New Campus Dining Website

By Anne Yu, Dining

MIT Campus Dining has a new look. After nearly eight years, the old Dining website has been retired. A new website with improved search capabilities and a new layout was launched on August 17.

Site visitors can view menus of their favorite campus restaurants, or search for food based on where they are on campus, what type of food they are interested in eating and the day of the week. Karen Nilsson, Senior Associate Dean for Residential Life, hopes the new search function will encourage people dining on campus to try different restaurants and cafés.

“It is easy to find a favorite place and go there over and over again,” Nilsson said. “But we have so many different cuisines on campus, we hope the site will help diners find new places to eat based on what they’re in the mood for on a given day.”

Along with the introduction of the website, Campus Dining has also started using the popular social networking website Twitter. Dining is joining the growing ranks of MIT Offices who are “twittering” news and information to the campus. Follow Campus Dining updates on Twitter at twitter.com/mitcampusdining.

Comments and feedback are always welcome; use the feedback tools on the Dining site or email foodstuff@mit.edu to contact Campus Dining.

To view the new Dining website, visit http://dining.mit.edu.
Congratulations to the 2009 Infinite Mile Award Winners

Robin Baughman, Housing, Commitment to Student Programs and Services
Aubrey Brick, DAPER, Commitment to Student Programs and Services
Kaya Miller, FSILGs, Commitment to Development of Students and Staff
Christopher Nayler, CAC, Commitment to Development of Students and Staff

The Sexual Assault Awareness Week Planning Committee:
Led by Jason McKnight: Dan Chapman, Alicia Erwin, Abigail Francis, Heidy Gonzalez, Dave Hagymas, Divya Kumar, Becca Madsen, Kerri Mills, Susana Montesinos, Lynn Roberson, Rashmi Tiwari, Chad Waxman, Lauren Wojtkun

The Varsity Volleyball Assistant Coaching Staff:
Samantha Lampert and Charles Morton

For more information and to access the 2009 Infinite Mile Awards Ceremony program, go to studentlife.mit.edu/infinitemile.

On the Spot Available Online

On the Spot forms can now be accessed and submitted online.

Go online:
studentlife.mit.edu/onthespot

Fill out a fast form.

Get an On the Spot Card from your Coordinator.

Give Thanks!

Go online to learn more about the program, find out who the coordinators are, and who has recently won an On the Spot.
MIT Community Gardens

Community building, a practice in sustainability, and an opportunity to give back.

Gardening can be a humbling yet rewarding experience, as the 32 gardeners who participated in the MIT Community Gardens project discovered. The three year pilot project in urban sustainable agriculture was started by Cheryl Vossmer, MIT Police Sgt. and Ryan Gray, Libraries Administrative Assistant and Public Service Support Associate. Participants were selected in a lottery last Spring for a chance to have a plot on the roof of West Garage or on the ground along the Albany Street Garage.

Ninety-two staff/faculty entered the lottery, a much higher and exciting number than expected. “One of the things that makes this project so unique is that MIT is about engineering, not about agriculture. Yet there is so much excitement about agriculture here,” said Vossmer.

Once selected, the gardeners were required to purchase an Earthbox and their own plants. Earthboxes are low-cost, compact and water-efficient containers, complete with organic soil and fertilizer. “The Earthboxes were a perfect solution to the problem of finding green space on campus to grow crops,” said Gray. They require no soil testing, and everything is contained in the box, making for easy cleanup and re-usability.

MIT Endicott House offered the boxes and plants at a discount to gardeners and Endicott’s Andy Turcotte gave gardening tips and lessons to participants.

Donna Denoncourt, Associate Dean of Residential Life, and Dan Chapman, UAAP, are co-gardeners, raising and caring for their plot jointly. This is just one example of the community-building aspect of the program, which is truly an Institute wide initiative. Gardeners are from all over the Institute, allowing the opportunity for interaction among staff and faculty who otherwise may be strangers. Along with Endicott House, MIT Facilities has also been involved. Robbie Kuykendall in Facilities has filled barrels of water on the roof of West Garage so the gardeners don’t have to lug water up the stairs, something they would have initially had to do.

An email list and a Facebook group have also offered opportunities for gardeners to exchange tips and advice, receive updates, and request help with watering or weeding.

