

MIT Alumni Association ~ FY2017 Report to the President

The MIT Alumni Association provides a lifelong community for MIT graduates, a launching pad for students, and growing connection among MIT friends who include parents, non-alumni donors, and post-docs. The Association seeks to connect alumni to MIT and to one another through events, online offerings, and philanthropy. This year 48 percent of alumni were engaged in one of these three ways.

In a major cross-departmental effort, the Alumni Relations, Strategic Communications and Marketing, Annual Fund, and Volunteer Services teams partnered to support worldwide MIT's Campaign for a Better World events. Our teams collaborated on the logistics and execution of the events; promoted them to special alumni cohorts, like MIT10; hosted the Alumni Association Information Commons that offered MITAA branded giveaways and staff chatting about MIT, MITAA, and giving; and provided on-site social media coverage.

Highlights

The **2017 Tech Reunions** program drew 3,586 alumni and guests—the 4th highest reunion attendance number.

The MIT 24-Hour Challenge, a major new pan-departmental initiative, resulted in more than \$3.8 million raised from 6,051 donors.

The Association supported the **MIT Campaign for a Better World** with strategic communications and event collaboration on a series of eight domestic and international roadshow events, with 2,928 in attendance.

The **Graduate Alumni Council**, a committee of 23 graduate alumni, was formed to serve as a sounding board for MITAA programs and events designed for graduate alumni, who comprise 53 percent of living alumni.

The CASE professional organization recognized communications and marketing materials promoting last year's **MIT2016: Celebrating a Century in Cambridge** with three top honors.

The Alumni Association and the Student Ambassadors launched the **Dinner with 12 Strangers** (D12) pilot program, which brought together students and local alumni.

MIT Alumni Association continues to lead its Ivy+ peers in **social media engagement** with #1 ranking on Facebook and Twitter, #3 on LinkedIn, and #4 on Instagram.

The **Student/Alumni Externship Program** placed 424 students with 278 alumni in their workplaces during January's Independent Activities Program (IAP.)

The March/April issue of *CASE Currents* featured the work of the Alumni Education team in celebrating alumni books, while the *Inside Higher Ed* published an MITAA staffer's article on the growing challenges facing alumni relations professionals.

Bimonthly *Slice of MIT* posts, titled **Grad Life**, were published throughout the academic year, featuring first-person perspectives on the MIT graduate student experience.

The Alumni Careers Program launched the **MIT Alumni Advisors Hub**, a custom platform enabling alumni volunteers to share professional advice and wisdom with students and fellow alumni.

Family Weekend 2016, organized by the MITAA's Parents Association, had the second highest number of attendees in the history of the program with 2,436 parents and families.

The 2016 Pi Committee hosted the largest **Pi Reunion** ever held with nearly 600 MIT10 alumni and guests attending the weekend reunion in Las Vegas, NV, in July.

MIT faculty led 21 **MIT Alumni Travel Program** trips with 369 travelers.

Quick Facts

Living alumni totaled 136,079 at the end of FY17. Some 53 percent have graduate degrees only; 25 percent of undergraduate degree holders also have MIT graduate degrees. In terms of composition, 23 percent are female and 15 percent are international residents. By school, 47 percent hold engineering degrees; 21 percent, science; 18 percent, management; 7 percent, architecture; 5 percent, humanities, arts, and social sciences; and 2 percent, other. Other FY17 data of interest:

- 15,889 alumni and friends volunteered for MIT or the Alumni Association.
- The Association supported 1,220 events that drew 28,569 unique attendees (a 15 percent year-over-year increase).
- The MIT Annual Fund raised nearly \$82 million, up 8 percent over last year.
- The Association maintains contact information for 95 percent of alumni, exceptional in the advancement industry.

Annual Fund

The MIT Annual Fund is MIT's office of annual giving, primarily promoting unrestricted support for MIT, as well as supporting annual giving initiatives across campus, including academic departments, athletics, religious organizations, and selected programs. Annual alumni participation—the Annual Fund's primary goal—means increasing participation at every level to build a donor pipeline for future gifts.

Excitement for the Annual Fund's first-ever giving day—the successful MIT 24-Hour Challenge—was driven by an extensive lead-up marketing campaign involving 886 volunteers and cross-campus collaboration. Set for Pi Day, March 14, the give-a-thon's initial goals were to bring in gifts from 2,000 individual alumni, students, and friends to unlock a \$100,000 challenge from an anonymous alumnus donor; to inspire gifts from alumni who hadn't donated to MIT in six or more years; and to engage with younger donors. The challenge exceeded not only all these goals, but also saw every micro-challenge targeted to a specific MIT group, such as Hillel, DAPER, or alumni class, surpass their goals.

