

Alumni to help students with 3-pronged program

By Margot Tsakonas

In an effort to encourage and develop direct interaction between MIT alumni and students, the Alumni Association is stepping up a three-pronged program of student-alumni projects.

The program, conceived over a year ago at an Alumni Officers' Conference, is directed by the Committee to Strengthen Alumni Relations. In conjunction with the Admissions Office and Student Employment, the committee will conduct career seminars, provide summer jobs, and pair freshmen with sponsoring alumni families.

Claude Brenner '47, volunteer chairman of the program, assessed its motivation as an opportunity for "alumni to serve the Institute". The committee has two interests, said Brenner, "one concerned with academic activities, relating to the teaching process, the other to contribute to improve the quality of life for students."

Brenner concisely defined the philosophy of the alumni. "Tech is Hell" is still the motto. One aspect should well include alumni making available their life experience to help them [students] over some of the rough spots."

The career orientation seminars will be sponsored and conducted by alumni, drawing professionals from a variety of fields to informally discuss career opportunities, trends, and realities with students. The seminars will be geared toward upperclassmen, but, as need dictates, their focus can be modified. Unfortunately, this segment is temporarily without its chairman who resigned a week ago due to his own career demands.

The summer employment program, directed by Charles Hieken '51, is actually one example of a national effort by the Alumni Association "to secure jobs for graduates during the summer," said Hieken. Metropolitan Boston has the greatest number [11,000] of alumni and students, so the focus will be local. However, Hieken added, "we hope to have clubs participate" nationally so that students can find jobs in their home states as well. The positions themselves will be available from a variety of sources, including "those companies with which alumni are associated." "Frankly," admitted Hieken, "I don't care where the jobs come from, and I don't think the students do either."

Nelson Armstrong, Director of Student Employment, agreed. "We are just trying to get in touch with as many club presidents as we can. We've got to let them know that students need to earn money." Currently, there are several drafts of a cover letter that will be sent to alumni club presidents around the country. The letter states that MIT expects entering freshmen to earn \$700 during the summer, sophomores, \$900; juniors \$1000; and seniors, \$1100.

"MIT students are indeed well-trained and highly motivated," the letter continues, "making them excellent candidates for summer employment." Another draft notes, "Experience is helpful, but money is crucial."

The Southern California Club has been the most active to date, as evidenced by the eleven positions currently offered in the Student Employment Office through the club.

Hieken emphasized that alumni were definitely interested in hiring students, not only for the summers, but also for part-time work during the term and, potentially, as permanent employees as well. He cited one instance of an alumnus in Cambridge who had hired students and was "very

pleased with the results." "What I'm presently trying to do," Hieken explained, "is to find a responsible person to work in the Boston area to be a chairperson for developing the program."

Hieken said that the Denver Alumni Club's recent efforts exemplified the success of the program.

Last September, during the Alumni Officers Conference, the president of that club met in Boston with students from Colorado and collected resumes which he subsequently sent with a personal letter to "key people in industry" in Colorado. The results were 25 arranged interviews for positions this summer, and several hirings as of this date. Hieken optimistically concluded, "the program has got to succeed."

The third branch of the program is patterned after the family-sponsor program currently available to foreign students. Any freshman could have an alumni (Please turn to page 6)



Gordon Hall

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