of Staff**

**Mo Eltahir**

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Past Month:

This past month I have been working to complete the restaffing Institute Committees which experienced scheduling conflicts in the last month. In addition, I have completed drafting a confidentiality policy for undergraduate representatives on standing committees of the faculty. It is meant to create a standard procedure for students sitting on these committees to be able to pass off some of the more sensitive information they encounter to relevant undergraduate leaders.

Current Projects:

I will meet with faculty and faculty governance administrators in order to move forward on revising and enacting the policy. Additionally I will help the Dean of Engineering staff his undergraduate advisory council. Lastly, I will look into helping secure more of a role for undergraduates in overseeing the IS&T operations at MIT.

**Treasurer**

**Jonathan Coden**

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Past Month:

This past month I've worked with Sarah and Alexa as well as the GSC, SWE, Senior Class Council, and the Department of Student Life to reassess student funding sources. We focused on trying to find ways to help benefit more undergraduate students such as creating a ticketing foundation for students who can't afford to pay for ticketed events as well as securing more stable funding for student groups going forward. In this discussion we also began discussing the Career Fair and professional development and how we can improve both of those aspects to better serve the undergraduate community.

Current Projects:

Currently I'm developing a framework on how to award travel grants for conferences to individual undergraduates. I'll be presenting this framework at council on 11/15 so stop by if you're really interested! Next, I'll be part of a working group that seeks to reimagine the Career Fair and professional development chaired by the Vice-Chancellor Ian Waitz. I'm really excited about this because I think MIT has a lot of work to do to help students in pursuing diverse career paths, in both industry and academics, and it's something that I've been passionate about changing for a while.

**Secretary**

**Kathryn Jiang**

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Past Month:

I revamped The Byte, a weekly newsletter for all undergrads, to include community events and officer updates. We also had a mixer with The Tech and held a study break for students affected by natural disasters.

In the First Year Experience Core team, we finalized the syllabus and listed the course as a special subject in Course 2. Working with Chris Peterson and the rest of the communications team, we also developed a student engagement plan to build awareness about this project and generate interest for the class through dorm and student group visits.

Current Projects:

In the First Year Experience team, we are working on building workshops for the class and looking at non-traditional pathways through the GIRs. We are also working to formulate a concept description for a hypothetical new freshmen year experience incorporating increased flexibility, hands-on learning, and entrepreneurial skills.

The CUP (Committee on the Undergraduate Program) is continuing our discussion about the new computational thinking requirement. I'm also restarting ua-informed, a weekly / biweekly summary of updates happening around the UA and MIT that might be relevant to students but aren't yet well-formed enough to bring to Council.

**Assistant Officer on Diversity**

**Citlali Trigos-Raczkowski**

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Past Month:

This past month, we have made progress in creating relationships with administration, faculty, and student leaders interested in developing a Latinx fly-in program, expanding surveys to show data on LGBTQ and other underrepresented groups, making advances towards a freshmen diversity training, and implementing an unconscious bias training for faculty and student advisors.

Current Projects:

With these connections in place, I'm hoping to spend the month of November appointing student leaders to a committee for the Latinx fly-in, presenting the program to senior administration and various departments for funding, and finalizing survey questions with IR to bringing together previous data that reflect URM information. Together with the Committee on Community and Diversity, we'll work work with Ian Waitz and Edmund Bertschinger to work out details for a campus-wide unconscious bias training and developing a curricula for the diversity training.

**Student Support and Wellness Committee**

**Sophia McGowan & Tchelet Segev**

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Past Month:

This past month we have been focused on our MIT Mental Health & Counseling mural competition. We received over 10 submissions and are currently working with MIT Medical Staff

to select the winner. In addition to this, we are working with the Food Insecurity Solutions Working Group to identify solutions to address food insecurity on campus. We have also begun reaching out to FSILGs to identify how MIT Mental Health & Counseling can serve those communities, in particular working with FSILG leadership.

Current Projects:

Our current projects include working to launch a pilot for free sanitary hygiene products on campus and partnering with UA Events to incorporate mental health and wellness themes into Tech Twinkles. In addition to this we have been working with MIT Deans and support staff to develop a guide to wellness resources for the MIT Mobile App. Finally we are also gathering early data on the prospect of creating an inter-departmental tutoring center.

**Committee on Community and Diversity**

**Annie Abay & Bruke Kifle**

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Past Month:

Efforts this past month have been focused on recruiting undergraduates for the committee, and working towards identifying projects for the coming term. We are currently a committee of 13 members (including chairs). Furthermore, efforts have been dedicated towards identifying possible funds/grants, and establishing relations with senior admin.