Even with all of this advice and despite one’s best intentions, nature can be unforgiving. This summer’s rainy, cool weather and blight required ambitious efforts to overcome. It was survival of the fittest on the West Garage roof, as high winds and scavenging birds were a few of the issues encountered. “But with all that sun, the plants are growing beautifully,” said Denoncourt. Vossmer and Gray hope to keep future plots on the ground to avoid some of the issues encountered on the West Garage roof. Lately, the plants are thriving and gardeners are reaping their bounty, making the first year of this pilot anything but a bad apple. “To me, there are so many positives,” said Vossmer. “It is so fun to watch these plants grow.”

Another unique aspect of the program is that gardeners donate a portion of their produce to Food For Free, www.foodforfree.org, a nonprofit organization in Cambridge which takes unwanted fresh food and distributes it to those in need.

There are hopes to expand the program next year, to get students involved, and to make a greater contribution toward Food for Free. Vossmer and Gray plan to hold a tomato tasting for participants and an end-of-season meeting to gather feedback. “In general, everyone has been happy and inquisitive,” said Vossmer.

The MIT Community Gardens project will pilot for two more years. For more information contact: community-gardens-exec@mit.edu.
By Ruth Kohorn Rosenberg, Office of Student Citizenship

Tucked in the corner on the fifth floor of the student center sits Mediation@MIT. Why does MIT offer conflict resolution services and training to its undergraduate and graduate students? Because we all deal with conflict, it exists. It’s how it is dealt with that is important.

The fields of science and engineering, along with the rest of the world, have moved into a collaborative era where we must learn to work with other people and use conflicts to solve problems creatively and constructively. As students graduate and enter leadership roles, they will need these skills to be effective.

Mediation@MIT offers conflict resolution services to all undergraduate and graduate students and workshops on mediation and conflict management skills to students, faculty, staff and alumni. We keep all conversations in confidence and will only share with the permission of the visitor or party—except in the situation of imminent risk of harm to self or others.

Last year, I became the first full time director of student mediation within the Office of Student Citizenship. This year, Nikki Shenefiel joined me. Nikki, who recently received a master’s degree in college and community counseling, helps with intake, training and services. We also collaborate with other offices and programs within the Institute, including Student Activities, Student Leadership Development, the Office of Minority Education, the Division of Undergraduate Education, the Ombuds Office, and the Center for Health Promotion and Wellness.

We not only assist students in dealing with disputes but also help them graduate with the skills to deal with conflict in a variety of arenas. These skills include listening, identifying the interests underlying the conflict, framing key issues, negotiating and problem solving. We teach these skills both through our workshops and through our services. In our experience, students with whom we interact are learning these skills and find them valuable.

About the Author

Ruth Rosenberg has more than 20 years experience as a mediator, teacher, university administrator, non-profit director and consultant. She is a freshman advisor and teaches a freshman advising seminar at Next House.

Resources at Mediation@MIT

Conflict Coaching is a one-on-one meeting between the student and a conflict coach. It provides students with the skills and resources that will help them address a conflict themselves, without a third party.

Mediation: The mediator will facilitate a problem-solving process in which the parties themselves define the issues and work towards the creation of a mutually agreeable resolution. If the parties reach an agreement, it is usually formalized and put into written form. The process typically takes two hours, but varies depending on the case.

Workshops: Mediation@MIT provides workshops throughout the academic year on subjects such as basic conflict resolution skills negotiation, having difficult conversations, and giving and receiving feedback. The workshops are usually tailored to the specific needs of the student organizations and living groups.

32-hour Mediation Basic Skills Workshop: We offer full 32-hour mediation trainings for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni twice a year.

Resources for Easing Friction and Stress (REFS): Mediation@MIT supports a departmental, lab, and center-based graduate student peer resource program called REFS, which trains graduate students in mediation skills so they can offer problem-solving and resources to their peers within their department, lab, or center.

To learn more about Mediation@MIT resources, go to web.mit.edu/mediation or call 258-8423.

“In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.” – Albert Einstein
When Support Gets Personal

Series offers information from experts and resources to help students.

