

Boston celebrates July 4th

By Joy E. Lee
STAFF REPORTER

Despite the hot and humid weather, masses from around the world

crowded into Boston for one of the most anticipated Fourth of July celebrations in America. Everyone was full of national spirit; children and adults alike wore

red and blue foam Lady Liberty crowns and played games on blankets spread out along the banks of

Fourth of July, Page 11



VISIT [HTTP://TECH.MIT.EDU/V131/N29/JULY4/VIDEO.HTML](http://tech.mit.edu/V131/N29/JULY4/VIDEO.HTML) TO CHECK OUT THE TECH'S BEHIND-THE-SCENES FOOTAGE FROM THE FIREWORKS BARGE.

JOANNA KAO—THE TECH

Over half a million people gathered to watch the fireworks and the Boston Pops concert on Monday.

Beta alumni disband fraternity

Frat suffered from low numbers, sanctions over past year

By Joanna Kao
STAFF REPORTER

Beta Theta Pi (Beta) has been disbanded, a decision that was made by its local alumni association, advisory board, and the national organization. Members were notified of the decision on June 5 and were asked to move out of their house within five days.

Reasons for disbandment

According to Michael G. Feinstein

'82, president of the Beta alumni association, the decision to shut the fraternity down was based on two main reasons: low numbers and recent sanctions.

"First of all, [we have had] very disappointing rush results over the past several years where we've lost critical mass," Feinstein said. Feinstein also said that running their house with such low numbers was difficult.

The MIT Interfraternity Council (IFC) put Beta under social probation,

imposed heavy fines, and imposed rush restrictions after an alcohol violation during rush last fall.

"We've had a series of risk management incidents over the last few years, and we felt that in this environment — where we didn't have enough people — there was a risk of another incident happening," Feinstein said.

According to Feinstein, any additional incident would have resulted in

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Disney lab resurfaces

New research lab to work with MIT

By Michelle E. Szucs
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Disney Research opened a new lab near MIT in East Cambridge this month, 11 years after closing the doors to its old Cambridge lab. Disney Research works in a number of areas — including robotics, computer graphics, and video processing — that benefit many facets of The Walt Disney Company. The new lab plans to work in the social sciences and forge ties with researchers at MIT.

Joe Marks, vice president of Disney Research, said that the

lab plans to focus broadly on the social and behavioral sciences, from behavioral economics to user experience. Data mining and developing technology focused on machine learning to help analyze data would be large components of this research.

However, Marks also emphasized that labs tend to grow "organically," building upon the skills of the researchers they employ. He said that "one of the areas that might grow organically because of previous opportunities is materials science." The

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Barge goes up in flames as July 4th celebrations wind down



DAVID M. TEMPLETON—THE TECH

The barge that fired off Boston's Fourth of July fireworks show caught fire around 5 a.m. yesterday morning, six hours after the end of the show. The Boston Fire Department's harbor unit extinguished the fire around 6:10 a.m.

Facilities may move

Cambridgeport relocation at the top of the list

By Ethan A. Solomon
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The people who keep MIT running day-in, day-out are looking for a new home. The Operations group of MIT's Department of Facilities is mulling use of the former California Products Corporation's property at the corner of Waverly St. and Putnam Ave., just northwest of West Campus. At a June 22 meeting, MIT officials pitched the idea to residents of Cambridgeport — the

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IN SHORT

A new head for the EECS department has been named. Anantha P. Chandrakasan will succeed W. Eric L. Grimson.

On June 18, MIT and the Skolkovo Foundation announced a partnership to create a new global institution, called the Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology in Russia.

On June 24, President Barack Obama named President Susan J. Hockfield to co-chair the new Manufacturing partnership called the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership.

Send news information and tips to news@tech.mit.edu.

BAY DOES NOT DISAPPOINT WITH TRANSFORMERS 3

Dark of the Moon is the best of the trilogy. ARTS, p. 13

YES ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Institute needs to support the LGBT community. OPINION, p. 4

GAY MARRIAGE: YAY OR NAY?

A point/counterpoint by two of The Tech's columnists. OPINION, p. 5



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Boston celebrates July 4th with music from the Boston Pops and fireworks. JULY 4TH, p. 8

RECIPES FOR THE SUMMER

Now that classes are out, try out these recipes from Pika. CAMPUS LIFE, p. 14

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The Tech (ISSN 0148-9607) is published on Tuesdays and Fridays during the academic year (except during MIT vacations), Wednesdays during January, and monthly during the summer by The Tech, Room W20-483, 84 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. 02139. Subscriptions are \$50.00 per year (third class). **POSTMASTER:** Please send all address changes to our mailing address: The Tech, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. **TELEPHONE:** Editorial: (617) 253-1541. Business: (617) 253-4324. Facsimile: (617) 253-8226. **Advertising:** subscription, and typesetting rates available. Entire contents © 2011 The Tech. Printed on recycled paper by Mass Web Printing Company.

Yes on same-sex marriage

New York was an important victory, but there's more work ahead, including here at the Institute

Last month's vote to legalize same-sex marriage in New York was a welcome victory in the struggle to provide all Americans, no matter their sexual orientation, with equal rights. It is self-evident that people should have the right to marry whom they love.

The Tech fully endorses the New York vote. We ask that students who feel the same way contact their state and federal representatives from their home states and demand marriage equality. Demand that our country hold itself to its core principle: we're all created equal.

There's also work to be done here at MIT. An issue with as many misconceptions and as much misinformation about it as same-sex marriage obliges scientists and engineers to set the record straight. MIT is well-poised to help do just that. For instance, it is simply not true that gay or lesbian parents are any worse at raising children than heterosexual couples (for a literature review, see Andersen et al., 2002 in the *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*).

Furthermore, gay and lesbian couples marry because they love each other (Ramos et al., 2009 from UCLA's Williams Institute), not because there's a plot to destroy the institution of "traditional" marriage. Finally, a majority of Americans — 53 percent — believe that same-sex marriages should be legal, according to a May 2011 Gallup poll. If you've been unable to make up your mind on

this issue, look no further than the data: same-sex marriage is as healthy as heterosexual marriage, and most Americans support it.

But what can advance understanding and acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community members at MIT? So far, the Institute has been a leader among the country's universities in providing support and services for LGBT students. In that vein, continuing institutional support for LGBT groups, programs, and services is crucial.

