INTRODUCTION

The staff of lbgt@MIT in Residential Life and Student Life Programs works with the LBGT Issues Group and a variety of offices and staff, including Women's Studies and the Health Education Service of MIT Medical, to support MIT's LBGT student community. Though our focus is on students, many of our services and programs benefit the entire MIT community. While the LBGT Issues Group has undertaken a process of evaluating its role, the staff of lbgt@MIT has continued to institutionalize and build upon the Issues Group's efforts.

This has been a year of mixed blessings for the LBGT community at MIT. While programs, community support, and resources have seen significant improvement, MIT is also facing the national trend of decreased participation of students in campus political organizations. With greater support available for students, it seems students themselves often find less reason to actively participate in support mechanisms or programming efforts. A primary focus of the upcoming year will be enhanced assistance of the student leaders' efforts to meet the needs of their peers.

We would like to recognize the efforts of both Wendy Beauchamp and Nicole Homan. Wendy, a Master's student in Library Science at Simmons College, brought significant experience in leading campus LBGT and women's organizations from her time at the University of Florida. Wendy's contribution as the first Graduate Assistant for lbgt@MIT has been immeasurable; she has made the great progress of this past year possible. As Graduate Assistant, Wendy worked with us for nine months, 15-20 hours a week. Nicole, an undergraduate here at MIT, worked to both design and develop our website (web.mit.edu/rlslp) and to edit and update the Lavender Guide for this year's printing. Thanks to both Nicole and Wendy!!

Significant effort was made this year to connect with other campuses and their efforts. We joined the National Consortium for Campus LGBT Directors and attended several Massachusetts Safe Schools programs and conferences. On the national front, this year has seen the adoption of CAS Standards for LGBT Programs and Services on college campuses (the standards will be available starting September 1, 2000).

This report begins with a review of the three major areas of the services of lbgt@MIT: (1) Resources and Support Services, (2) Programs and Events, and (3) Campus Group Advising. This report then considers the current MIT campus climate, details the financial support received this past year, and concludes with a prospectus of lbgt@MIT's goals for the next few years.
RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Efforts continue to make resources, information, and support available to individual students. A major step forward was taken this year through the completion of a logo for lbgt@MIT that serves as a universal link for the various programs, services, and efforts on campus. The logo design process began last year with input from the community and was finalized last summer with the assistance of the Publishing Services Bureau and rhumba Design's Marc Harpin.

The lbgt@MIT logo was a key component of the "You are Welcome Here" Campaign. The Campaign's core purposes are:
- To raise awareness of LBGT issues and resources on MIT's campus,
- To increase visibility of support programs (the Sign includes a web link to the Lavender Guide), and
- To create a more welcoming and comfortable environment for LBGT community members.

Through the Campaign, approximately 6000 Faculty, Administrative Staff, Support Staff, Graduate Resident Tutors, and Independent Living Group Resident Advisors received an invitation in September 1999 to participate. Each invitation included a letter from the LBGT Issues Group and the Office of the Dean of Students and Undergraduate Education (see attached), a "You are Welcome Here" Sign, and a reply card. Individuals or offices that elected to participate were encouraged to return the reply card, which included an opportunity to subscribe to the lbgt@MIT e-mail newsletter. Almost 500 reply cards were returned; we also estimate that almost as many signs may have been hung without returning the reply card. Response to the Campaign has been positive, though we have received at least two dozen requests for replacement signs due to signs having been removed.

Starting in January, we began producing a monthly lbgt@MIT e-mail newsletter. Each newsletter included upcoming events, updates on important issues such as the Vermont Same Sex Marriage case, and an educational topic. Educational topics included intersexuality, the Cambridge domestic partner rights ordinance lawsuit, information about the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, and Freedom to Marry Day. The newsletter is sent to the staff of Residential Life and Student Life Programs, over 300 subscribers to the lbg@mit.edu list, and approximately 200 Campaign participants.

The Lavender Guide was edited and updated from a publication of 32 pages to 40 pages. A significant focus this year was to significantly increase information for lesbian/women and transgenders. As usual, we also verified all the phone numbers and contact information contained in the Guide. Due, in no small part, to the "You are Welcome Here" Campaign, distribution doubled to nearly 1500, even after the creation of a one page flyer to direct individuals to the on-line version. 556 unique hits to the on-line version of the Lavender Guide were registered between November and May.

Two undergraduate students, Chris Beland and Nicole Homan, served as Orientation 1999's Sexual Identity Committee with the support of Orientation Coordinator Elsie Huang. One significant improvement to Orientation was the creation of Living Pink: A Guide to LBGT-
Friendly Living Groups to replace the Pink Tours. Living Pink created a comfortable and safe mechanism for students to gain information without the public visibility of a tour. Sixteen Living Groups elected to participate in Living Pink.

