GE Renews Research Grants to Women, Minorities

By Rachel Yudovich

The General Electric Foundation has recently renewed a three-year, $130,000 grant to the School of Engineering to encourage women and underrepresented minorities to pursue careers in academia.

Funds are distributed between qualified students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as to the GE Foundation Faculty for the Future program. On the undergraduate level, 50 percent of the money will be allocated for the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program each year. On the graduate level, there will be two main categories of allocation. About one-third of the total grant is being allocated to fund one or more outstanding women or underrepresented minority graduate students interested in pursuing an academic career. The grant is supposed to supplement, not replace other forms of graduate student support. A small part of the GE grant will fund two or three outstanding students in the case that other more meaningful support cannot be found.

The final portion of the grant will be used to fund what the GE foundation calls Junior Faculty Coupons. GE defines underrepresented minorities as Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, African-Americans, and Native Americans. UROP support for minorities

Money will be allocated for UROPs with the thought that if students become involved with research at an early stage, they may be encouraged to go on to graduate school and become professors, according to the grant proposal.

The UROP office is not in the practice of recruiting students. Women and underrepresented minorities are not singled out for possible positions, said UROP Coordinator Debbie H. Shang. Instead, students are simply encouraged to approach faculty supervisors to discuss possible projects. Money from the GE grant will be specifically allocated to underrepresented minorities, and to a lesser extent, to women, Shang said.

These funds will be publicized to the proper audience through the UROP Office itself and possibly in the Office of Minority Education newsletter. To receive funds from the GE grant, no special application is required.

Junior Faculty Coupons

In only three years, the GE Foundation's Faculty for the Future program has shown promise in increasing the number of women and underrepresented minorities in graduate school who wish to pursue academic careers, according to the grant proposal.

Since July 1, the grant has been supporting two extensions of the Faculty for the Future Program – GE fellowships and the new Junior Faculty Coupons. The funds are being used to support students who are going to Associate Dean of the School of Engineering John B. Vander Sande in a letter to the engineering faculty.

Faculty members are encouraged to nominate one or more students for the GE fellowships, Vander Sande wrote in his letter. The Junior Faculty Coupon program awards $15,000 to an underrepresented minority or woman student as he or she embarks on an academic career. Money will be awarded when the recipient of the award is appointed to the faculty of a U.S. college or university, and these funds are to be used for start up costs. Engineering faculty members will also nominate students for the coupon program.

MIT’s School of engineering currently has 25 women on its faculty, out of a total of 355 faculty members. At this time there are no other major schools with a significantly higher percentage of women faculty.

There are nine underrepresented minority faculty members. In the 1993-94 school year, 15 offers for faculty positions were made: 10 to white or Asian males, two to black males, two to white females, and one to a Puerto Rican male.

MIT Card Services Are Test for Future

Card, from Page 10

sion Services databases," he said. The MIT Card Office ran into a minor problem while preparing the new cards this year. Several hundred electronically-stored pictures were lost in the transfer from the Graphic Arts Service, where they were stored, Lew said.

Most of the pictures lost were about five or six years old, Lew said. But most of those people have had more recent pictures taken, he said.

The missing pictures should not have an effect on the distribution of the new cards, Lew said. Anyone who does not receive a card should come to the MIT Card Office at e-k745, he said.

Students have mixed reaction

Student opinion regarding the new ID cards is mixed, but the general feeling is one of anxiety.

"If it works ideally then it's a good idea, but I'm not very clear on the issue," said Michael C. Yang '96.

"They have to make sure that the services they are adding don't cause other problems," said Robert R. Jansen '97, echoing this sentiment.

Other students addressed their concerns about possible consequences of the new system.

"If there is no resistance is converted to card readers, we would not be able to use the convenient parking lots when they aren't being used, like during the evenings and on weekends. It would be a hassle to have to park in my assigned lot during those times," said Theodore M. Walig '97.

"It's a kind of a hassle to keep changing those cards, but it doesn't make me feel like a different person," said Mark S. Lohmeyer '95.

A few students expressed more vehement opinions. "The new card is a waste of plastic, I really don't know what the purpose is in re-issuing cards," said Christopher B. Gould '95.

Part-Time Job Opportunity

$12/HOUR

Student Phonathon Supervisors Needed

Will manage student fundraisers to contact the constituents of MIT by telephone to solicit funds on behalf of the MIT Alumni Fund. Responsible for supervising students on a nightly basis and for maintaining an adequate number of trained callers performing at levels in accordance with nightly calling objectives. Responsible for monitoring calling sessions for the project, coaching callers, and assisting in development of related statistical work and training materials.

Recommended Qualifications:

- Supervisory experience.
- Demonstrated problem-solving abilities.
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills.
- Strong quantitative skills.
- Familiarity with computerized databases.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Flexibility in working hours.
- Ability to organize and prioritize work.
- Ability to manage and motivate employees performing result-oriented tasks with standardized goals.

A team of two to three supervisors will be hired and will have the responsibility for covering all student calling shifts throughout this project. Calling shifts will be held on Sunday from 3-5pm and on Monday-Thurdays from 6-10pm. Supervisors will be expected to arrive 30 minutes prior to each calling shift to set up for the nightly calling session and will be expected to stay 30 minutes after calling to complete nightly reports. Successful candidates will be required to have a minimum of a 2.0 GPA and should possess a good speaking voice. The work is done primarily in the evening and weekends and demands a flexible approach, common to goal-oriented managers.

Qualified candidates:

- Leave message for Marilyn Silverstein at 252-1668

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