However, significant challenges remain. The spring 2011 Living Pink survey collected hundreds of comments from on and off-campus MIT living groups about students' attitudes towards peers with different sexual orientations. While many respondents said their living groups were welcoming, supportive environments, several cited instances of passive or active hate, at least one of which went unreported.

One commenter said, "This is MIT. This is the 21st century. Nobody cares if you're gay." But other comments indicated the opposite. The truth is, some people — even at MIT — do care if you're gay.

MIT needs to work harder to ensure that *everybody* in the MIT community 1) is aware that LGBT community members face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and 2) understands that solving these problems requires work from all of us —

LGBT and non-LGBT alike.

The Division of Student Life (DSL), in conjunction with LGBT student groups, should formulate ways to bring substantial, meaningful awareness of LGBT issues to all sectors of campus. Whether it be combating hateful name-calling (unintentional or otherwise), social marginalization, vandalism, or violence, MIT should be a leader in making its campus a truly accepting place. The exact mechanisms to bring this kind of awareness to MIT should be a point of ongoing discussion and are outside the scope of this editorial. What is clear is that making MIT an accepting place means getting everybody involved — at least aware — and DSL is in a position to push for this goal.

Much work remains among MIT faculty as well. Few faculty members are out, and this contributes to a less welcoming academic support environment; faculty members of older generations may not be as accepting as current students of LGBT community members. DSL and the Provost's office should pay much closer attention to this issue.

This editorial is by no means an exhaustive analysis of the challenges between where we are now and a fully tolerant MIT community. We hope, however, to start a more open and frank dialogue between the LGBT community and allies, the administration, and faculty.

Ryan Normandin has published a dissent to this editorial.

DISSENT

By Ryan Normandin
DISSENTING

I am dissenting from the above editorial because it is my firm belief that by legalizing gay marriage, New York has become the latest state to embarrass itself and this country. Contrary to what the rest of the editorial board suggests, there is strong research conducted by Dr. Bruce J. Ellis, Professor of Psychology at the University of Canterbury, and others demonstrating that a child needs a father to develop properly. Further, there is no interest compelling enough to justify legalizing gay marriage. By the logic above — namely that "it is self-evident that people should have the right to marry whom they love," the government should allow first cousins or siblings to marry. Love is not enough for the government to spend my tax dollars subsidizing a relationship which does not serve a compelling interest. Heterosexual relationships, on the contrary, allow for the propagation of American society, which justifies a government subsidy. For the rest of my argument, please see my counterpoint on page five. While I do not endorse New York's decision, I do agree with the rest of the editorial board's encouragement of the MIT community to continue providing support and services and raising awareness for LGBT students, as it would for any other group that has faced lack of acceptance or has been the subject of social marginalization.

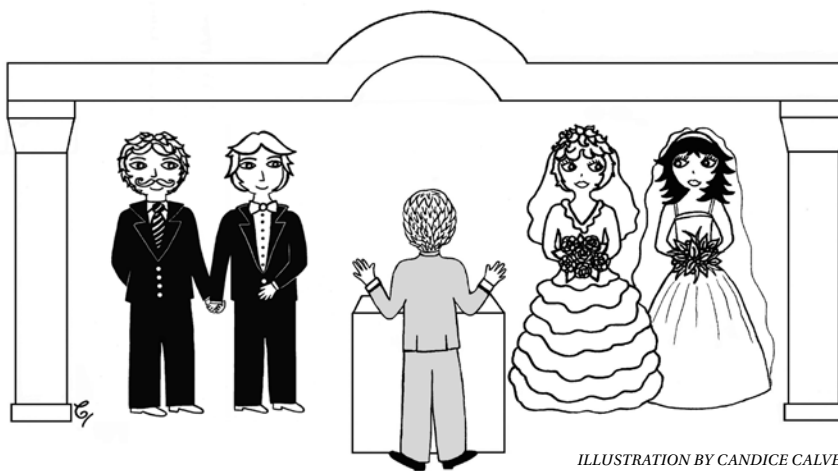


ILLUSTRATION BY CANDICE CALVE

CORRECTIONS

The caption for the mood meter photo in the April 15 issue mistakenly identified the creators as M. Ehsan Hoque G, Professor of Media Arts and Sciences Rosalind W. Picard ScD '91, and Javier H. Rivera G from left to right. The creators should be, from left to right, Javier H. Rivera G, Professor of Media Arts and Sciences Rosalind W. Picard '86, and M. Ehsan Hoque G.

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Of lawyers and scientists

MIT must balance its science and advocacy more carefully

By Keith Yost
STAFF COLUMNIST

There are two methods by which mankind searches for the truth.

The first, which is dominant at this Institute, is the scientific method. Researchers pose questions, hypothesize answers to those questions, gather empirical evidence on the validity (or invalidity) of a hypothesis, and then revise their hypotheses to achieve as great a consistency as possible with the collected evidence.

The second method, which is dominant outside the confines of a university or laboratory, is the adversarial method. A pair of advocates stands before an audience and pleads the merits of two contradictory possibilities. The case that the audience finds the most compelling is taken as fact, and its rival is discarded.

It is tempting, as scientists, to dismiss the second method entirely. "Leave the debates to lawyers and politicians," one might say, "and let MIT concern itself only with the science."

The problem with an MIT that absolves itself of any advocative role is that human beings do not naturally reason with the scientific method. Almost everywhere in our lives we apply the adversarial method, picking and choosing between explanations purely based on their immediate plausibility. If MIT does not speak with a clear voice on scientific

facts, it risks not being heard at all.

Much as it is with news organizations, a great deal of the value added by a scientific institution is not in its generation of information, but in the interpretation of that information for lay audiences and policy makers. It's not enough to analyze core samples from the arctic ice shelf — what do those samples suggest for the intensity of global warming? Somewhere along the line, the results of the scientific method need to venture out into the adversarial arena and take a stand; someone needs to fight for science's agenda.

By failing to clearly denounce pseudoscience, MIT is inviting millions of dollars to be wasted in needless research and treatment attempts, and it is harming autistic patients, who could otherwise receive useful treatment.

