Aspin to Speak at Graduation

By Sabrina Karan
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

U.S. Representative and Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Les Aspin ’66 has been chosen as the keynote speaker for commencement on June 1.

President Charles M. Vest, who selected the speaker from a three-page list presented to him by the Commencement Committee, said that Aspin has "a unique perspective on important issues of our time, particularly those involved in our shifting national priorities as defense needs subject to changing conditions and civil and military issues come to the forefront.

Pro-rector Mark S. Wrighton and Dean for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs Arthur C. Smith were unavailable for comment.

Director of Special Events Mary L. Morrissey, who led the Commencement Committee, was pleased with Vest’s selection. "I always feel surprised, and pleasantly so, in who is picked as the final choice," she said. She declined to name the other potential speakers on the list given to Vest, but did comment that the president "generally does stick to the list presented" in this decision.

Aspin graduated summa cum laude from Yale University in 1969 with a bachelor’s degree in history. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, England, receiving his master’s degree for a combined major in economics, politics, and philosophy. He received his PhD in economics from MIT in 1966. Aspin has been described as "one of the truly important legislators on Capitol Hill" by the Alemanac of American Politics.

Student opinion mixed

"I think he’s an excellent choice," said Aileen W. Lee ’92, class president and an officer of the student body. Aspin, president of the Commencement Committee, "has heard from several different sources that he is an excellent speaker … He has his finger on the pulse of what’s going on in Washington. He knows about the economic climate that the members of our class will face, especially about what the defense situation will be like," she said.

Graduate Student Council President Furio Ciacci was also happy with Vest’s decision. "I, for my own benefit, laid out options I thought the speaker should have, and this person has nearly everything. In that respect, I think he’s ideal and am quite satisfied with the choice." Ciacci continued, saying that since Aspin studied and spent time at MIT, students will be able to "relate better" to his speech. "He’s familiar with the experience of the student body at MIT, students will be able to relate better to his speech."

Bansal, Kessler Elected UAP/VP in Close Vote

By Reuben M. Lerner
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Shalby Bansal ’93 and David J. Kessler ’94 narrowly beat three opposing teams to win this year’s Undergraduate Association election, according to unofficial results released last night by the UA election commission.

The results will be formally recognized at Wednesday night’s UA Council meeting.

The Bansal-Kessler team captured just over 26 percent of the 1213 first-choice votes, only 10 more than the second-place team of Karl-Teh S. Chan and Prithvi Vyasprakash ’94, who received 258 votes.

Stephen A. Rinehart ’93 and Jeremy H. Brown ’94, who campaigned on platforms of apathy, came in a close third with 304 first-place votes, or 25 percent. The fourth-place team of Emily R. Prieter ’93 and Anne S. Tsao ’94 received 253 first-choice votes, about 23 percent.

Only 30 percent of students eligible to vote did so, according to Rajaish A. Chaitley ’93, UA election commissioner.

This year’s election was one of the closest and most complicated in many years, in part due to the March 11 theft of a ballot box from Lobby 7. A group calling itself the "Student’s Revolutionary Government" said the theft was only the beginning of a popular campaign to overthrow the UA.

The sense that students had in Lobby 7 on March 11 were allowed to cast their ballots again two days later.

About 500 of the nearly 700 students who voted in the original election cast their ballots a second time on Friday.

Excited about possibilities

Bansal, interviewed in the UA president’s office last night, said he is "very excited" about the upcoming year, but was not sure what she will do first when she becomes MIT’s president. Kessler, who was "absolutely shocked" when he first heard the election results, said there were a number of ideas that he wanted to act on immediately.

The possibility of turning the Butterman-Conner House dining room into a "language lab" for people on the campus.

"It was a really good race — in general, not a bitter race at all," Kessler said, adding that "I’m very impressed with the race that was won."

While Bansal would not speculate on why she won the election, Kessler attributed their success to the fact that they spent time with students, asking for ways in which the UA could improve their lives. One of the most important issues among independent living group members, Kessler said, was the fact that sidewalks on the Harvard Bridge are rarely plowed when it snows.

Kessler also mentioned the possibility of unlocking women’s bathrooms first raised by Bansal and Brown at a debate on March 1.

Imposter Robbed Aphi; Arrested Later at URI

By Brian Rosenberg
COLUMN OF THE MONTH

A woman posing as an Alpha Phi alumna forged a check and used the credit cards of several members of MIT’s Alpha Phi chapter. The crimes took place before spring break, when the woman, using the name Tracy Lynn Ryder, stayed six nights at the Alpha Phi house in Kenmore Square.

Lisa Sergeant, a Canadian woman, was arrested and charged with larceny last week by University of Rhode Island police who had received similar reports in April.

Sargent has also said her father is the U.S. Ambassador to Japan. At different times, she said she had just had her purse stolen and had no money or identification, or that she had been abused by her boyfriend.

Alpha Phi President Susan K. Scraggs ’93 said Sargent slept in her room. She said someone in her sister’s house became suspicious of Sargent when

McGill University in Canada. She has also said her father is the U.S. ambassador to Japan. At different times, she said she had just had her purse stolen and had no money or identification, or that she had been abused by her boyfriend.

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2090 Admitted to Class of 1996

By Eva May
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The statistical profile of the newly admitted class of 1996 is similar to those of previous years, with academic scores and racial and gender distributions falling within normal fluctuations, according to Associate Director of Admissions Elizabeth S. Johnson.

Most students were admitted this year — 2090 of 6671 applicants, compared to 2099 last year. This large increase was made possible because of an apparent rise in housing vacancies, which leaves more room for freshmen. Another 579 applicants are on the wait list. Between one and 130 students have been admitted from the wait list in the past five years.

Fifty percent of the admitted students with high school class rankings are first in their class. Nearly 80 percent are ranked within the top five percent average, and 97 percent are within the top 10 percent. Seventy-seven percent of the applicant pool had class rankings.

The average Scholastic Aptitude Test math score of admitted students is 742 out of 800, and 54 percent scored above 700. The average SAT verbal score is 646 out of 800. Those averages are based on 2050 admitted students. Scores for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) are not included, although they are considered in the admissions process.

For admissions officer who took the American College Test, the average for the math components is 33 out of 36; the average for the verbal components is 30 out of 36.

The average score for the Math Level I and Math Level II Achievement tests is 750 out of 800. The average score for the science Achievement tests, including Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, is 660. The average score for humanities Achievement tests, including English, American History, and European History, is 647.

Johnson said there are "minor fluctuations" from recent years’ test averages. "They don’t change enough for us to worry about them," she added.

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