

In League...

February – March 2018



A quarterly newsletter



Glass Lab Tour—Talk—Demo

Tuesday, February 27 • 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
Glass Lab, 4-003

The MIT Glass Lab displays its creations in the windows of the lab in the basement corridor of Building 4 — and occasionally ventures above ground! You might have caught their holiday sale in Lobby 10 in December, or the eagerly anticipated annual “Great Glass Pumpkin Patch @ MIT” event that happens every October. This event sees beginner, intermediate and advanced glass-blowing students and instructors in the MIT Glass Lab work together in teams to create hand-blown glass pumpkins, gourds and squashes in all sizes, shapes and colors. Their creations are later displayed on Kresge Oval in early October. If you missed these events, never fear! They will return with a Mother’s Day Sale in March.

Glass-blowing instruction, the very best demonstration of MIT’s motto *Mens et Manus* (the application of theories and skills through hands-on

project) is offered to members of the MIT community in MIT’s Glass Lab. The courses are so popular that admission is now lottery based.

On February 27th Glass Lab Director Peter Houk, will host a talk and demonstration in the lab space. A painter and a printmaker, he added glass blowing to his education in 1988, later in his career. Invited to teach at the Glass Lab in 1993, he took on the leadership of the Lab in 1997, expanding the program to include intermediate and advanced students and taking on special projects.

The tour is limited to 15 because of lab space. To reserve your place contact the League office.



Genealogy Workshop

Monday, February 5
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Emma Rogers Room, 10-340

Learn how to find your extended family! Family history is so much more than creating tedious charts of faceless ancestors. There are as many reasons to engage with family history as there are individual researchers—to better understand world history by connecting it to your family’s history; to better appreciate your own life by comparing it with the lives of your ancestors; to prove or disprove long held family beliefs and stories; to prove or disprove relationships to specific individuals; to learn more about yourself; or just because! Which one will inspire you to begin? Come join us as we explore strategies for getting started.

This workshop will be facilitated by Jane Papa. She is a retired educator; has been exploring family history and genealogy for about twenty years, working on projects for her own family history and that of friends and relatives; is a volunteer at the New England Historic Genealogical Society for more than ten years, and a volunteer and Overseer at the Boston Lyric Opera.

Let us know if you plan to attend by emailing wleague@mit.edu or by signing up at www.workshopgenealogy.eventbrite.com.

We look forward to seeing you on February 5 in the Emma Rogers Room!



Conversational English Class Registration

Tuesday, February 13

9:00 am to 11:00 am

Stratton Student Center, Room 491

For international women arriving at MIT whose first language is not English, our conversational English classes provide a friendly venue for practicing the language, learning new vocabulary, and engaging in conversations with classmates about a variety of subjects. They are a perfect home-away-from-home for visitors from other cultures and countries.

Students meet women from around the globe and come together to learn and improve their English skills with the guidance of dedicated Women's League teachers. The focus is on functional "how to" English conversation and student interests vs. grammar. Grammar instruction, however, is provided and reviewed at the Basic and Intermediate levels.

In addition, these classes offer students opportunities to make new friends, share their cultures and interests, and gain confidence while living their new life in the United States. As stories and experiences are shared, speaking and listening competence improves.

Spring classes are held from February to May on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:15 am to 11:00 am. Four levels of classes (Basic to Advanced) are offered and after a brief interview with one of our teachers, each student is placed in

an appropriate level class. Babysitting is provided for children, age 6 months to 4 years at a cost of \$200 a semester per child. Textbooks are provided and included in the student fee of \$100 per semester.

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An **English Partners Program** is provided to students for additional practice in conversational English with volunteers who are fluent English speakers. Since most Partners are MIT employees, these informal meetings usually take place on campus on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Participation is optional and subject to the availability of volunteer Partners.

Contact the League office for more information.