For some extreme cases, there is little conflict between advancing a conclusion to the general public and performing unbiased research. Case in point: from July 20 to July 22, the MIT Media Lab is hosting a convention on Facilitated Communication (FC). FC is the idea that severely autistic people are capable of communicating with the outside world, and need only a facilitator to support their hands while they type at a keyboard.

The concept has been long-discredited, with numerous studies showing that any positive results have been the result of either outright fraud or unconscious direction by the facilitators. FC is the equivalent of believing that Ouija boards allow us to communicate with ghosts.

Proponents of FC hope to use MIT's good reputation to lend credit to their pseudoscience, and MIT shouldn't let them. From the naive perspective of the scientific method, it shouldn't matter whether or not FC proponents have a conference — if there is no scientific validity to the idea of FC, then it

doesn't matter how many conferences are held; the hypothesis will still be discarded. But realistically, giving FC practitioners a forum with which to spread their malarkey comes at a great cost. By failing to clearly denounce pseudoscience, MIT is inviting millions of dollars to be wasted in needless research and treatment attempts, and it is harming autistic patients, who could otherwise receive useful treatment.

Of course, an MIT that embraces advocacy is not without its headaches. After throwing out the homeopaths and astrologists, what is MIT to do in the gray areas? How is MIT to come down on a professor such as Richard Lindzen, an excellent and thorough scientist, but whose research succors those who believe climate change to be a wholesale fabrication by a shadowy conspiracy of academics? Overly zealous advocacy invites the same tragedy that befell the University of East Anglia, which, while not committing fraud, lost its reputation as an honest broker of scientific information, when computer servers containing thousands of research documents and emails were released in 2009. Worse, advocacy can mean advocacy of the wrong conclusion — if MIT draws a conclusion too early, it could stifle dissent and undermine the quality of its research.

Striking a balance between the focused message needed by the adversarial method and the open mind that is needed by the scientific method is a difficult and nuanced task. But as the upcoming facilitated communication convention demonstrates, MIT can do better. The decentralized, ad hoc way in which MIT crafts its message to the public has watered down the Institute's influence and prevented it from coherently advocating in the policy arena. At a minimum, we should not be allowing pseudoscientists to use the Institute as a backdrop for their propaganda.



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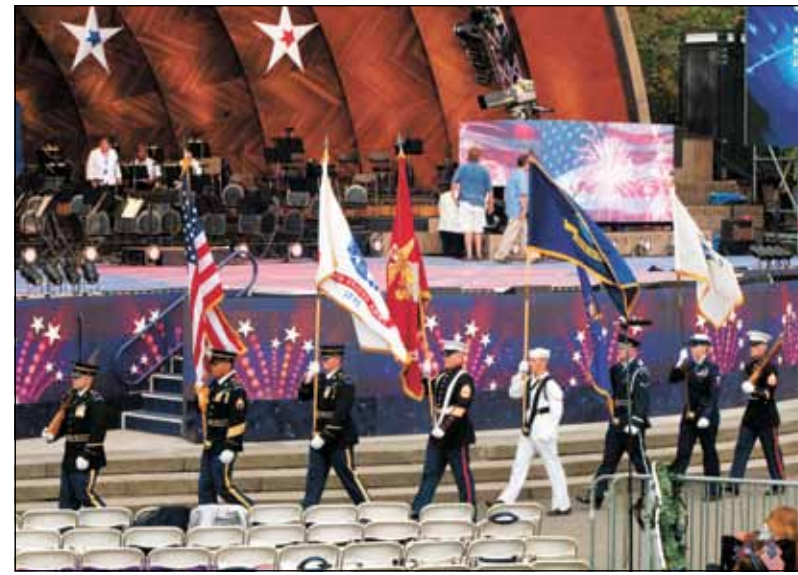
Boats gather on the Charles River to watch the fireworks display.

JESSICA LIU—THE TECH



DAVID M. TEMPLETON—THE TECH

A worker makes electrical connections to a fireworks shell that has been loaded into its firing tube midday Saturday.



JOANNA KAO—THE TECH

The honor guard displays flags before the beginning of the concert.



DAVID M. TEMPLETON—THE TECH

Firing tubes that have not yet been loaded with fireworks shells are seen midday Saturday.

Fireworks and the Boston Pops celebrate the nation's 235th birthday



Thousands lined the Charles River to watch the fireworks display.

MANOHAR SRIKANTH—THE TECH



Staff Sergeant Tracy Labrecque and the U.S. Army Field Band and Soldiers Chorus kick off the program with the *Star-Spangled Banner*.

JOANNA KAO—THE TECH



JOANNA KAO—THE TECH

Keith Lockhart, conductor of the Boston Pops, and Michael Chiklis, host for the concert, pose for reporters before the beginning of the July 4th concert at the Esplanade. Chiklis is best known for playing Detective Vic Mackey on *The Shield*.



Over 15,000 fireworks lit up the sky above the Charles River on Monday night.

JESSICA L. WASS—THE TECH



JOANNA KAO—THE TECH

Members of the 101st Field Artillery Regiment fire off cannons during the *1812 Overture*.



AISLYN SCHALCK—THE TECH

Members of the public watch the fireworks, which started shortly after 10:30 p.m. on Monday night.

Brothers upset by decision timing

Alumni tells fraternity the week following Commencement

Beta, from Page 1

the IFC kicking Beta off the campus for a long period of time. "We wanted to have a smoother landing rather than a crash landing, so we decided to act and put ourselves up in place for a well-organized fresh start in a few years," Feinstein said.

Beta has been on declining status with the national fraternity and in "very low standing" with the IFC for some time, according to Feinstein. "They basically were one step above being shut down. They had written sanctions and goals from the national fraternity that were given to them in the fall that told them what they had to do. If they didn't, they'd be subject to being shut down. They were nearly shut down by the IFC after their

pecting, and give them time to address it. And they were sincere in their desire to address it, I really think they wanted to, but I think they were victims of their own situation because their numbers make it tough," Feinstein said.

According to the FSILG office, the chapter had 28 members, with eight graduating last month and three members initiated over the past year.

By the end of the spring semester, the alumni board "determined that they were not making enough progress," Feinstein said.

Telling the Beta brothers

The brothers were told of the decision to disband their chapter during a meeting on June 5, the Sunday following grad-

set because they were not around when the decision was made. "A lot of people were out of the country or back at home. And people who were here had very limited time to move out to find somewhere to live," he said.