What are some of the challenges students face? What causes our students to be stressed and concerned? How does the economic change impact our students on a day to day basis? These are just a few of the questions addressed in the interactive training seminar for staff, When Support Gets Personal.

Designed to better prepare administrators for “student situations that require delving into more personal realms,” the seven-week series brings expert speakers and panelists from across the institute to discuss topics such as student citizenship skills and whole health. Participants leave the program with a comprehensive understanding of MIT's support resources, ideas on how to identify the “red flags” of a student in distress, and how to refer students efficiently and effectively.

The series was started six years ago, but had not been held in a few years. It was brought back to life by a steering committee made up of staff from across the Institute. Now sponsored and hosted by the Dean for Student Life, When Support Gets Personal will be held every semester to ensure that staff who work with students have the opportunity to attend. “We want people who are frontline, working with students daily to have these resources in their hands,” said Sharon Snaggs Gendron, Assistant Director of Student Outreach and Support.

“The Cycle of Student Life and Pressure Points Along the Way,” was the theme for the Spring 2009 series. “We tried to look at the current needs and what is important to students in 2009, such as financial issues,” said Dean Barbara Baker. Participants included staff from across the Institute who interact with students daily. Another session of When Support Gets Personal will be held this fall. Stay tuned for an announcement and opportunity to sign up in early September.

A brown bag lunch series has been created to offer topic specific sessions for staff. The first installment, “MIT After Dark,” will be held on Tuesday, September 15th from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM in W20-West Lounge. The session will address what happens at the Institute after 5:00 PM, including emergency protocols.

Possible future brown bag topics include, “Dealing with Trauma,” and “Working with Home Schooled Students.” To learn more about When Support Gets Personal and the Brown Bag Sessions, or if you have any ideas for future topics, please contact Sharon Snaggs Gendron at 253-6836 or snaggs@mit.edu.

Additional information about When Support Gets Personal, including copies of some of the presentations, is available at web.mit.edu/wsgp.

CDSA Receives Grant

The MIT Community Development and Substance Abuse Center (CDSA) has been awarded a two-year grant in the Competition to Prevent High-Risk Drinking and Violent Behavior Among College Students sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.

The grant, the MIT Alcohol-Related Violence Initiative (MARVIN), addresses alcohol-related violence among MIT students, and is primarily aimed at reducing incidents of hazing, physical violence, sexual violence and relational aggression. This award provides financial support to expand the CDSA staff, create new programs, and comprehensively evaluate programmatic efforts.

To learn more about CDSA, go to cdsa.mit.edu.
MIT Sets Record for NEWMAC Championships

Many MIT Varsity Sports fans know about the successful season the MIT Men’s Basketball team had, but they may not know how successful the year was for MIT Sports in general. And it wasn’t just successful, it was record breaking. MIT Varsity Sports set a new record in the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) by winning seven out of eighteen conference championships this year, the most any team has ever won in one season. The teams who won included Men’s Basketball, Men’s Cross Country, Women’s Cross Country, Men’s Swimming and Diving, Men’s Tennis, Men’s Track and Field, Women’s Track and Field. Congratulations to the seven varsity teams for setting NEWMAC and Institute records!

DSL Staff featured in MIT Parents News

Four DSL Staff members wrote articles that were featured in the Spring 2009 edition of the newsletter, MIT Parents News. Staff whose articles were featured included Emily Flores, Residence Life Associate; Marc Lo, Residence Life Associate & Associate Housemaster; Bob Ferrara ’67, Executive Director of Strategic Planning, Communication and Alumni Relations; and Ruth Kohorn Rosenberg, Director of Mediation, Office of Student Citizenship. To read these articles, go to studentlife.mit.edu/staffarticles.

“Broadsides” Screening at MIT

World Premier of alum’s movie will be held at MIT on September 29.

By Katie Casey Maloney, MIT Alumni Association

MIT graduates often have talents beyond science and technology. One MIT alumus, Bruce Twickler ’67, has a documentary film company right here in Cambridge, which just produced “Broadsides”. This two-hour film will be airing on public television throughout the nation beginning in October, but here at MIT we can be among the very first to witness this exciting historical tale. “Broadside” tells the story of the fiercest naval war in the age of sail. The rivalry between the British and the Dutch spanned oceans, continents and empires. The film is cast in the actual houses, gardens and forts of the seventeenth century and uses 3D animation to bring 1660 New Amsterdam and London to life. As those of you who have seen Twickler’s previous documentary film “Damrell’s Fire”, the technical sophistication is simply stunning. We are in for another treat!