This was also the first year that an event was organized for Campus Preview Weekend. Five prospective pre-frosh attended a gathering with several MIT students.

Finally, lbgt@MIT was available to provide individual support and assistance to community members regarding coming out, resource referrals, and other issues. One of the strengths of MIT is that a variety of staff are able to fill this role, including those in MIT Medical and Counseling and Support Services. The "You are Welcome Here" Campaign was meant to assist members of the MIT community in identifying friendly people. We specifically assisted four individuals at the initial phase of publicly Coming Out. Incoming students and newly-hired staff also contacted us with questions ranging from basic information on student groups to finding a primary care physician who is sensitive to the needs of LBGT people. The staff also received several requests for resource referral from both MIT alumni and individuals from the greater Boston community.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

The majority of our program planning efforts are aimed at coordinating two major weeks: Coming Out Week in October and Transgendered, Bisexual, Gay, and Lesbian Awareness Days (ToBGLAD) in March.

Coming Out Week, organized annually during the week of National Coming Out Day, consisted of a variety of events, anchored by the annual Rainbow Reception. Through the Reception, an invitation was extended to all faculty and many members of the MIT administration to show their support of MIT's LBGT students. This year, over 60 individuals were in attendance. In addition to a Lobby 10 table for the distribution of information and resources, the Week consisted of a meeting of GaMIT's Coming Out Support Group with special guests from Counseling and Support Services and MIT Medical, and a discussion organized by the MIT Women's Collective. The week ended with a speech by Full Exposure author Susie Bright, organized primarily by Authors@MIT and Women's Studies; over 200 people attended. The Tech also played a significant role in raising awareness by choosing to organize several articles regarding MIT's LBGT community and Coming Out Week.

ToBGLAD consisted of several workshops and social programs. Kim Aires, a local "sexpert," offered a program on LBGT friendly safe sex and sex practices. GABLES organized their annual Open House. Comparative Media Studies and Women's Studies organized a talk and reception with Erica Rand entitled "Barbie, Youth Violence, Queer Sex, and Censorship: Mixing it Up" with an approximate attendance of 40 people. The Rainbow Bright Party, organized by several living groups through the Weekends@MIT grant program, reached out to a few new faces in its attendance of 60 or so students. FAQS organized a study break and movie screening. The Lutheran-Episcopal Ministry @ MIT organized "Human Sexuality and Religious Intolerance," a speech and discussion with Bishop Steven Charleston. Additionally, as part of
the Tuesday Night at Baker Series, lbgt@MIT organized "I'd Like to Solve the Puzzle, Please?", a workshop co-facilitated by Professor Jean Jackson that focused on exploring the intersection of sex, sexuality, and gender.

Finally, through the invitation of a Graduate Resident Tutors, lbgt@MIT and several out students organized a program for one of the residence halls that sought to challenge residents to consider the kind of community they create. Over 100 students were in attendance.

STUDENT GROUP ADVISING

LBGT Programs works to provide support and advice to MIT's various LBGT student groups. The Boston Colony of Delta Lambda Phi, a gay and progressive male fraternity, is a new group this year that we have assisted in interacting with MIT's procedures and in promoting their organization on campus.

The Graduate GLB Coffeehouse has typically operated independently and continues to hold events regularly with success. MIT FAQS primarily plans study breaks and smaller social events and continues to operate under very loose organizational structure by choice of the members. The Women's Collective supports LBGT efforts but is not a primarily lesbian organization; they have chosen to work with us primarily in planning the major weeks. GaMIT organized several events this year and continued to operate their coming out support group, however, the organization has been struggling, due in part to significant personal and academic struggles by some of the more active LBGT students. Efforts continue to be made to assist GaMIT in building membership and in resolving its budget deficit.

This year, the LBGT Issues Group Funds Subcommittee granted financial support to several student group requests. These grants were in addition to the funding provided to Coming Out Week and ToBGLAD. This years' grants to student group events included $100 to support food during FAQS' Open Houses, $40 to cover the registration fee for the Boston Pride Parade, and $200 towards the Graduate Coffeehouse's book reading by Rabih Alameddine.

