MIT Honors King at Birthday Celebration

By Kevin S. Subramaniam

William H. Gray III, president of the United Negro College Fund and the first black whip of the U.S. House of Representatives, addressed about 1,500 people in Kresge Auditorium on Friday, Jan. 15 as part of MIT’s celebration of the 64th birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The theme for the Institute’s 19th annual celebration of King’s birthday was “Where do we go from here? Chaos or Community?” the title of King’s last book.

The day’s events began at 11:45 a.m. with a four- abreast symbolic march across Massachusetts Avenue to Kresge.

After being introduced by MIT President Charles M. Vest, Gray reminded members of the MIT community of King’s symbolic nonviolent revolution, which brought an end to segregation and changed this nation forever. He said that even after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to relinquish her seat to a white man, King became involved to desegregate. Gray added that before King became involved in the civil rights movement, blacks could not ride on buses, vote, or go to college. It was King’s non-violent revolution, Gray noted, that made it possible for blacks to have these rights. Though blacks in America have “come a long way,” Gray said there is still chaos, bigotry, and hatred in America that has to be dealt with.

As president of the United Negro College Fund, Gray works to provide African-Americans with an excellent preparation in every possible field of education, and he spoke on the importance of education. “Keep a sense of tolerance, sensitivity, and brotherhood to overcome prejudice of all kinds and fears, ” Gray said.

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3 Dorms May Get Card-Key System

By Ryon Soo Kim

Magnetic card-key readers will be placed on the main entrances of MacGregor House, Next House, and possibly Baker House by the first week of February as a preliminary experiment, according to Lawrence E. Magazine, director of housing and food services.

“It’s going to begin as a tentative experiment within three works. We will begin to win and put them into use on the doors. We will probably keep the key system too, for a while,” Magazine said.

The card-key readers will initially be placed on the exterior doors of each of the houses. Currently, residents access MacGregor’s nine outside entry doors with a metal key. Similarly, at both Next and Baker Houses, residents open the main entrance with a metal door key.

The card-key system will replace keys. The card-system will enhance security in the dorms significantly,“ Magazine said.

The card-key system will begin to wire and put card-key readers on the doors. We will probably keep the key system too, for a while,” Magazine said.

According to Magazine, the card-key system will enhance security in the dormitories. “Eventually the card system will replace keys. The goal is to provide better security. Keys tend to duplicate themselves, but it’s a little harder to duplicate cards,” Magazine said. “It’s a timely thing to do. Other schools are doing it. It will upgrade security.”

Magazine estimated that it would cost $140,000 per house to add card-key readers and change the locks on perimeter doors.

He also said that the new equipment would not eliminate the need for desk workers. “In fact, he said, they will become even more necessary to work these ideas out with the residents,” Magazine said.

Institute Faces Belt-Tightening

By Jeremy Hylton

Faced with the prospect of a $20 million gap in the Institute’s operating budget by fiscal year 1996, President Charles M. Vest and Provost Mark S. Wrighton have initiated efforts to cut costs throughout the Institute and find new sources of revenue.

In a Jan. 8 letter to the MIT community, Vest described the budget gap as “a serious problem regarding MIT’s finances... one that is growing rapidly.”

Wrighton detailed the current status of MIT’s financial and efforts to improve them in an article in Tuesday’s Faculty Newsletter.

“MIT’s underlying financial health is good, but we do face some problems,” he wrote.

Both Vest and Wrighton were unavailable for comment this week.

MIT has spent more than $50 million in unrestricted gifts to meet budget deficits over the last four years; in the past, these gifts have been added to the endowment.

Expenditures should continue to outpace revenues next year, according to Wrighton, resulting in a $16 million gap.

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