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 has stepped 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 from MIT.

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

Brenner concisely defined the philosophy of the alumni: "Tech is self 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 in chairman who resigned a week ago due to his own career demands.

The summer employment program, directed by Charles Hieken '65, 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 care where the jobs come from."

Hieken emphasized that alumni are "the people with sponsoring alumni industry," in Colorado. The response was 25 arranged interviews for positions this summer and, several hirings as of this date. Hieken optimistically concluded, "the program has gone very well and I consider it a success."

The third branch of the program is patterned after the family-sponsor program currently available to foreign students. Any freshman could have an alumni "parent to mentor." "The letter continues, "making available their life experiences to help them (students) over some of the rough spots.""