

## MIT Alumni Association ~ FY2018 Report to the President

### Overview

In 2018, the MIT Alumni Association developed a guiding vision: **to engage and inspire the global MIT community to make a better world.**

This statement served as the North Star of a strategic planning process that spanned the entire year and united the Association's Board of Directors and its senior staff leadership in close partnership.

And as this path forward was being mapped out, the Alumni Association advanced its enduring mission, "to further the well-being of the Institute and its graduates by increasing the interest of members in the school and in each other." Engagement and fundraising initiatives continued, even as we began to adjust our approach and direction.

MIT undergraduate and graduate alumni, students, and friends—including parents, non-alumni donors, post-docs, and more—turned to the Alumni Association to strengthen their connections with the Institute. Through their philanthropic support, their attendance at events, and their participation virtually, more than 47 percent of living alumni engaged with MIT in FY18—demonstrating that the Institute continues to maintain strong connections with our broad, global community.

Those bonds were reinforced as the MIT Alumni Association settled into a new chapter of leadership, with a new CEO and a renewed sense of partnership with the MITAA Board of Directors.

This has been a solid year of adjustment, progress, and achievement.

### Highlights

The **Annual Fund** celebrated a record-breaking year for fundraising with \$87.7 million in support and a donor participation rate whose steadiness is bucking the national downward trend.

The **2018 Tech Reunions**—MIT's largest gathering of alumni each year—drew alumni and guests, with three classes breaking attendance records and six setting new goals for dollars raised.

The **MIT Campaign for a Better World** global tour, in partnership with the Alumni Association, visited six major regional hubs where MIT alumni live and work, with 2,628 in total attending.

The number of **MIT alumni volunteers** reached an all-time high of 15,333.

This year saw the launch of the new **MIT Alumni Employer Job Board**, a platform that enables the Institute's graduates to search and find career opportunities at top-tier firms.

More than 350 alumni and guests attended the **MIT Women's unConference**, two days of programming highlighting how the MIT community is "completing the equation" for women in

today's world.

Formerly known as the Student Alumni Ambassadors program, **the MIT Student Alumni Association** energized its mission: to provide students with opportunities to focus on leadership development, career networking, and positive promotion of the Institute.

The Alumni Association launched its new website—**alum.mit.edu**—to provide its users with a more modern, optimized UX; increased functionality; and greater content options.

In its second year, **the MIT 24-Hour Challenge** saw a rise in donors, with 8,673 alumni and friends raising more than \$3.4 million for the Institute on March 14 (Pi Day).

More than 7,600 alumni and friends registered for the **Faculty Forum Online** and **Faculty Forum Online, Alumni Edition** virtual alumni education series.

**Family Weekend 2017**, organized by the MITAA's Parents Association, had a record-high attendance, with more than 800 families visiting campus.

The Alumni Association featured more than 450 alumni and friends in **MITAA content pieces** in *MIT Technology Review*, *Slice of MIT*, videos, podcasts, and on social media.

MIT faculty led 17 **MIT Alumni Travel Program** trips with 640 travelers.

The MIT Alumni Association continued to lead Ivy+ peers in **social media engagement**, with #1 ranking on Facebook, #2 on Twitter, #3 on LinkedIn, and #4 on Instagram.

**The Student/Alumni Externship Program** matched 420 students with 287 alumni for short-term career opportunities during January's Independent Activities Program (IAP).

**The CASE District I** professional organization recognized the MIT Alumni Association for its programming and events with four gold awards and one silver.

## Quick Facts

At the end of FY18, living MIT alumni totaled 137,765. Some 53 percent have graduate degrees only; 25 percent of undergraduate degree holders also have MIT graduate degrees. In addition, 24 percent are female and 15 percent are international residents. By school, 47 percent hold engineering degrees; 20 percent, science; 18 percent, management; 7 percent, architecture; 5 percent, humanities, arts, and social sciences; and 3 percent, other. Other FY18 data of interest:

- A record 16,602 alumni and friends volunteered for MIT or the Alumni Association.
- The Association supported 1,192 events that drew 28,667 unique attendees (<1 percent year-over-year increase).
- The MIT Annual Fund raised \$87.7 million, a 7 percent increase over last year.
- The Association maintains contact information for 95 percent of alumni, exceptional in the advancement industry.

## Annual Fund

Annual Giving contributes to the financial footing that makes MIT the extraordinary place of education, research, and innovation it is today.

Over the past 75+ years, the annual engagement of the extended MIT community—alumni, students, parents, and friends—has strengthened the Institute and supported its greatest advancements.