Current Projects:

Moving forward, our committee is looking forward to addressing a wide range of community, diversity and inclusion related topics. Working closely with the Assistant Officer on Diversity, we are working closely with senior administration such as Ian Waitz and Edmund Bertschinger to work out details for a campus-wide unconscious bias training and developing a curricula for the diversity training. Furthermore, our committee is interested in cultural celebration efforts, such as the continuation of OneWorld@MIT, as well as various other projects to facilitate and encourage greater cross cultural interactions. Lastly, we hope to address various issues affecting the LGBTQ & International Student population.

**Committee on Community Service**

**Kelly Barton & Joaquin Giraldo**

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Past Month:

Over the last month, we have worked to grow our new committee! We now have 9 members, including two co-chairs and a vice chair. We also have discussed with each dorm to create a position in every dorm/living group to spread the word and encourage community service events.

Current Projects:

UA Community Service Campus Partners List

Dinner to welcome and train all new partners

A movie series on current issues and events to encourage involvement (partnering with the LSC!)

Veteran's Day Card Making in Lobby 10

### **Public Affairs Committee**

**Elena Alberti & Ashti Shah**

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#### Past Month:

The UA Public Affairs Committee hosted candidate for Cambridge City Council, Nadya Okamoto. Nadya hosted a workshop on how to get involved in politics. The committee also registered students to vote in Massachusetts.

#### Current Projects:

Workshop on local, state, and national government

Terrabyte

Meeting of club presidents

### **Events Committee**

**Christine You & Ann Quan**

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#### Past Month:

This past month we have brought the famous comedian Hasan Minhaj to campus during our annual **FallFEST** comedy show. Many undergraduates and members of the MIT community attended, and it was a sold out show.

#### Current Projects:

Now we are planning the **Halloween themed fall study break** on **Oct 31st, 4-6p** on Kresge Oval. With pumpkin decorating, flash tattoos, donuts, cider, and much more! Also on the horizon is the annual **Tech Twinkles Tree Lighting Celebration** that will string lights on trees on campus and brighten it up in the dark winter months. Look out for the **SpringFEST** Survey that will be polling undergrads on their music choices!

### **Marketing Committee**

**Nicholas Curtis**

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#### Past Month:

This past month we have worked on a handful of tasks. First, we finalized our committee membership, and we are excited to welcome two new freshman on board! I am very excited to see how they will learn and grow this year. Secondly, we worked on a few preliminary projects, including advertising the MIT Mental Health Mural and the Nadya Okamoto event. Lastly, we

began working on making an official marketing committee request form to make it easier for UA Committees to request our services.

Current Projects:

Right now, we are working on three main projects. Firstly, we are creating a new logo for the Community Service Committee. Secondly, we are creating a poster for the UA Committee on Education Office Hour that will soon be happening every Monday. Lastly, we are working on creating a Facebook page for the Terrabyte, which is a weekly email newsletter with world news.

**Technology Systems Group Committee**

**Michael Amoako**

**Email:** [ua-technology-chairs@mit.edu](mailto:ua-technology-chairs@mit.edu)

Past Month:

In the last month we've been recruiting undergraduates to join the team and figuring out the details of our current and future projects. Our focus this year is on students at MIT and our goal is to use our skills as a committee to improve the undergraduate experience.

Current Projects:

One of our main projects - in collaboration with the Innovation Committee - is a Student-Life Hackathon. This hackathon is motivated by the fact that students at MIT oftentimes feel like they have no say in the issues that they face and often complain about **being unable to do anything about it**. The point of this event is to get students involved in tackling the issues that they face and, more generally, to get undergraduates more involved in student life. We also plan on organizing a TedX during the hackathon. In addition to this hackathon, other things we may work on include:

- Revamping the MIT mobile app
  - Improving Saferide monitoring system
- Organizing a cybersecurity awareness event
- Organizing a Biotech week (sometime in Spring)
- Making a Google calendar for all clubs at MIT
- Crowdsourcing tutors

We are looking forward to what is to come this year!

**Alumni Affairs Committee**

**Loewen Cavill**

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Past Month:

Over the last month we have been developing our team of 11 members. We have been meeting with both the Alumni Association and the Student Alumni Association to develop avenues for collaboration. We have been developing our initial ideas on how to strengthen student alumni relations.

Current Projects:

Student Alumni Mixer  
Information sessions for students on how to make use of their alumni network  
Summer Alumni Mentorship Program  
Speaker and Mentorship Events

**Innovation Committee**

**Malte Ahrens**

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Past Month:

We spent our first month together focused internally: we are now 17 members strong and worked to onboard everyone, develop the team infrastructure and hone our priorities.

Current Projects:

Our two large projects at the moment are *Hacking for a better MIT* -- a student-life hackathon during President's' Day Spring '18 -- and a report on the accessibility of campus innovation resources, particularly looking at barriers to participation and demographic use, to direct our efforts for universal access.

**Involvement Committee**

**Nikhil Bhatia**

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Past Month:

Over the past month, we have worked to recruit vice chairs as well as fill all committees with at least 5 members. We've finished up a successful fall recruiting season! We've also outlined a number of social events for the next couple months, including a UA-chairs + vice chairs + officers study break, a UA wide thanksgiving party, and a last day of classes study break.