Feinstein said that they chose June 5 because they didn't want to disrupt the brothers' academics. "It wouldn't have been fair to them. We could have done it before graduation, but we didn't want to spoil the day for those graduating. We decided to do it right after that, at the start of the summer, so that the guys would have the best chance to find a place to live for the summer and get in line for fall housing. I don't think there's ever a convenient time to take these actions, but we felt that this was the best option."

Nevarez said that he would have preferred to be notified about a month before the end of the semester, "when people could have still chosen to live on campus and gotten a place on campus that they'd be comfortable with," Nevarez said.

The FSILG and MIT Housing Office are working with the residents of the Beta house to get housing in the dorms for the fall. However, according to Nevarez, many of the brothers are being assigned to dorms that they do not prefer since they are requesting dorms later than the rest of the student population.

Vandalism to the house

According to Senior Associate Dean of Residential Life and Dining Henry J. Humphreys, the Beta house was vandalized a few days after the brothers moved out of the house. Detective Sergeant Craig Martin of the MIT Police is conducting an investigation of the situation. Martin could not be reached as of 7 p.m. yesterday.

According to Feinstein, the house was not broken into, but he did not provide any other comment.

Beta's future

Beta will begin with a fresh start in fall 2013. Unlike fraternities that are under suspension or have been expelled by the IFC, Beta will not have to reapply to become a fraternity at MIT. "We realize that they have a long history, and everybody will be working together to make sure they have a strong start that fall," said Gordon W. Wintrob '12, president of the IFC.

In the spring of 2013, a Beta representative from the national fraternity will be living in the Beta house full time. He will be "participating in Campus Preview Weekend, connecting with people on campus, and creating a positive presence for Beta starting at that time and looking to meet incoming freshmen," Feinstein said.

Until then, rooms in their houses on 119 and 120 Bay State Road will be rented out to graduate students.

Beta alumni are planning on recruiting a founding house of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors all at one time when they return to MIT in 2013.



NIKITA A. KHLISTOV

The Beta Theta Pi fraternity was disbanded for two years by its local alumni association and national organization.

risk management incident in the fall; they received very severe sanctions from the IFC and significant financial fines regarding alcohol social probation. That was down from the suggested penalty, which was much harsher," Feinstein said. "Their performance [on their national fraternity's expectations] was one of the reasons why we decided to take the action." Feinstein declined to comment on the specifics of the national fraternity's written goals.

The alumni board had considered disbanding the chapter last fall after the IFC put Beta on social probation. "We considered it in the fall, but I think we made the right decision then to make it crystal clear what we were expecting from them, what progress we were ex-

uation. "It was supposed to be a meeting to prepare for the summer, said Victor Nevarez '12, president of Beta. "The chapter was to be disbanded, the reason being that we weren't capable of sustaining a good fraternity. [They] didn't believe the chapter was holding the values of the fraternity well enough."

According to Nevarez, the brothers were not surprised about the decision, so there wasn't much disagreement, but they were surprised by the timing of the decision. "The only thing people were really upset about was the short amount of time and the time that was chosen. The decision itself, everyone saw it coming. It was mainly the execution," Nevarez said.

According to Nevarez, most were up-

New location will require substantial improvements

Cambridge community concerned about possible noise pollution caused by facilities move

Facilities, from Page 1

neighborhood where this property currently lies dormant.

MIT's Grounds Services division and Repair and Maintenance (R&M) division are planning to move from their current sites in NW62 on Mass. Ave. and E19, respectively. The Grounds Services division maintains MIT's outdoors areas and the R&M division maintains HVAC systems and plumbing. NW62 will be demolished along with other buildings just north of Random Hall as part of a redevelopment project led by Forest City Boston, a real-estate company.

At last month's meeting in NW35, Facilities director John DiFava cited the former California Products building as a good site for Grounds and R&M because it is close to campus, already owned by MIT, and can serve the various storage, repair, and administrative needs of the displaced

Facilities groups. The building has gone largely unused for years, since MIT acquired the property to allow for the reconfiguration of roads in the area. The Institute built California Products, a paint company, a new factory in Andover, Mass. in exchange.

If Facilities does pick the site, the site will need to undergo substantial renovations before it can be used. "Shops," like for plumbing, carpentry, and metal work will be installed, in addition to exterior renovations and landscaping of the property. MIT suggested a variety of modern designs for the building's now crumbling, battered exterior.

Sarah E. Gallop, director of MIT's community relations office, noted to Cambridge residents that MIT has not made any decisions yet. Feedback from area residents, she said, was part of the evaluation process. If MIT moves forward with relocating the Facilities groups here, it will not

need to request any re-zoning.

Several Cambridge residents from the dense residential area around the site raised concerns over noise, parking, and the further development of housing in south Cambridgeport.

MIT acknowledged that the building's ventilation and carpentry shop would create noise, but were firm that noise levels would be within city standards. DiFava noted the current location of R&M, in the same building as labs and offices, is not a problem and noise is contained well.

On the issue of parking, MIT said that Facilities employees would park in lots already owned and used by MIT and therefore would not take up valuable street parking. When pressed on the issue, DiFava acknowledged to concerned residents that MIT could not prevent Facilities employees with Cambridge permits from parking on Cambridgeport streets, but assumed that few, if any, employees would ac-

tually do this.

Cambridge Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis (also a resident of the area) voiced concerns over the development of housing in south Cambridgeport — a long-time goal of the city and neighborhood leaders. For years, Cambridge has been looking to transition light industrial areas in Cambridgeport to residential use.

"[This] wasn't what the council envisioned with the zoning that pushed towards housing but left [MIT] the option for commercial," said Davis. The plan to convert the former paint factory into a Facilities garage, she said, did not seem "compatible" with the housing situation in the area.

Davis also noted that the potential Facilities building directly abuts an affordable housing complex now under construction. The complex — "Putnam Green" — will help enclose the old factory on two sides with residential buildings when complete.

Residents also inquired as to the status of smaller California Products buildings across the street from the main site. The Institute currently has no plans for those buildings, but did not rule out the possibility that extra space could be converted for community parking use. The large, MIT-owned lot on Waverly St. will be used for Facilities vehicles parking.