Excitement for the Annual Fund’s second giving day—the successful MIT 24-Hour Challenge—was driven by an extensive lead-up marketing campaign involving 784 volunteers and cross-campus collaboration with 53 partners and 53 micro-challenges. Once again held on Pi Day (March 14), this year’s event presented a tau-themed challenge: If 6,283 people gave to MIT that day, an anonymous alumnus donor would give a pi-themed \$314,000 challenge gift. In the end, 8,673 donors had given to MIT, unlocking the challenge gift and a \$50,000 bonus gift, taking the final fundraising tally for the day to more than \$3.4 million. Annual Fund fundraising results this year:

- \$87,730,001 was raised.
- 45,544 **alumni, students, parents, and friends** donated to MIT.
- MIT hit an **alumni participation rate** to stay even at 26 percent (33 percent undergraduate and dual degree undergraduate alumni; 19 percent graduate student exclusive alumni.)
- \$8.28 million was raised for Institute **unrestricted giving** from 12,400 donors.
- The team had 514 **visits** with alumni and friends that resulted in gifts totaling \$5.56 million.
- The **Senior Gift** effort resulted in 54 percent participation and an average gift per donor of \$30.
- **Class- and affinity-**based fundraising efforts engaged volunteers.
- In year two of the **Graduate Student Exclusive (GSE)** fundraising campaign, there was a 17.63 percent increase in current graduate student donors over FY17.
- The team managed 43 volunteer **Class Stewardship Agents**, who wrote more than 11,400 personal thank-you notes to donors.

[MIT thanks all Annual Fund donors.](#)

## Alumni Relations

Alumni Relations develops and fosters an interactive global MIT community through quality programs and services designed to increase support for, awareness of, and interest in MIT.

Through our work, we engage our constituents to generate future volunteers, leaders, and donors. We serve as the connector for alumni, students, and friends to each other and the Institute.

## Gatherings and Programs

This year, 1,600 reunion-year alumni attended **Tech Reunions**—a 10.6 percent increase over the attendance of those classes five years ago.

**The Cardinal and Gray Society** and **Emma Rogers Society** held four events around the US that drew 530 attendees.

The Events team worked with 18 departments, labs, and centers on campus, supporting **outreach for 51 events**.

Student/Alumni Relations supported 17 **DAPER** alumni events that brought 913 alumni, students, and friends together.

The **Alumni Talks** program hosted 18 alumni speakers who addressed 700 alumni, students, and friends at 34 events.

The **Alumni Education** team collaborated on two alumni hackathons this year—during the MIT Women’s unConference; and Hacking Inclusion, a collaboration between MITAA’s Alumni Affinity Program and the Black Alumni of MIT (BAMIT)—as well as 35 Faculty Forum Online events and 3 MIT Forum pilots.

The **Alumni Careers** program produced three Virtual Career Fairs and six Career Lunch & Learn webinars this year and expanded the alumni employer relations program to include live regional events at corporate headquarters. These programs drew 12,131 registrants in FY18

**The MIT Club of New York** celebrated its 125th anniversary at the Lotus Club in Manhattan, with more than 110 in attendance.

A total of 640 travelers participated in 38 **Alumni Travel Program** trips this year. Nine events were organized with local alumni, bringing together 55 local alumni, seven current students, and 178 MIT travelers.

## **Strategic Communications and Marketing**

The Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) team leads and executes against marketing and content strategies to help the MIT Alumni Association meet its goals of engaging its constituents with the Institute and with one another.

### **Key Accomplishments**

- Led, with great collaboration with Association partners, the successful launch of the new **MIT Alumni Association website**, with visits and visitors up over FY17.
- Completed more than 650 **communications and marketing projects** in support of the MIT Alumni Association.
- Featured 453 unique MIT alumni and friends in **articles, podcasts, videos, and social media**, a 15 percent increase over last year.
- Produced 25 **original videos** to support the MITAA’s engagement goals.
- Increased **social media followers** on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram from FY17.

- Saw the number of **Social Toaster** social media ambassadors rise to 156—a 90 percent increase from last year.
- Led content and media relations around the Better World (Seoul) event.
- Worked with the MIT News Office and MIT central communications to promote alumni-specific content on their main channels.
- Oversaw the marketing communications plans for **the MIT Women’s unConference** and the **Alumni Advisors Hub**, two FY18 priorities for the Association.
- Logged 485,046 *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.
- Devised **email marketing strategies** that helped boost the email open rate to 44 percent and drove attendance for signature MITAA programs like Tech Reunions, ALC, Family Weekend, and the Alumni Advisors Hub.
- Developed **strategic marketing plans** for partners in several Alumni Relations departments.
- Provided round-the-clock social media coverage for the **MIT 24-Hour Challenge**.