Annual Fund fundraising results this year:

- \$81,966,450 million was raised.
- 44,031 **alumni, students, parents, and friends** donated to MIT.
- MIT hit an **alumni participation rate** of 26 percent (32 percent undergraduate and dual degree (UG) alumni; 20 percent graduate student exclusive alumni.)
- \$8,132,172 was raised for Institute **unrestricted giving** from 16,587 donors.
- The team contacted more than 600 alumni, parents, and friends including **354 visits** that resulted in gifts totaling \$4.17 million.
- The **Senior Gift** effort resulted in 64 percent participation and a record-breaking average gift per donor of \$32.64.
- **Class- and affinity-**based fundraising efforts engaged more than 340 volunteers.
- The pilot **Graduate Student Exclusive (GSE)** fundraising effort resulted in 429 percent increase in current graduate student donors over FY16.
- The team managed 47 volunteer **Class Stewardship Agents** who wrote more than 10,000 personal thank you notes to donors.

MIT thanks all Annual Fund donors.

Alumni Relations

The mission of Alumni Relations is to develop and foster an interactive global MIT community including alumni, students and friends—through quality programs, events, and services designed to increase support for, awareness of, and interest in MIT.

Gatherings and Programs

This year, 1,523 reunion-year alumni attended **Tech Reunions**—a 14.2 percent increase over the attendance of those classes five years ago.

To boost reunions weekend attendance, **Tech Night at Pops** was moved from Thursday to Friday night and followed by a new event, Pops Encore Party, leading to a 13 percent rise from last year.

The Tech Reunions schedule for the 5–45th reunion classes was trimmed from a four days to three days, helping to **reduce costs for attendees**.

The Cardinal and Gray Society and **Emma Rogers Society** held six events around the US that drew 523 attendees.

The Events team worked with 18 departments, labs, and centers on campus, supporting **outreach for 29 events**.

Student/Alumni Relations supported nine **DAPER** alumni events that brought 406 alumni, students, and friends together.

The **Alumni Talks** program hosted 16 alumni speakers who addressed 750 alumni, students, and friends at 33 events.

The Alumni Education team piloted three **alumni hackathons** this year: Hack My Nonprofit (two events) spotlighted alumni-founded nonprofits and Hacking Discrimination was a collaboration between MITAA's Alumni Affinity Program and the Black Alumni of MIT (BAMIT).

The **Alumni Careers Program** produced more Virtual Career Fairs and Career Lunch & Learn webinars this year and expanded the alumni employer relations program to include live regional events at corporate headquarters; these programs drew 12,397 registrants in FY17.

Alumni Career recruiting events, exclusive to alumni and spotlighting prominent C-suite alumni at Fortune 500 firms, were held in Seattle, Boston, New York, and San Francisco.

The **MIT Club of South Texas** hosted their Out of this World 90th Anniversary Celebration in February at the Astronaut Gallery at Space Center Houston for 140 guests.

The **MIT Club of San Diego's** successful inaugural gala was held on May 12 with 75 alumni and guests.

In a new venture, the **D. Reid Weedon '41 Grant** program received 29 applications for FSILGs student/alumni programming and was able to fund 16.

The **Graduate Alumni Working Group**, working in tandem with the new Graduate Alumni Council, completed a yearlong data collection effort and made recommendations on graduate student/graduate alumni engagement.

A total of 635 travelers participated in 40 **Alumni Travel Program** trips this year; 23 events were organized with local alumni, bringing together 74 international alumni and 248 MIT travelers.

Strategic Communications and Marketing

The Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) department, renamed this year, connects MIT's alumni and friends through engaging content and targeted marketing campaigns. The 10-person SCM team works interdependently and with its partners across the Alumni Association and MIT in a novel model marrying an alumni news organization with an internal marketing agency.

Key Accomplishments

- Featured 277 unique MIT alumni and friends in more than 300 **articles, podcasts, videos, and interactive social media events**, a 7 percent increase over last year.
- Produced 22 **original videos** to support the MITAA's engagement goals.
- Launched **Social Toaster** as a gamification-based initiative designed to gather dedicated social media ambassadors.
- Oversaw the marketing communications plans for launching **Switchboard** and the **Alumni Advisors Hub**, two FY17 priorities for the Association.
- Accumulating 495,206 *Slice of MIT* blog views.
- Developed a suite of beta **mobile-responsive email templates** for Encompass/iModules.

