

MIT Faculty Newsletter

<https://fnl.mit.edu>

in this issue we offer “Creating the MIT Values Statement” (page 6) and the “MIT Values Statement” (page 7); “Elevating Design at MIT Through the Morningside Academy” (page 10); and “In Memoriam: Leo Marx” (page 11).



Astronaut Jeffrey Hoffman

MIT Opens Learning for Refugees

Admir Masic

IT'S DECEMBER 2016, and I've just arrived in the port town of Pozzallo in Sicily, where I am watching a group of boys playing soccer. The boys are animated and loud, fighting for a chance at the ball. A typical group of boys, except that these boys are refugees from Africa who have just made the long and arduous crossing across the Mediterranean Sea by boat. Beside them, a huge pile of life jackets marks the arrival of the thousands before them. Many did not make it.

As I am reflecting on this unsettling reality, one of the boys breaks out from the group, and comes running towards me. He stops, and looks up at me with an excited smile. “I heard you were a professor from MIT.” I nod, “Admir Masic, pleasure to meet you,” and reach out my hand. “I have always wanted to shake the hand of an MIT professor,” he says to me,

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An Astronaut on the MIT Faculty

Jeffrey Hoffman

***Explanatory Note:** Prior to joining the faculty of MIT's Aero/Astro Department, I was a NASA astronaut for 19 years. I was contacted earlier this year by Emeritus Professor Jonathan King, who had heard about my astronaut career. He told me that he had been unaware that an astronaut was a member of the MIT faculty and thought that most faculty and staff at MIT were similarly unaware. As chair of the Editorial Board of the Faculty Newsletter, Professor King invited me to write the following article about my astronaut career and how I came to MIT.*

I JOINED MIT'S DEPARTMENT of Aeronautics and Astronautics at the beginning of the 2001 fall semester, but this was not my first position at MIT. From 1975 to 1978, I worked as a research scientist in the X-ray astronomy group at

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Editorial

I. On Closing the MIT Pharmacy II. Graduate Students Vote to Unionize

On Closing the MIT Pharmacy

THE STARK STATEMENT announcing the closing of the MIT Pharmacy was like pouring concrete over green grass. Stunned silence – powerful and persistent – has been followed by *disbelief*, *disappointment*, and *dismay*. For almost everyone at MIT, the Pharmacy has long been a source of support and security, and a beacon of reliability and stability.

The *disbelief* is because the Pharmacy is so central to the wellbeing of the community, the staff always supportive and skilled and problem solving, and the entire “retail” responded to the needs of an appreciative community. We cannot point to any example where the Pharmacy was called to task on any issue – large or small. This is a distinctive feature of critical service to the MIT community.

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Address

MIT Faculty Newsletter
Bldg. 10-335
Cambridge, MA 02139

Website

<https://fnl.mit.edu>

Telephone 617-253-7303

Fax 617-253-0458

Email fnl@mit.edu

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On Closing the MIT Pharmacy
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The financial argument for closing the Pharmacy is that its use has gone down due to Covid; the pandemic pushed some to go for local rather than MIT “retail.” This logic implies a “continued-covid” path shaping a future away from valued services to the community as a whole.

The *disappointment* is due to the suggestion that closing the Pharmacy is an important imperative to the financial viability of MIT. That, in itself, is hardly credible given the state of the endowment, and the massive expansion of infrastructure associated with new research initiatives. Even if there were a logic – in comparative scale and scope – the decision to get rid of the MIT Pharmacy must be weighed against opportunity costs to the community as a whole. Moreover, it is hypocritical for such financial considerations to outweigh community needs in a formally “non-profit institution.”

We recognize that financial imperatives guide decisions at MIT. We know that none of this is easy. But we find it very difficult to understand the decision to close the MIT Pharmacy just as the campus was beginning to sense a post-Covid reality. Now one will have to schedule time and effort to be away from campus in search of other “retail” services.

The *dismay* is that the decision is poor and inconsiderate. The timing is particularly bad – we are all trying to recover from the Covid constraints – and the signals it sends about the value of worker-wellbeing are especially discouraging. We would have expected the MIT Pharmacy to be low on the list of “disposables” not only because of the great services it renders to the MIT community, but also

because to many of us, it represents a reliable and friendly environment in a medical department that has been slowly turning impersonal and cold.

Closing the MIT Pharmacy should have been dealt with through deliberation and discussion. Perhaps we should have a measure of the trend in the use of the Pharmacy. If 50% or more of the people using the Pharmacy were going elsewhere, that might be grounds for discussion; but if only 5% or 10% of the community were turning to close-to-home retail, there is no need to close down the Pharmacy.

