Faculty Minority Recruiting Produces Limited Successes

By Karen Kaplan

MIT News Office

After one year of recruiting efforts to increase the number of women and minorities on the faculty here, there have been mixed results and limited success. MIT officials acknowledge that more aggressive work is needed to diversify the faculty.

"We're doing very well with attracting women, not as well as I would like, but there has been some success. For minority faculty, I would say we're not doing as well."

said Provost Mark S. Wrighton, who last year initiated programs to encourage each department to recruit more women and minorities to its faculty.

A year later, the numbers tell the story plainly. Of the 116 senior faculty members hired at MIT during the year that ended June 30, nine are men and one is a woman. One of them is an African-American. These figures include both professors and associate professors.

At the assistant professor level, 48 were hired during the same period.

Fourteen of them are women, one is black, two are Hispanic-American, and five are Asian-Americans.

"I'd like to say there's more that can be done," said Wrighton. He warned that if hiring trends do not improve, "we won't be any better off by the end of the decade than we are right now with respect to diversity.

However, a closer look at each stage of the hiring process reveals.

Course VI Chooses 60 Seniors For 5-Year Masters Program

By Eric Richard

MIT News Office

Of the 106 seniors who applied to the new Electrical Engineering and Computer Science 5-year Masters of Engineering program, approximately 60 were accepted and 50 were placed on the waiting list, said Campbell L. Searle '85, chairman of the ECECS committee on graduate admissions.

A vote on final approval for the MEng program will be held at the faculty meeting this December.

Unveiled in April, the program will eventually replace the bachelor's degree as the primary professional degree offered by the ECECS department. According to the proposal, all students in good academic standing will be automatically accepted into the MEng program.

"This program will represent a major change in the way that the Institute does business," Searle said.

"Most of our students will go on to the fifth year."

In mid-September, Searle met with seniors to introduce the program and stimulate the application process. He said that these students had to be informed of a decision as soon as possible since their acceptance into the program would determine whether they would have to write a senior thesis or a masters thesis next year.

Searle said that 106 was an unexpectedly large number of applicants.

Housing Group Regained Under New Leadership

By Nicole A. Sherry

MIT News Office

After two years of little activity, the MIT Chapter of Habitat for Humanity was revived last spring by Odysseas D. Kostas '95 and Adam P. London '95, its current co-presidents.

The group is affiliated with the worldwide Habitat for Humanity organization. The purpose of this group is to provide affordable housing for needy families. The Boston chapter obtains land, often by donation, and labor of its volunteers and donated or purchased materials.

These homes are then sold to families, chosen by a selection committee, which makes judgments primarily on relative financial need. The families are given a 20-year no-interest loan and must contribute "sweat equity," which consists of donated labor toward the construction of theirs and others' houses, London said.

"The families end up paying about the same amount each month as they would otherwise pay for rent and they get a house out of it," London said.

Over 100 on mailing list

This fall, the MIT chapter had a large turnout at the Activities Midway and currently has over 100 people on its mailing list, London said. The group's leaders have been encouraged by the amount of interest and are working to find projects to work on.

The group has had four events this year. On three Saturdays, 10 to 15 people helped construct a four-family house on West Cottage Street in Roxbury, a project currently being undertaken by the Boston Chapter.

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High School Students Present Film about Violence

By Brian Rosenberg

MIT News Office

Nearly 200 people crowded into 5-150 last night to watch a special screening of You're a Young Girl, a 27-minute documentary on violence produced by 12 freshmen at the Boston Latin School.

The video was organized into five sections, each dealing with a different aspect of violence. The segments explored racial violence, war, rape, police brutality, and the effects of growing up with violence.

The MIT Center for Advanced Engineering Studies donated the use of 9-130 for the screening. MIT also assisted the project through donations of studio time and various technical services. "MIT very generously donated time to transfer the film to wider videotape, as well as studio time," said Sarah Frishhorn, who acted as the film's producer. MIT also offered the group the internal rate for post-production services, according to Cindy E. Tronick, a freelance video specialist who works at CAES.

The project grew out of an assignment Frishhorn gave to the students last year, when she was a student teacher at Boston Latin. She asked each of them to write a short paper on the causes and effects of violence. She then asked a few of the students if they were interested in putting together a video on some of the same topics.

The group began planning the project in April and spent most of this summer filming. Frishhorn said. The students learned to operate video equipment and assisted in the editing and post-production, she added.

In making the film, the students interviewed two Boston police officers, a Vietnamese refugee, two Yemeni veterans, and a variety of local children, including a 12-year-old girl who had been raped by a 14-year-old boy.

All the youths involved said the experience was a valuable one and that they were interested in similar projects in the future. Shira Kaid, who worked on the police brutality segment, said he learned that police brutality is a topic.

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

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