Brown Bag Lunch — Ari Daniel

Tuesday, March 13

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

Ari Daniel, PhD '08, has channeled his love of learning into a career inspiring others to do the same. While working on his PhD at the MIT/Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Joint Program, Daniel connected with the radio producers at Atlantic Public Media, who also call Woods Hole home. He began learning how to edit audio and produce radio, and found a new passion—science communication. "I was looking for a way to do something that was still steeped in science," Daniel recalls, "but somehow connected with a more creative outlet, where I would be interacting with people."

Now, Daniel works in science communication full time, working as a digital producer on *Nova*, for PBS, and as a freelance reporter for a host of beloved public radio shows such as NPR's *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered* and *Weekend Edition*, PRI's *The*

World, WNYC's *Radiolab* and WBUR's *Hear and Now*. He also produced the spectacular evening "Under the Stars," a planetarium series at the Boston Museum of Science that weaves together live music, storytelling, and visuals projected onto the planetarium dome.

The skills Daniel honed at MIT gave him the unique perspective on the work of reporting and communicating. "I think that getting a PhD in a science field has given me a lifelong sense of what it means to do research, be a scientist," he explains, "And that helps immeasurably when I work on my stories."

Daniel will be joining the MIT Women's League for a Brown Bag Lunch to talk about his work and the role of storytelling in the changing landscape of science communication. Please RSVP to wleague@mit.edu if you plan to attend.



MIT Student Furniture Exchange

The first in a series of interviews with our volunteers

A project of the League since 1958, the MIT Student Furniture Exchange (FX) relies on its volunteers to keep raising money for the Women's League Scholarship Fund. Julie Parker, who manages the FX, interviewed 17-year-old Lisa, who has volunteered at the FX for over six years. She works on the first Saturday of every month, and during the summer. She helps rehab furniture, serves customers, and bakes cookies for tea time! She even wrote her college application essay about working at the FX.

Q. What is your connection to MIT?

A. My father works here at the Energy Lab.

Q. What is your favorite task to do at the FX?

A. My favorite thing to do is to work the register. You get to communicate with almost everyone that comes into the store (as almost no one leaves without purchasing something!)

Q. What is your favorite section of the FX?

A. I love the housegoods section—especially the mugs!

Q. How many things do you think you have bought at the FX over the years?

A. Ummmm... maybe 100? (a lot of small items -like mugs!)

Q. Favorite TV show?

A. Riverdale

Q. Dream job?

A. Interior Designer

Q. Least favorite subject at school?

A. Math

Q. Favorite Subject at school?

A. Umm...lunch, I mean English.

Excerpt from Lisa's college essay:

"It was the first Saturday of the month, and I was giddy. I knew that today was the day I would be going to my second home, the MIT Furniture Exchange, which I call simply "FX"... The FX has donated over a million dollars to funding the scholarships. I'm proud that I also have contributed to help women to pay for their education.

The FX has sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding in my life. What I thought would just be a volunteer experience turned into a family. It has taught me many life lessons. I have not just grown personally, but socially too. I have learned how to communicate with adults better, work behind the cash register, and solve problems right on the spot.

Everyone at the FX is a family... the movers and volunteers are all kind and helpful to each other. We share everything and anything with each other. We are all open to help anyone out. While the FX is a place where people volunteer, all of us take our responsibilities very seriously. I show up on time, leave late, and enjoy every second while I am there.

I was somewhat shy at school, but I've taken the opportunity of working at the FX and stepped out of my comfort zone. The FX is just a place where I had the chance to grow and mature as a person. By the time the FX is closing for the day, I'm a bit tired but I feel satisfied by being useful to others. I miss the FX. Until the next first Saturday of the month. The FX has taught me an important lesson: what is worth doing at all is worth doing well. Thank you, the FX!"





Teresa de Figueiredo (second from left) and Julie Norman (second from right) with friends and family at the 2017 Awards Convocation.