- Led creative development of president and Mrs. Reif's **holiday e-greeting**, with increased collaboration with Resource Development.
- Designed more than 350 **print and digital outreach pieces**.
- Devised **email marketing strategies** that helped boost the email open rate to 34 percent and drove attendance for signature programs like Tech Reunions and ALC.
- Developed **strategic marketing plans** for partners in several Alumni Relations departments.

Volunteer Services and Information Systems

Volunteer Leadership Development

Volunteers continue to power the MIT Alumni Association and all its activities. Every club and class activity, every interest and affinity group, every mentor and externship opportunity is made possible because of the countless hours alumni and friends devote to MIT. The FY17 statistics reflect this:

- 15,889 volunteers worked on behalf of MIT and the Alumni Association (up 3 percent over last year.)
- 14,750 are alumni volunteers; 1,139 are non-alumni.
- 13 percent are international.
- 33 percent are women.
- 42 percent are donors.

The Association thanks all MIT volunteers.

The **Alumni Leadership Conference**, held Sept. 23–24, 2016, drew 627 people. The event included Institute leaders, faculty, students, and volunteer speakers; workshops designed for volunteer roles; and a festive awards dinner.

Infrastructure and Operations

The Office of Records maintains MIT's database of record documenting contact and other information for alumni and friends of MIT, with key results in FY17.

- More than 229,000 combined **record updates and gifts/pledges** were recorded.
- The **annual email campaign** drew 3,312 alumni to update their information.

Web, Database, and Support Services for the MIT Alumni Association also logged a number of achievements in its efforts to support its programmatic partners' goals. In FY17, the team

- Provided project management/technical implementation for the Alumni Association's upcoming **website redesign**.
- Improved site performance of the **Giving to MIT website**.
- Developed new **registration forms** for Tech Reunions and campaign events.

- Created **data feeds for alumni** who register for MITx courses and for **automatic gift processing** for the 24-Hour Challenge and crowdfunding initiatives.
- Upgraded systems to **Oracle 12C**.
- Executed more than 2,000 **programming data requests**.
- Accommodated technical needs of 29 **new employees** and provided tech orientations.
- Upgraded software including Windows 10 and implemented a **Software Center**.

Governance

In FY17, Nicolas E. Chammas SM '87 served as the 122nd president of the MIT Alumni Association Board of Directors, and Hyun-A C. Park '83, MCP '85 served on the board as president-select.

Board highlights

- Worked to engage more of MIT's graduate alumni and students through participation in the newly created Graduate Alumni Council and the one-year Graduate Alumni Working Group.
- Developed strategies to connect with more of MIT's diverse, global community of friends.
- Promoted the Alumni Association's inaugural 24-Hour Challenge.
- Participated in the MIT Better World Campaign roadshow events around the globe.

Finance and Operations

The Finance and Operations Team (F&O) provides strategic allocation and tactical management of fiscal resources, financial reporting and analysis, administrative operations, space planning, and facilities for the Alumni Association and Resource Development.

Budget Summary

In FY17, the Association's total expense budget was \$17,095,138, which included \$1,879,709 allocated for subscriptions to *MIT Technology Review*. The budget was funded by \$14,616,489 in general Institute budget (GIB) funds, \$115,000 from the Association's reserves, and program revenues of \$483,940. Also this year:

- The F&O staff successfully partnered with the CEO and senior directors to steward the **FY17 operating budget** to a modest surplus at year-end.
- F&O staff led the rollout of **Buy-to-Pay (B2P)**, the Institute's new purchasing and payment system.
- On the operations front, F&O coordinated major work to **reconfigure workspaces**, creating more seats in the building, as well as major HVAC repair work and façade leak testing.

Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management

The Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management team (HR&STM) leads the MIT Alumni Association's efforts to attract, develop, and retain a talented and diverse workforce who are committed to advancing MIT's success.

- In FY17, the HR&STM team led efforts to **hire** 14 new MITAA employees, who were welcomed through a programmatic onboarding process and **promoted** 12 current staff members.
- The team enhanced **staff recruitment** by presenting at events including the CASE District 1 Conference and boosting the HR&STM presence online at advancement.mit.edu and with a new video.
- HR&STM worked with MIT Compensation to begin **benchmarking** every position in the Association.
- For staff development, HR&STM held 15 events related to **diversity and inclusion** and 15 **health and wellness** sessions.
- The **annual review process** was migrated into MIT's online Performance and Development Review online system for all staff.

Judith M. Cole
Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer

Learn more about the [MIT Alumni Association online](#).