THE MIT COMMUNITY AND CAMPUS CLIMATE

Overall, there is a sense that the MIT campus climate continues to improve. "You are Welcome Here" Signs can be found in locations throughout campus and has resulted in anecdotal feedback about the positive difference it has made. LBGT students are out and active in a variety of student activities and living groups and seem to find places they feel comfortable and welcome. The Tech had several feature articles on the LBGT community and responded to public incidents with supportive editorials. Many key service providers, such as Counseling and Support Services, are either on the LBGT Issues Group or actively support the LBGT community. Finally, an individual critical of MIT's InterFraternity Council chose to say that they were too gay friendly.
At the same time, the need for improvement continues to be made evident. Incidents such as graffiti in the bathroom or comments made in the halls are still reported; highlighting the need for continued educational opportunities. Multiple cases appeared this past year of LBGT students facing personal or academic struggles, at least one with a very serious result; indications are that the numbers are high for this community relative to the overall MIT community. The numbers of living groups participating in Living Pink is relatively low, sexual orientation continues to be the only part of MIT's nondiscrimination policy with a footnote, there are very few out members of the faculty, and "You are Welcome Here" Signs have been removed. While many are finding supportive environments, students continue to report anxiety regarding the coming out process at MIT and staff communicate concerns regarding their ability to best address LBGT related issues and incidents. Finally, a widely reported incident of vicious hate mail sent to an openly gay student caused considerable concern. The Committee on Discipline's serious sanction for the perpetrator, which was also reported in The Tech, may have helped to demonstrate MIT's commitment to improving the climate on campus.

In writing this report, we solicited input from a variety of sources. One response came from a Housemaster who reported that several years ago a gay student had approached the house team to communicate his impression that the hall was less than supportive. This feedback was taken to heart; the hall made a conscious effort to work as a community to build a LBGT-friendly environment through intentional use of non-biased language, modeling behaviors, and being open and responsive to concerns. The hall is now a participant in Living Pink.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Approximately 75% of our funding continues to come from the generous support of John Kellett '47. The LBGT Issues Group just completed its fourth year of receiving $12,000 a year for five years. He also funds the efforts and activities of BGALA (Bisexual, Gay, and Lesbian Alums). We continue to be aware not only of the opportunities this funding has provided but also that we are entering the final year of his donation. The issue of continued support must be addressed. Without funding at this level, we will lose not only our ability to continue to develop programs and resources but also to maintain our current level of effort, including: the ability to hire a graduate assistant and all the benefits of the additional support and energy, to maintain the "You are Welcome Here" Campaign, to organize Coming Out Week and ToBGLAD, and to offer financial support to groups and special programs.

The Lavender Guide continues to be a collaborative effort; this year the Health Education Service of MIT Medical, Orientation 1999, Residential Life and Student Life Programs, and Counseling and Support Services each provided resources and funding. The Publishing Services Bureau also donated towards the development of the lbgt@MIT logo, in addition to making significant effort to identify an affordable yet quality designer.

Orientation 1999 continued to fund and support the Sexual Identity Subcommittee of Orientation. The annual Rainbow Reception also continued to be a collaborative effort of the LBGT Issues Group and the Office of the Dean of Students and Undergraduate Education.
Residential Life and Student Life Programs contributed substantial support towards the hiring of the graduate assistant, in addition to providing a computer, phone, and work space.

We also want to recognize the many LBGT-friendly programs organized and funded by a variety of programs and departments at MIT, including Comparative Media Studies and Women's Studies. Thanks also to the Graduate Student Council and the Undergraduate Association for their continued support of MIT's LBGT student organizations.

Finally, we would like to thank former Dean for Student Life Margaret Bates for her strong support of LBGT students, particularly the efforts of GaMIT during her tenure at MIT.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

**GOALS FOR THE 2000-2001 ACADEMIC YEAR:**

1 - **Identification of future funding sources**
   This upcoming year will be the final year of John Kellett's generous financial support of MIT's LBGT community. Permanent sources of funding will need to be identified.

2 - **Reaching beyond our current allies**
   The LBGT Issues Group, at its initial inception, focused on building a foundation of support services and information for MIT's LBGT student community. The result of much of their efforts has been realized: greater communication among the network of support, specific staff and support to MIT's LBGT student groups, the continued development of the Lavender Guide and other resources, the coordination of Institute events and programs, and the launch of the "You are Welcome Here" Campaign. The Issues Group needs to explore its next step, including mechanisms for engaging areas of the Institute not already identified as friendly and supportive in its work.

3 - **More coordination of information**
   LBGT-related issues and incidents can be reported through a variety of channels. Effective program development will ultimately rely on communication and sharing information.

**LOOKING BEYOND 2001**

One of the strengths of MIT's LBGT community is its diversity and individuality. For example, few campuses of MIT's size have as many specifically LBGT student organizations. The broad range of interests and ideas, also presents challenges towards larger goals. Ultimately, greater linkages will need to be made between lbgt@MIT, the variety of support mechanisms across MIT, the services of the greater Boston community, and the LBGT student leadership. Efforts have been made through the LBGT Issues Group, the development of an lbgt@MIT logo, and the creation of the lbgt@MIT website to provide centralization of services and support. Ultimately, however, our goal is the creation of a central, visible, and welcoming space to anchor MIT's diverse efforts and to enable stronger and more consistent resources and support.