Another resident called the proposed site an "eyesore" and suggested that renovation and landscaping would be an improvement. But another chimed in: "At least it's a quiet eyesore."

MIT currently has no timeframe for the proposal, and will continue to solicit community feedback at follow-up meetings. The Institute invited area residents on a tour of current Facilities buildings, to get a sense of the potential for noise and the type of work that would be done in the building.

Borges to manage Maseeh Hall

As of July 1, Rui Borges is officially the new house manager of Maseeh Hall, MIT's newest undergraduate dorm. For the past 10 years, Borges has served as the house manager of Simmons Hall. In an email to Simmons residents, he said that he will miss everyone at Simmons and is looking forward to the new challenges he will face as manager of Maseeh Hall. Over the next few weeks, he will be working closely with Nika L. Hollingsworth, who was named as his successor as house manager of Simmons Hall. Hollingsworth has spent the past two and a half years as assistant manager of the Warehouse, one of MIT's graduate dormitories. Rounding out the house team at Maseeh will be Suzanne Flynn and Jack Carroll, formerly of the Phoenix Group, who will now be the Housemasters of Maseeh Hall.

—Judy Hsiang

Pixar acquisition boosts research

Lab to host 12-15 researchers

Disney, from Page 1

new lab may also delve into transportation research. Though the lab has very general research goals, specific projects are driven largely by the individual researchers.

Marks is enthusiastic about working with members of the MIT community. According to Marks, MIT Associate Professor Wojciech Matusik PhD '03 is already serving as a consultant for the lab, and Professor Alexander H. Slocum '82 is involved with a project concerning the next-generation stroller — an integral part of the experiences of families with young children that visit Disney Parks. Marks said that the lab will be offering both student internships and opportunities for MIT faculty to collaborate at the lab.

Marks also said that the Cambridge lab will serve as a "nexus for collaboration with other parts of Disney Research." Other Disney Research labs focusing on computer vision and computer graphics could reach the MIT community via the Cambridge lab.

Marks said that Disney's 2006 acquisition of Pixar influenced the decision to reopen a lab in Cambridge. "We started building our research capabilities this time around shortly after the merger of Pixar and Disney. Pixar has always had a strong research organization, and we wanted to expand that approach to research across the whole company." John Breckow, director of communication for Walt Disney Imagineering, said in an email that Disney Research chose to return to Cambridge "because of the great university culture and entrepreneurial spirit in the area." He said that the choice to close the original Cambridge lab "was a business decision."

While the old Cambridge lab tended to be more private, Marks said that the new lab will follow the new Pixar-influenced model of other Disney Research labs. Disney Research is emphasizing an outward focus by collaborating with academia and openly publishing results. One opportunity the company is taking advantage of is the SIGGRAPH 2011 conference, an annual computer graphics summit. Marks said Disney Research will be "the dominant research organization at the conference."

Since the lab is just opening, its staff very small — Breckow said that the lab is aiming to initially employ 12-15 people. Marks said the hope is to hire one or two principal investigators per year and make other hiring decisions based on the needs of the PIs, "on par with small academic departments." The expected composition of the staff allows for extensive interaction with MIT; Breckow said the lab will be "a mixture of full-time researchers, post-docs, student interns, and faculty consultants."

Breckow added that this staff mixture would be similar to the existing Disney Research labs in Pittsburgh and Zurich. Additional Disney Research facilities are located in Salt Lake City and in multiple California locations.

		2008	2009	2010	2011
Bexley Hall	In	23	35	18	34
	Out	1	3	3	4
Baker House	In	40	47	40	15
	Out	15	15	10	14
Random Hall	In	5	7	9	10
	Out	2	1	3	0
East Campus	In	17	22	22	23
	Out	7	7	4	11
McCormick Hall	In	22	23	21	16
	Out	3	15	7	25
Burton Conner	In	16	26	27	35
	Out	21	21	11	14
Senior House	In	4	9	3	4
	Out	4	3	12	4
MacGregor	In	8	10	6	25
	Out	33	29	23	18
Simmons Hall	In	12	25	16	5
	Out	28	43	36	20
New House	In	7	5	2	13
	Out	38	29	21	21
Next House	In	10	9	7	3
	Out	52	62	45	43

NEWS ANALYSIS

Dorm transfers review

Changes in dining dorms not drastic

Next semester marks the first year of MIT's new undergraduate dining plan, requiring students who live in Simmons, McCormick, Baker, Next, and Maseeh Hall to purchase meal plans ranging from \$2,500-\$4,500 per year. Opponents to the plan have suggested that the cost may be prohibitive for some, driving students away from dorms where they otherwise would have liked to live. Here we present a breakdown of requests for transfers to and from every dorm from 2008-2011. Data from prior to 2008 is not available, nor do we yet know how dining plans will affect how freshmen pick dorms. However, with these data we can begin to ask whether dining changes significantly impacted dorm popularity.

First, an important note: These data show requests to move into or out of a dorm in the April housing lottery. They do not reflect the number of people who actually moved.

A useful metric is the "net flux" of requests to enter or leave a dormitory; that is, the number of people who request to enter a dorm minus the number who request to leave. Here, those numbers are plotted as a percentage of a dorm's total capacity (positive numbers reflect more "in" than "out" requests). We have also provided data on the absolute number of people who requested moves.

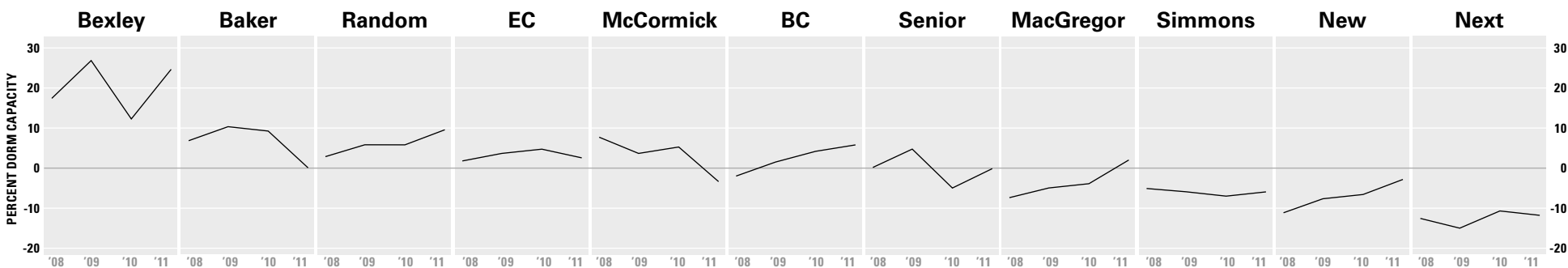
Note that the number of people who request transfers in the April lottery generally constitute a small fraction of a dorm's total population. In most buildings, net in-minus-out fluxes are be-

tween -10 and +10 percent over the past four years, except Bexley. Next House hovers just under -10 percent. Therefore, since 2008, a relatively small number of students request dorm changes, with 2011 being no exception.