The film will be shown in the Stata Center on the evening of September 29, and producer Bruce Twickler ’67 will be there to explain what went into its making.

For more information and to register for the viewing, go to MIT Events, events.mit.edu, for September 29, 2009. The cost is $15 in advance, and $20 at the door. Proceeds benefit the MIT Club of Boston.
DSL Staff Spotlight: Ted Falvey

By Betty Dasilva, Endicott House

Since August 2003, Ted Falvey has been a steadfast and extremely popular employee of the MIT Endicott House. Ted came to the Endicott House from Lifeworks; an organization that helps people with disabilities live fuller lives through employment at area businesses, social enrichment opportunities, and customized support services. Now Ted’s responsibilities have expanded to support day and evening large special events. He has become a true asset for MIT Endicott House.

Ted has a large and loving family. Upon receiving his first paycheck from MIT Endicott House, Ted treated his family to dinner at their favorite restaurant. Ted also volunteers for the Dedham Food Pantry.

For the first few months, shy Ted learned his job responsibilities and was a man of few words. As he came to know other employees on a more personal level, we learned that Ted is an avid Red Sox fan and also loves the NY Mets and has traveled to Florida for Mets spring training (which causes lots of teasing here.) Ted is quite an athlete himself. He has been a successful participant in several Massachusetts Special Olympics and Lifeworks basketball, softball, bowling and tennis teams, recently taking up crew. Most recently Ted “took home the gold” in a Massachusetts Special Olympics tennis tournament, and wears his medal proudly.

Ted’s work ethic, pleasant demeanor, athletic achievements and giving spirit are just a few reasons the MIT Endicott House is proud to introduce MIT to Ted Falvey. Be sure to stop by and say “hi” to Ted on your next trip to MIT Endicott House.

Summer Professional Development Series

SAO, Residential Life Programs, CDSA, PSC, and the Office of Student Citizenship collaborate to offer series.

To encourage and aid staff in continuing their own development, a Summer Professional Development Series was held. Sponsored by SAO along with collaborating offices such as Residential Life Programs, CDSA, Office of Student Citizenship, and PSC, the series offered four workshops by professionals from across DSL. The workshops offered implementable ideas and a chance for staff to share their own experience. Workshops included:

Social and Environmental Determinants of Behavior: Using the Social Ecological Model to Plan Programs
Rashmi Tiwari, CDSA

Program Assessment: Putting Theory into Practice
Jason McKnight, Residential Life Programs

Working in the Fire Hose: Surviving to Thriving as a Professional at MIT
Abigail Francis, LBGT, Student Activities Office
Andrea Gatti, Student Activities Office

The MIT Student: Putting the Pieces Together
Ben Bradley, Public Service Center
Ruth Rosenberg, Office of Student Citizenship

Rashmi Tiwari’s workshop offered staff a chance to plan a program using the Social Ecological Model, illustrated above.
Smoot Plaque Installed

By Bob Ferrara '67, DSL Administrative Services

Back in the fall of 1958, the fraternity brothers of Lambda Chi Alpha created one of MIT’s enduring traditions when they invented a measurement system for the Massachusetts Avenue Bridge. This past June 4th marked the official completion of the 50th Anniversary Smoot Celebration with the installation of a very special plaque on the bridge.

The Division of Student Life was a major contributor to this “only at MIT” celebration. Thanks especially to Karen Nilsson who convinced three local contractors to donate the construction and installation of a custom-designed concrete post to house the plaque. For more information about the plaque and the remarkable history of Ollie Smoot ’62, go to web.mit.edu/smoot/.

Institute Chaplain Robert Randolph’s blessing of the plaque:

“It stands for the reality that the serious work done here at MIT is enlivened by humor and whimsy. It reminds all that while victory may go to the strong, and the race may be won by the swift, in this place, in this city, on this bridge over the Charles River, all is measured by the Smoot and so it shall be now and forever more.”