MIT's Oldest and Largest Newspaper

Established 1861

Volume 114, Number 17 Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Friday, April 1, 1994

The Weather
Today: Increasing clouds, 54°F (12°C)
Tonight: Mostly cloudy, MIT (5° C)
Tomorrow: Sprinkles, 49°F (7°C)

Details, Page 2

MIT and Amgen Ink 10-Year Pact
By Sarah Y. Keightley

On Tuesday, the Institute and Amgen, a biotechnology company, announced their agreement for a decade-long partnership.

Amgen will fund research efforts at MIT for a year for 10 years — in exchange for some patent and technology licensing rights on this research, according to a press release. The company will use the research results to develop and manufacture pharmaceutical products.

Both sides are pleased with the collaborative arrangement.

“This agreement with Amgen represents an essential element in the kind of future I see for MIT — a synergy of basic research efforts at universities and long-term commitments by industry,” said President Charles M. Vest in the press release.

“We are enthusiastic about this promising collaboration, which could serve as a model for industry-academia partnerships,” said Gordon Binder, Amgen’s chairman and chief executive officer, in the press release.

Agreement is ‘a definite plus’
Director of the Center for Cancer Research Richard O. Hynes PhD ‘71 said that the collaborative effort is similar to others that have been made between university scientists and corporations. “Faculty talk to companies all the time,” he said.

Still, this agreement is unique because it is department-wide, and the donation is quite large, Hynes said.

“It is a good thing — a definite plus,” Hynes said. “We’ll see more arrangements like this...”

Scientists can make discoveries, but “we can’t develop them to a point” where the public can use them, Hynes said. This is where the pharmaceutical companies can take the idea and develop it, he said.

The partnership between academia and industry “is beneficial to both sides and the public in that it leads to increased transfer of technology to the public,” Hynes said.

Terms of the agreement
In the agreement, Amgen will donate $5 million a year for up to 10 years. MIT researchers who are affiliated with the SCC can initiate their own projects and publish articles on their work, though Amgen will have the rights to the technology licensing rights to the research.

“MIT and Amgen will jointly hold patents that are the result of joint effort,” said Provost Mark S. Wrighton.

Moreover, Amgen scientists can come to MIT as visiting scientists.

To determine which projects will...

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Students Approve of New UROP Guidelines
By Ramy Amnaou and Eva Moy

Many students are appreciative of the three-week acceptance period — April 1 — for summer Undersgraduate Research Opportunities Program proposals.

With this change, “there is no advantage to getting your proposal done early” — that’s what we’re trying to eliminate,” said UROP Director Nomin McGavern.

The window of opportunity for submitting applications before funding will turn at last term was about 24 hours, she said.

In addition, summer proposals requesting the waiver of overhead and employee benefits in June will be accepted from April 1 to May 31.

“The three-week period [for submission] gives students more time to think for a UROP that’s original” and these original projects “are what will get funding,” said Eric Fong ‘95.

Sometimes it takes a long time to finish a proposal which requires B. Davidow’s ‘94. The time it takes to complete a project from turning in a complete, finished proposal, he said.

Overall, people who did good

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By Sarah Y. Keightley and Eva Moy

This year’s Spring Concert on April 23 will feature Belly with Cold Water Flat as the opening act.

A contract with the band has already been made, according to Student Center Committee Spring Concert coordinator. The Spring Concert is the highlight of the annual Spring Weekend, which includes several activities for students.

Belly won this year’s Grammy awards for best act and best new artist, according to co-coordinator Jonathan A. Allen ‘96, Incidentally, lead singer Tanya Donelly was previously the bassist for the Boston-based band, Throwing Muses, he added.

Cold Water Flat is in alternative rock groups, they’re smaller, but they’re good,” Weldon said.

The SCC considered more popular groups such as Nine Inch Nails and Pearl Jam, but they either became unavailable or were not on SCC’s budget, Allen said. Pearl Jam, which would have cost $100,000, was about $100,000 out of range, he said.

Instead, SCC concentrated on bands they could afford — and would have reasonable ticket prices for the MIT community — as well as ones which people would recognize by name, Allen said.

At $10,000, Belly fell within the usual price range for Spring Concert bands and even included their own opening act.

For MIT students and the MCC, tickets will be $10 in advance and $12 at the door. For non-MIT students, tickets will be $12 in advance and $14 at the door.

Allen said, “we would be really pleased to attend a free concert in the year’s concert, featuring Thryd Thursday, hosted a crowd of about 2,300, he added.

“I think a lot of people here like pop music and would come to see them,” Weldon said.

“We’re pretty psyched,” said Weldon.

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Dean’s Office to Survey Seniors
By Jeremy Hylton

The Undergraduate Academic Affairs office will distribute a survey to seniors next week asking them to comment on their experiences at MIT, ranging from their impressions of student life to satisfaction with their majors.

“We’re looking at and for people to finish off their experience by leaving something behind — a message that others can use to change, improve, build on, innovate,” explained Norma G. McGavern, director of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

The 10-page survey is MIT’s first attempt to collect feedback from every member of a graduating class. “There are all kinds of ways that MIT gets input about the process ... but there’s never been a comprehensive survey,” said Travis R. Meier, dean for undergraduate academic affairs.

In addition, seniors are asked dozens of very specific questions, and the answers will be used to answer those questions to consider specific changes. “We’ll do our very best to make sure that the places they’ve commented about will use this information to fix, change, add to, or not to change, according to comments they hear,” Merritt said.

“We want this to be very pragmatic,” the survey’s results will be provided to academic departments, institute committees, and administrative offices. “We will also provide an Institute-wide summary of the complete survey data.

The survey will be distributed by the Women’s Independent Living Center during Spring Weekend and is expected to be completed later this year.

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Belly to Perform at Spring Weekend Concert
By Sarah Y. Keightley and Eva Moy

The new biology building nears completion. Construction began in the fall of 1993 and is expected to be completed later this year.

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Spring Ahead!

Daylight saving time begins Sunday at 2 a.m. Don’t forget to set your clocks one hour ahead. You go to bed Saturday night.