Two dorms with dining halls, Simmons and Next, show little change in popularity this year as compared to previous. Baker dropped from around +10 percent net popularity to 0 percent, while McCormick fell from around +6 percent to -4 percent. Maseeh has not been plotted, since this year it transitions from the 50-person Phoenix Group to the 462-bed dormitory, and a separate application process solicited Maseeh applicants earlier in the semester.

With a 4-year history, it cannot be said that changes in transfer requests to and from dining dorms is solely attributable to the implementation of a new dining plan, considering 1) there is probably some normal year-to-year variation that a 4-year window may not capture and 2) two of the four current dining dorms did not show any appreciable change. Even if decreases in the popularity of dining dorms were solely attributable to dining changes, the number of people involved are small percentages of total dorm populations — the reader can decide whether the magnitude of those changes constitute shifts in dorm culture.

Dining opponents also said that dining plans may impact dorm selections among freshmen, which we will not know until the freshmen make their final dorm selections.



INFOGRAPHIC BY CONNOR KIRSCHBAUM

The graphs show the net flux of all requested undergraduate dorm transfers. Net flux is defined as the number of people requesting to move into a dorm minus the number of people requesting to move out of the dorm, normalized by dividing this difference by the capacity of the respective dorm.

Fireworks light up the sky

Over half a million turn out for 235th birthday

Fourth of July, from Page 1

the Charles River. Those seeking the best seats for the spectacle arrived early in the morning, stretching clusters of lawn chairs from the Harvard Bridge all the way to the Hatch Shell, where the 38th Annual Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular would take place later in the day. Other spectators took to the seas, docking their boats around the barge from which the firework show would ignite and release its potential energy into the skies.

Over half a million people turned out for the celebrations, and the concert began at 8:30 p.m. with Keith Lockhart conducting the Boston Pops at the Hatch Shell. Singer Lionel Richie was expected to join the Boston Pops, but he bowed out at the last minute, citing strained vocal chords. Country music star Martina McBride stepped in for Richie and sang her hit songs "Independence Day" and "This One's for the Girls." The audience joined along in song as well, especially during the Pops' rendition of "Bohemian Rhapsody."

Other guest singers who performed that night included Norm Lewis, who sang "Go the Distance" from *Hercules*. Following Lewis, Michael Chiklis, a native of Lowell, Mass., and host of the event, performed "'Til I Come Home." Lockhart, who was wearing a white jacket with a black bow tie and suspenders, charismatically lead the crowd in a patriotic sing-along before the start of Tchaikovsky's classic *1812 Overture*.

Early birds compete for the best spots

Even though people were lined up at the gates to the Oval at 7 a.m. to claim a spot, others who arrived later — provided that they obtained a wristband at the Hatch Shell in the morning — were also able to find a seat, especially if they came alone. Rachel Manke, a native of Connecticut who is interning in the Boston area, said that she had arrived at 8:45 a.m. Despite seeing the show on TV, Manke said that this year was her first time to experience the show live. "[I] wanted to at least do it once," she said.

Manke and other spectators who arrived early staked out spots on the Oval and spent hours together in the sun. Manke noted the "great community spirit" of those who camped out. Strategies for beating the heat varied from person to person. Some opted to buy cold drinks and treats from vendors scattered throughout the Esplanade, while others sought shade under pop-up tents. The Oval itself, directly in front of the Hatch Shell, was covered by a makeshift village of tents and blankets. Event coordinators, citing the large turnout for the rehearsal on July 3, expected the Oval to reach its full seating capacity of 10,000 people.

Manke sat in the Oval to watch the concert, but she didn't have a view of the fireworks due to the surrounding trees. However, Manke didn't mind. She said that she wasn't overly concerned since the concert was "more of a singular experience," while she could see fireworks elsewhere.

Some people, however, prioritized the fireworks show over the

concert, including a group of MIT Class of 2015 students here for Interphase. Seated in the shade along the river, some snacked on popcorn, while others came equipped for the long wait with p-sets and readings for their classes. With a view of the Green building almost directly across the river, they were content to listen to the concert through the loudspeakers that were distributed across the Esplanade.

The fireworks began at around 10:30 p.m. with accompanying music including "Firework" by Katy Perry, "Fireflies" by Owl City, and "Dynamite" by Taio Cruz. Fireworks in the form of green and red smiley faces and green cubes stretched across the night sky. During "Fireflies," a myriad of twinkling lights cascaded over the Charles. There were also shapes for the hungry as colorful sandwiches hung in various positions above the spectators. For the scientifically inclined, a series of what appeared to be atoms with increasing numbers of orbitals flashed across the sky. Red hearts burst and slowly diffused in the sky while the Boston Pops performed "There's a Place for Us" by Carrie Underwood. For the finale, fireworks during "The Star-Spangled Banner" turned the night sky bright with a multitude of red, white, and blue explosions.

As the Fourth of July celebration finally drew to a close, a golden, sparkling canopy spread over the skyline, bringing a magnificent ending to a day of enjoying hot but beautiful weather, spending quality time with family and friends, and celebrating our nation's 235th birthday.

Agarwal officially CSAIL's director

Anant Agarwal, a professor in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, assumed his role as director of CSAIL (Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory) last Friday on July 1. Agarwal will succeed Professor Victor W. Zue '76, who held the directorship for four years. CSAIL is MIT's largest interdisciplinary lab and is home to over 900 undergraduates, graduate students, and researchers.