The Laya Wiesner Awards 2017

Since 1981, MIT presidents have presented awards at the Institute Awards Convocations. Among those awards are two the Women's League created to honor Laya Wiesner, wife of MIT's 13th president Jerome Wiesner. Last May, these two prestigious awards were presented Teresa de Figueiredo and Julie Norman for their contributions to improving the quality of life at MIT and beyond.

Senior **Teresa de Figueiredo** was the winner of the **Laya W. Wiesner Award** that is given to an undergraduate woman who have helped make MIT a better, happier, friendlier environment. This award recognized her contributions, made in any area of Institute life, while at the same time maintaining a good academic record.

Teresa served the MIT and Greater Boston communities since her arrival on campus as a freshman. Deeply caring and actively engaged, she was an engaging MIT community member. A natural community organizer with a warm personality, she worked with the Freshman Urban Program as a counselor and coordinator to create a welcoming and inclusive community on the MIT campus and with the UA Events Committee to create "Tech Twinkles," an early December campus tree lighting initiative to brighten winter nights, bring holiday cheer and

provide a fun study break with sweets and entertainment on campus. As a member of the Society of Women Engineers, Teresa expanded outreach and community engagement by adding "Engineering Chats," when math and science teachers open their classrooms so high school students can learn about engineering first-hand from MIT engineering students. With Amphibious Achievement she was a mentor, swim coach, and counsellor to under-resourced high school students.

One of her many talents in being part of different communities is her ability to connect with people, put them at ease and contribute to the wealth and welfare of the community.

Julie Norman, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Director of the Office of Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming, is the winner of the **Laya Wiesner Community Award**. This award is given to "a member or friend of the MIT community for conspicuously effective service that reflects Laya's concerns for enhancing life at the Institute and in the world at large."

In her seventeen years at MIT, Julie's work has touched the lives of countless students and researchers. She is praised for her consummate professionalism and strategic thinking and is known as an

influential, transformative leader who is steadfastly committed to the well-being of students, faculty and staff. Julie is an extraordinary citizen of MIT. Her devotion to her students having the most positive MIT experiences exemplifies her commitment to community. Whether helping students discover and fulfill their purpose through guiding their thinking of majors and careers or helping them through a rough personal patch in their lives, she is there for them. She is equally committed to her staff and their development, seeing that they are recognized and rewarded for their contributions. Julie's lasting contributions to student life and learning will remain a testament to her dedication to the MIT community. "She has not only contributed to the Institute, but she has made it a better place."

We are proud of our award recipients and congratulate them for their dedication and accomplishments.

In anticipation of the May 10 2018 Awards Convocation, we invite League members to nominate candidates for these awards. Both carry financial prizes. Please send letters of nomination, describing the candidate's qualifications, to the League office, Room 10-342, or via email to wleague@mit.edu by **March 19**. Alternatively, you can make your nomination at awards.mit.edu.



League Interest Groups and Classes

LEARN MORE

Book Discussion

Barbara Donnelly

781.646.4617

Nancy Hollomon

nancyredsox@gmail.com

Chorale

Sharon Lin: hlin@mit.edu

Sally De Fazio: de_fazio@alum.mit.edu

web.mit.edu/womensleague/womenschorale

WORK WITH YOUR HANDS

Informal Needlework

Carol Clark

cclark@med.mit.edu

Women's League Community Craft Fairs

Brenda Blais

bmbblais@mit.edu

MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND CONTACTS

CitySide Dining

League Office

wleague@mit.edu

MIT Japanese Wives Group

Kimie Shirasaki

mitjwg@yahoo.com

Groups meet weekly, bi-monthly or monthly. Contact the above women to learn more about their groups.

Women's League PKG Center Fellows

During IAP, the Women's League funded two student Public Service Fellows through our long-standing support of the PKG Centers' Fellowship program.

