Richardson: Admissions seeks variety

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Richardson cited the 65th Ellen Swallow Richards awards which the Admissions Office made, on its own initiative, to high schools around the country, in recognition of their efforts in the professional training of women. He also mentioned two conferences on women that have been held at MIT, and successful news office efforts to get publicity for the booklet.

When asked if the Admissions Office would now take up the task of recruiting women, he replied, "It is not a question of somebody taking something up now, it is a question of following through.

A lot of people at the Institute have worked very hard to recruit women," Richardson said. "People in the news office, in my office, we've had support from the second floor, the upper levels of the administration. We have had a lot of help from students. A lot of people have been working on the problem."

Richardson was not willing to give all the credit for the rise in applications to the efforts of the Institute, preferring instead to credit societal forces. The national psyche is such that we picked a good time to do these things. The whole issue of women as professionals has come under considerable discussion, and it is beginning to be discussed in the high schools. Our timing is good; we can't take credit for that.

Part of the uncertainty as to how many women there will be in the class of 1978 stems from the differences between this year's pool of female applicants and those who applied in years past, Richardson believes. "We have stimulated applications from a group of people which is not identical to the group that applied last year," he said. "This year's have been stimulated, enticed if you will by our activities. The real question is will that interest be sustained as they learn more about us."

Richardson says that, in spite of the increase in the number of preliminary applications from women, the "sex-blind" admissions policy of the last few years will continue. "The only pressure I have felt at this point, is the pressure of people asking what will happen next. No one in the administration or the faculty has suggested that we change our policy of last year or the year before. We are trying to make sure that the quality of our decisions is the very best it can be."

Admissions report examines applicant perceptions of MIT

(Continued from page 11)

Deon't et it happen again!

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This would seem to indicate that our select audience - our final applicants - know about humanities programs and athletics, but that the general public needs more information on them," Hecht said.

"Getting the truth out."

"We want to get the truth out about MIT, and compare it with the perceptions that the general public and our applicants hold about us," Hecht said. The purpose of the report, he continued, "is to get this data and see how well we're getting your message across."

"We've found some very supportive data in some areas," Hecht added, "but this points up the areas where our communication is working well."

One problem of communication that the Institute has yet to overcome, according to Hecht, is in the area of oddity. "We still aren't perceived as a place where women can come and study and not feel out of place," he said.

Influence of the report

Hecht pointed out what he felt were the main implications of the study:

1. There is a broad pool of highly-qualified applicants available that MIT is not teaching. We could be tapping a bigger market than we are now," Hecht said, "if more people were aware of what the Institute is really like.

2. MIT people are interested in pushing science and technology - not in an over-kill way, like after Spantnik, Hecht said, "but as important and useful careers."

3. MIT students are very valuable information sources on students that are considering college. "You can have a significant impact, either by getting or by failing to act."

4. Visits to M.I.T., enhanced by favorable encounters with students here, are terribly important in attracting students to the Institute."

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