CSAIL, which is housed in the iconic Frank Gehry-designed Stata Center, has three research focuses: artificial intelligence, systems, and theory. Over 50 research groups and 100 principal investigators from eight different departments are part of CSAIL.

In a letter to all of CSAIL, School of Engineering Dean Ian A. Waitz wrote that he was excited for Agarwal's "vision and enthusiasm as he takes on this important leadership role."

Agarwal currently heads the Carbon Research Group within CSAIL,

which is devoted to creating operating systems and multicore architectures. His recent focus has been Project Angstrom, which is a multidisciplinary effort to develop a computational model for exascale computing and new multicore systems.

In addition to his academic work at MIT, Agarwal is the chief technology officer and cofounder of the Tiler Corporation, a semiconductor company that specializes in processors. The company has created the Tile multicore processor, along with Virtual Machine Works, which brought the VirtualWires project at MIT into the market. Agarwal also assisted with the development of processors such as Raw, Sparcle, and Alewife.

He received his PhD from Stanford and his Bachelor's degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras. In 2005, he published a textbook, *Foundations of Analog and Digital Electronic Circuits*.

—Jessica J. Pourian

Here today, gone tomorrow, those cameras.

Surveillance cameras come and go in Lobby 10, with some frequency, it would seem.

In recent years, a pair of cameras has been installed to provide security for the Martin Luther King exhibit that goes up in Lobby 10 in February — but that didn't happen this year. This year, however, the cameras were installed in April for the MIT 150 Open House.

In a change from the usual policies for cameras installed by the Security and Emergency Management Office, the Lobby 10 cameras were to be used

"to monitor crowd levels during the Open House and will be removed after Commencement," Thomas W. Komola, a manager at SEMO, told *The Tech* in May.

Historically, recorded camera footage was only to be used for criminal investigations, and with the written approval of John DiFava, Chief of Police and Director of Facilities Operations.

Komola said in e-mail yesterday that removing the cameras from Lobby 10 was on SEMO's to-do list, but not a priority. "We will get to it," he said.

—John A. Hawkinson

MOVIE REVIEW

Conversing with the stars

No *Starry Night*, but *Midnight in Paris* is full of nostalgia, nevertheless

By **Derek Chang**
STAFF WRITER

Midnight in Paris is Woody Allen's most recent film. Like many of Allen's past films, *Midnight in Paris* tends towards the more philosophical and the atmospheric. The film heavily references many influential figures in literature and draws a contrast between a

modern-day man unhappy with his current life and the romantic atmosphere of Paris in the Roaring Twenties.

Gil (Owen Wilson) is an accomplished Hollywood screenwriter who is in Paris with his fiancée, Inez (Rachel McAdams). Though successful in the conventional sense, Gil is also putting significant energy into a side project

— writing a book about a “nostalgia shop” that brings people closer to fonder memories from the past. Instead of spending time with Inez and her friends, Gil decides to spend his nights wandering around Paris. When midnight strikes, an old-fashioned car arrives to transport him back in time to a bar in the 1920s. During these midnights, he becomes acquaint-

ed with writers and artists like F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, and Pablo Picasso. It goes without saying that Inez thinks Gil is out of his mind when he tells her about the people he has met.

The movie is unconventional in a few major ways. First, Allen does not follow a standard plot structure. He instead uses the

movie to focus on clashing philosophies and the atmosphere of Paris. Additionally, although the movie is usually classified as a romantic comedy, romance is not really central to the movie; Gil expresses romantic interest in Picasso's mistress Adriana and an antiques dealer named Gabriella, but these experiences are only supplementary to the overall philosophical discussion.

Of the themes that Allen discusses, nostalgia is possibly the most important. Gil is somewhat dissatisfied with his current existence and fantasizes about Parisian life in the 1920s. But the actual 1920s characters he meets instead tell him that life was better during Europe's Belle Epoque of the 1890s. Gil gives his book about a “nostalgia shop” to Gertrude Stein for a read, who gives positive feedback. In contrast, Paul, one of Inez's friends, reacts snobbishly to Gil's book, saying that nostalgia is a tool for people who cannot cope with the present.

Other themes are woven into the film more fluidly and amorously, which gives viewers much room for interpretation. The artists all have vastly different interpretations of what constitutes good self-expression, writing, or painting. In addition, Hemingway provides insight into the meaning and pursuit of courage in a way that reflects his values as a writer.

The philosophical discussions and clever introduction of literary figures and references throughout the film make it highly engrossing. I appreciated the focus of the movie on depicting the contrast between the contemplative, cloudy Paris at day and the lively, clever Paris at night. Allen also succeeds in painting an accurate picture of the Roaring Twenties as a time of optimism and glamour. The personalities of the literary characters in the movie — especially those of Zelda Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway — reflect perfectly what we know of them in real life.

One weakness of the movie was the personalities of the main characters. Instead of creating provoking, “real” people, Allen gives the characters a set of well-defined personality traits that fit certain stereotypes. For instance, Gil is portrayed as an absent-minded, outwardly dreamy, and socially removed man who likes to romanticize. Do people who daydream and idealize always have to have these traits? In contrast, his fiancée is matter-of-fact and always focused on bringing Gil “back to earth.” Characters with more mixed personality traits would be more interesting and reflective of actual people.

Overall, I recommend the film. The plot is not particularly conventional, so people looking for an exciting or compelling story might be disappointed. However, I enjoyed the portrayal of the atmosphere of Paris in the 1920s and the literary connections made throughout the movie. These features work perfectly with the philosophical and social commentary packed in the film.



Owen Wilson and Marion Cotillard: Present and past mix in *Midnight in Paris*.

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NERDY WITH A CHANCE OF RANDOM

Why grades suck

Grades fail their own game

By Amanda Aparacio
STAFF COLUMNIST

"You know what really grinds my gears?" as Peter Griffin of *Family Guy* fame would say. Grades. Grades annoy me more than a textbook that continuously switches between unit systems for no apparent reason. A letter that supposedly reflects the mastery of a subject actually disallows students to learn to their full potential. And the reasons for this endless frustration are as follows:

Confused Intentions

I cannot possibly count the number of times that I have had the privilege of seeing friends post "FINALS — Fudge I Never Actually Learned Stuff" — but with a more colorful vocabulary — on Facebook. Why? Because

If grades didn't exist, then students wouldn't feel the need to learn information just to pass a test.

during the entire semester that my classmates sat in lecture, the information presented found itself in the minds of the students only long enough to do well on midterms; how-

ever, after crossing that bridge, all "useless" knowledge now found itself abandoned. As a result, some of my peers would scurry about to relocate the misplaced information during final examination period.