The Fellowships are named after two former First Ladies of the Institute. The Rebecca (Becky) M. Vest Fellowship (established in 2005), supports women students who are working on issues that significantly affect women, including access to health, housing, and education, as well as issues such as violence prevention. The Elizabeth (Betty) W. Johnson Fellowship (established 2007), supports students working on environmental issues. Both Fellowships are open to students from all departments, from freshmen to PhD candidates.

The Betty Johnson Fellow is Suzanne Harris-Brandts, a PhD student in Urban Studies and Planning. Suzanne will lead the public service initiative, Collective Domain, alongside Georgian urban scholar David Gogishvili, looking at the erosion of public space in the Republic of Georgia. The work will examine how, since Soviet independence and the country's 2003 revolutionary change in government, the capital city of Tbilisi has been facing multiple threats to its public spaces such as sidewalks, plazas and courtyards. It will further examine a range of possible approaches to improving the quality of public space in the city. Suzanne's background in architecture and urban studies will provide not only a crucial foundation for analyzing the various types of spatial and political conditions impacting public space in the

city, it will further allow her to strategize alternative design recommendations. Looking specifically at three Tbilisi neighborhoods (Sololaki, Saburtalo and Dighomi), the goals of this project are to thoroughly document and assess the particular types of public space infringement taking place and to begin proposing alternative public space configurations that can lead to a more inclusive public realm for all civilians. Suzanne will be in Georgia through the summer combining this project with thesis research.

The Becky Vest Fellow is Lisette Tellez, a senior in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. She will be working with the residents of the Town of Watertown, MA, who vary from families who have been around for multiple generations to grad school students who have only lived there for a year—but there is one place where this diverse community comes together: the Watertown Farmers' Market! Currently, the farmers' market serves as a place for locals to buy and sell produce and products. However, it has the unmet potential of truly strengthening the sense of community. The goal of this project is to identify, analyze, and implement 1–2 initiatives that will help the farmers' market become a symbol and foundation of the community and create a sense of community that extends beyond the farmers' market itself. Lisette will be continuing her work part-time in the spring.

— Alison Hynd



Connections

Monday, March 5

12:00–2:00 pm

Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

Connections, our informal open house, is taking a break in February for our Genealogy discussion, but will return in March! Meet in the Emma Rogers Room (10-340). Escape your desk, leave your lab, and enjoy the beautiful view of the Charles. Feel free to bring your lunch, and we will provide a sweet selection of cookies.

Newcomers and colleagues are always welcome—come when you can and stay for as long as you wish!

The MIT Japanese Wives Group

Members' Activity in Japan

The MIT Japanese Wives Group plans activities for its members both on-campus and off-campus, and group activities also extend to Japan. Two members who have returned to Japan, Chizu Ikeda and Megumi Enokido, carry out activities there, including luncheon meetings. On November 28, a luncheon was held at Park Hyatt Hotel in Tokyo. We had a wonderful time talking about future activities for the group and sharing unforgettable experiences from our time at MIT. The next luncheon meeting will be on February 4 in Tokyo. It is our pleasure to continue The MIT Japanese Wives Group activities in Japan!

— Kimie Shirasaki

Notable — Books for discussion

11:30–1:00 pm

Wednesday, February 28

Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

Monticello: A Daughter and her Father
by Sally Cabot Gunning

Wednesday, March 28

Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

*The Brief and Wondrous life
of Oscar Wao*
by Junot Diaz

General Information

The MIT Women's League newsletter is published four times during the academic year. The deadline for submission for the **April–May issue is March 1**. All items should be sent to the Women's League office: wleague@mit.edu.

Please call the League office for a hard copy of the newsletter and for answers to questions you may have. The office can also arrange for your membership.

Staff Associate Kirsty Bennett
League Chair Srirupa Mitra
Honorary Chair Christine Reif
Design Tim Blackburn Design



MIT Women's League
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

77 Massachusetts Avenue
Room 10-342
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307
web.mit.edu/womensleague

Contact

Kirsty Bennett
617.253.3656
wleague@mit.edu

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facebook.com/mitwomensleague
 instagram.com/mitwomensleague