## Information Systems and Volunteer Services

The Information Systems and Volunteer Services team seeks to deliver value to alumni and other constituents by providing data input, analytics, online services, and volunteer services that strengthen opportunities for philanthropic, online, and face-to-face engagement.

In addition, we support the organization’s infrastructure by providing world-class technology support to our staff.

## 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 FY18 statistics reflect this:

- 16,602 volunteers worked on behalf of MIT and the Alumni Association (up 4 percent from last year).
- 15,333 are alumni volunteers; 1,269 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. 15–16, 2017, drew a near-record 645 attendees. The event included Institute leaders, faculty, students, and volunteer speakers; workshops designed for volunteer roles; and the annual Leadership Awards dinner.

## Infrastructure and Operations

The Office of Records maintains MIT's database of records documenting contact and other information for alumni and friends of MIT, with key results in FY18:

- More than 230,000 combined **record updates and gifts/pledges** were recorded.
- The **annual email campaign** drew 2,074 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 FY18, the team:

- Provided project management/technical implementation toward the launch of the new **MIT Alumni Association website**.
- Made major enhancements to the **Tech Reunions** registration process.
- Improved site performance of the **Giving to MIT website**.
- Developed new registration forms for **Better World** 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.
- Executed more than 2,000 **programming data requests**.
- Accommodated technical needs of 35 **new employees** and provided tech orientations.

## Governance

In FY18, Hyun-A C. Park '83, MCP '85 served as the 123rd president of the MIT Alumni Association Board of Directors, and Charles Joseph (C.J.) Whelan '92, '93 served on the board as president-select.

## Board Highlights

- Worked with MIT Alumni Association CEO Whitney Espich and senior staff to develop a five-year strategic plan, including a vision statement, goals, strategies, and tactics
- Promoted the Alumni Association's inaugural 24-Hour Challenge
- Participated in MIT Better World Campaign roadshow events around the globe
- Served as ambassadors for key Institute messages with their peers and networks

## Finance and Operations

The Finance and Operations (F&O) team supports all program areas by providing financial strategies and tactics and operations oversight to support the annual and long-term commitments and aspirations of the Alumni Association.

## Budget Summary

In FY18, the Association's total expense budget was \$17,093,369, which included \$1,879,709 allocated for subscriptions to *MIT Technology Review*. The budget was funded by \$14,543,940 in

General Institute Budget (GIB) funds, \$115,000 from the Association's reserves, and program revenues of \$554,270. At June 30, 2018, through a combination of open-position savings, increased revenues, and cost sharing with Resource Development on collaborative efforts in events and information technology, MITAA was able to fund all FY18 activity, including those costs originally earmarked for carryforward reserve coverage, within the regular operating budget and closed the year with a surplus of \$6,000.00. Also this year:

- The F&O staff successfully partnered with the MIT Alumni Association CEO and senior leadership to steward the **FY18 operating budget** to an even keel at year-end.
- On the operations front, F&O coordinated major work to **reconfigure and optimize workspaces** and continued to address technical issues with the **elevators**, 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 leads the MIT Alumni Association's efforts to attract, develop, and retain talented and diverse staff members who are committed to advancing MIT's success and who recognize the importance of their individual contributions in meeting this goal.

Our primary focus is to serve our employees, managers, and leaders professionally and effectively through a range of organizational services and functional expertise in support of the mission of MIT's Alumni Association.

- In FY18, the HR&STM team led efforts to **hire** 18 new MITAA employees, who were welcomed through a programmatic onboarding process, and **promoted** 9 current staff members.
- HR&STM partnered with central Human Resources and the Office of Resource Development to offer staff a pilot **sexual misconduct training** specific to work in the Advancement sector.
- The Alumni Association recognized three exceptional individuals and two teams with Infinite Mile Awards at our annual **Rewards and Recognition** ceremony. In addition, we recognized the contributions of 82 employees through a total of 55 Spotlight Awards and 70 Giving Thanks Awards.
- The team enhanced **staff recruitment** by presenting at events, including the CASE District I Conference, and boosting the HR&STM presence online at advancement.mit.edu and via a dedicated LinkedIn group.
- HR&STM worked with MIT Compensation to begin **benchmarking** every position in the Association.
- In partnership with the Office of Resource Development, we delivered a total of seven **staff learning and development** sessions and sponsored 11 **health and wellness** sessions.
- The **annual review process**, now in its second year on MIT's online Performance and Development Review system, was continually refined for greater efficacy.

Whitney T. Espich  
Chief Executive Officer, MIT Alumni Association

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