How is this actually learning? How can students learn anything from such a system? If grades didn't exist, then students wouldn't feel the need to learn information just to pass a test. Rather, they would either learn ... or they wouldn't. Why not let people decide what they want to know and what they don't? There really is no reason to cloud the mind with information that is unnecessary in order to do what one wants to do. Sherlock Holmes never retained the fact that the sun was the center of our solar system, but he never suffered for it. True, he's a fictional character, but, honestly, how would that information help an accountant? Or a businessman?

Under Pressure

When people compete for grades, unity disappears. Instead, grades hinder the advancement of knowledge because students sabotage or refuse to help each other in an effort to boost their grade. Take for example, medical and law students. Whenever these scholars come to mind, the term "cutthroat" pops into my head. Grades encourage students to be self-serving and lone wolves because helping out a fellow student might result in the mentor outscoring the mentee. Nowadays, Harvard Medical School and other such

institutions have implemented a pass/no record system for the first two years, perhaps as a result of the realization that competing for grades just leads to negative consequences.

It will be a rare event indeed when an employee is forbidden to consult with outside sources or their colleagues.

This pressure negatively affects the learning environment. True, not everyone expresses such selfish tendencies, but I believe that the fact that the temptation is even there in the first place demonstrates that grades stink and that learning can be enhanced without them. Even if an unlimited amount of A's can be granted to deserving students, institutions that have class ranks still suffer from this negative competition because helping a peer do well in one class could result in a lower class rank.

The Grade is a Lie

My hands start to sweat, and my heart starts to race. I don't really understand why I'm acting as if a horde of velociraptors has

been set loose upon myself and my unfortunate classmates. It's only a test, right? If I fail, it's no big deal, right? Right? Why haven't I calmed down yet? Crap, I'm going to fail. I'm going to end up working at McDonald's. What will my mom think? Wait, what am I doing again?

Unfortunately, I've become more than acquainted with this line of thinking over my educational career. Whenever I freak out, I tend to score lower on tests than I normally would. Does that mean I don't know the information? Well, in some cases, perhaps; however, normally the test in question will just reflect my ability to stress myself out to the point that I no longer even know what my name is. In essence, poor test takers have a disadvantage to good test takers; therefore, grades do not always accurately reflect the knowledge of a student.

The Solution

Instead of having grades, students should be allowed to do everything in groups — group tests, group quizzes, group homework assignments. And why not? In real life, most jobs require that their employees work well with other people, and it will be a rare event indeed when an employee is forbidden to consult with outside sources or their colleagues.

Until our educational systems reflect reality, I will continue to proclaim that yes, grades suck.

PREFROSH

Settling high school affairs

Leaving a legacy and moving ahead into a new chapter of life

By Jessica Yang
CLASS OF 2015

The hallways of my high school have emptied, the Class of 2011 has graduated, and I have reached the plateau linking a conquered challenge and the beginning of an intimidating journey. But while everything academic from high school has come to a final, satisfying halt, I'm still trying to conclude an equally significant portion of my life for the past four years: extracurriculars. I'm the type of person who can't sit still atop a colossal mound of ideas. I was always going out to organize events, start traditions, and sign up for activities, but now I am struggling to bid my favorite things farewell.

Saying goodbye — one by one — to everything I have grown so comfortably fond of feels really strange. First was soccer: I love sports, and while I am not inherently gifted, I have been playing with the same team for the past seven seasons. We can all relate to doing the same thing with the same group of awesome people three times a week for the past three and a half years. I have a room full of pictures and mementos and a mind full of inside jokes and memories. My ankle still hurts from that one slide tackle. But we had a pool party last week, and the realiza-

tion that we would probably never again play together finally sunk in. I would have cried, but I was eating ice cream.

I'm feeling apprehensive thinking about having to leave my year-long internship at the National Institutes of Health, even though summer is just beginning. Even when I'm sitting at home on my days off, I can almost see the over-cluttered shelves, hear the biofreezers buzzing, and smell the damp hint of the cell culture media. There's half a mini-fridge of my samples and reagents that the next intern will have to figure out. I love my binder of protocols, and I wish I could take my original lab notebook with me. Optimistically speaking, I've still got six weeks left and could probably find a similar niche at MIT if I chose to.

Saying goodbye — one by one — to everything I have grown so comfortably fond of feels really strange.

During Campus Preview Weekend, I stopped to rest at a bookstore and looked at

an assortment of college transition books. *The Naked Roommate* dictated odd, unexpected wisdoms, such as how one should act upon encountering a naked roommate. Other, more mainstream books talked about the increased pressures of college and the danger of trying to do everything. I suddenly remembered the alumni visitations at our high school, when we found that there was just something very different about the immature, naive high school seniors that had left in recent years — they brought back an ominous aura of weary sophistication. With unspoken words they seemed to carry the message that everything from high school changes in college.

My most significant challenge is actually figuring out the future of a company I founded as a high school junior to bring science education opportunities to elementary school students — Kids Are Scientists Too, Inc. (KAST). Created from just an idea, we became an entire organization of passionate high school students working toward STEM education. It is a significant part of who I am. Through KAST I learned about networking, professionalism, entrepreneurship, philanthropy, and the indescribable meaning of true leadership; the people I worked with have also become some of my closest friends. When it came time to write college

essays, nothing else could come close as a testament to where in life I was and how I got there. As the dawn of life at MIT approaches, a question I still cannot answer is whether I have to leave all of this behind.

As the dawn of life at MIT approaches, a question I still cannot answer is whether I have to leave all of this behind.

From my experiences, I believe that regardless of how long we've known somebody, or how much we stay involved, or what kind of work we've done, our impact will remain forever. The things we have done will have chain reactions, spreading to affect more people and do more good for the world. Some of the people I trained will set new directions, the ideas I left behind will become major projects, and the work I started will be continued and finished. For now, I have big plans for KAST, but I'm also ready to move on.

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