Current Projects:

Right now we are planning the first study break (happening on 10/30) and organizing the food options. We are also trying to nail down the details of the UA-wide thanksgiving party as well as pick a location for the event. Upcoming projects include planning the individual study breaks/events as well as updating the UA website.

**Special Projects Committee**



**Szabolcs Kiss & Jason Seibel****Email:** [ua-projects-chairs@mit.edu](mailto:ua-projects-chairs@mit.edu)Past Month:

In the past month we have begun talks regarding the implementation of the Living Pink survey, including a meeting among LGBT student organization leaders and discussions with LGBT Services. We have also made plans for making physical updates to the UA office.

Current Projects:

Gathering documentation for the Living Pink Survey from 2012 and before is the next step in that process. The actual improvements to the UA office will begin this coming month. Additionally we will begin work on one of our other proposed projects.

**Committee on Education****Jingwei Ma & Noah McDaniel****Email:** [ua-education-members@mit.edu](mailto:ua-education-members@mit.edu)Past Month:

Student-Faculty dinners and coffees recently launched for this semester, applications open until December 13. This semester CoE has been working with Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz to develop a class focusing on designing the first year experience. This class be available in the spring. We will be coming to dorm and living group meetings to discuss the first year experience and the class.

Current Projects:

CoE will soon be offering office hours, a time to join us in the comfort of the UA Office and talk about academics. We are also working on preparing a report on advising at MIT, to better assess what improvements need to be made across departments. Have ideas about improving education? Let us know!

**Financial Board****Zach Schmitz****Email:** [ua-finboard-chairs@mit.edu](mailto:ua-finboard-chairs@mit.edu)Past Month:

Fall Funding Cycle applications closed on September 21 and the Summer Cycle ended September 30. Finboard held Appeals from September 29th to October 10, and final allocations were released October 11. Finboard received about \$200,000 in requests for funding for the Fall Cycle and allocated ~\$100,000 in initial funding and ~\$20,000 in Appeals allocations.

Current Projects:

Finboard is working on implementing the experimental Pilot Program in order to simplify student groups' funding accounts. In addition, we are working on developing a standard protocol for auditing student groups; 2 groups will be retroactively audited and 1 group will be concurrently audited this Fall Semester. The findings of Finboard audits will NOT affect groups' future

funding, but we will outline a plan on how to improve student groups' financial stewardship and then monitor student groups' response.

### **Sustainability Committee**

**Soma Mitra-Behura & Mingshi Yang**

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#### Past Month:

The Garden subcommittee harvested potatoes last week from our new greenhouse. We resumed the Terracycle program for you to upcycle your granola bar wrappers. Please drop off your granola bar wrappers in our collection boxes in the Student Center and Z Center. Our Special Projects subcommittee is working with MIT Facilities on improving air conditioning in buildings. Thank you to everyone who gave us feedback on what large sustainability initiatives you want to see us take. We will be discussing the most popular and viable projects with administration soon!

#### Current Projects:

UA Sustain is attending the Students for Zero Waste Conference on November 3rd and 4th. We still a few tickets reserved for undergrads -- contact us if you are interested in attending. This is a great way to network and learn about ways to reduce your footprint. We are working with the Environmental Solutions Initiative (ESI) on incorporating sustainability in the new dorm. The new dorm will give us an opportunity to pilot various sustainability projects, like building a biodigester to reduce waste. The Trashion Show is in its 5th year and will be held on Friday December 1st. This year's show will feature even more designers and models. Our Garden subcommittee is beginning a green wall. Next month, the Trash On My Back Challenge will challenge you to be zero waste and see how much trash you generate in a week.

### **Student-Administration Collaboration Committee**

**Allie Stanton**

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#### Past Month:

Over the past month, UA SAC has recruited 8 new members to the committee! We have been working on a report on Senior House that will be delivered to the Corporation Joint Advisory Committee in December. We have been meeting with stakeholders to help inform our findings and recommendations and look forward to the creation of a clear and transparent policy over the next year to handle serious problems in living groups.

#### Current Projects:

We will be presenting a draft of the report on Senior House to UA Council in November in order to discuss the recommendations that we will be making. We are also planning a "town hall" style meeting to discuss the report. In addition to the report on Senior House, we are also developing a website that will help to connect students and student groups with the relevant administrators.

## **Campus Planning**

**Nenye Anagbogu & Charlotte Chazen**

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### Past Month:

Last month has been focused on establishing membership and finalizing the big projects for the community. We've been able to down-select to 4 big projects for this year, as well as a couple smaller projects.

### Current Projects:

- Census for undergraduate guiding principles
- Website to garner student feedback and be more transparency
- Stratton Lounge Renovation
- Stratton 2nd floor dining renovation