Perhaps this move signals that the next “retail” service to be terminated is MIT Optical. Or, perhaps, we are at the early stages of closing the MIT Medical Department entirely, and merging with the Mount Auburn Hospital. Whatever the future holds, discussion and deliberation are preferable to communication by pouring concrete over green grass.

Graduate Students Vote to Unionize
THE VOTE OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

to unionize may represent a sea change in the relationships of graduate students to their peers, their faculty mentors, and to the MIT administration. We believe this step offers the possibility for improving the quality of life of graduate students, and in the long run for increasing their productive contribution to their disciplines and to society.

In the period from WWII until about 2000, colleges and universities offering graduate student programs increased throughout the U.S. Thus, the market for employing doctoral level faculty also continually expanded. Unfortunately, that expansion has slowed down markedly,

and the market for new faculty has contracted sharply. As a result, current graduate students are subject to generalized anxiety with respect to their futures not present in earlier decades.

Those pressures have often translated into concern over the progress of their dissertation projects, their relationships with their mentors and thesis committee members, and their commitment to their undergraduate teaching responsibilities. Students who felt somewhat overwhelmed by the often-conflicting tasks had limited modes for altering Department or Institute policies and for reducing their own stresses.

The organization of the union will certainly increase the bargaining power of graduate students to control their workloads, timelines, and articulate their needs. Among the areas deserving of attention are medical leave, child care leave, and affordable housing. For example, we hope the union will be more influential in pressing MIT to respond to the acute housing shortage for graduate students, a product of the administration’s decision to build commercial office buildings, rather than graduate housing and academic buildings, on the East Campus. On a different front, wide variations in expectations of undergraduate teaching loads among departments may need to be addressed.

We wish our graduate students all the best in navigating the terrain, and plan for the pages of the *Faculty Newsletter* to be open for continuing discussion and reflection in this new period. ■

Editorial Subcommittee

An Astronaut on the MIT Faculty

Hoffman, from page 1

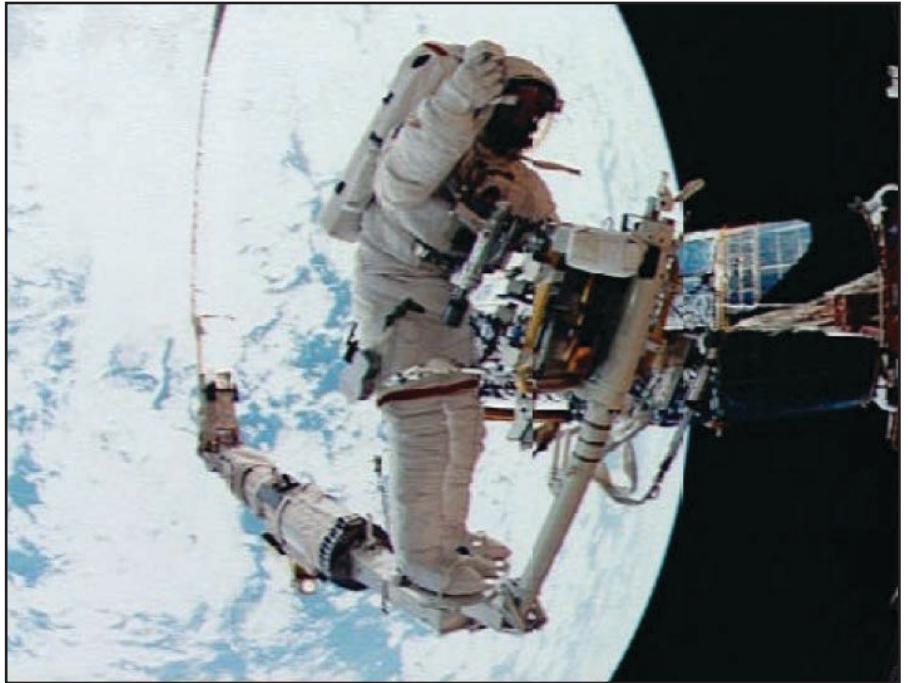
the Center for Space Research (now the Kavli Institute). I had completed my PhD at Harvard in high-energy astrophysics and spent three-and-a-half years doing X-ray astronomy research in the Physics Department at Leicester University in the UK. During that time, I met and married my wife, Barbara, and our first son was born just 10 weeks before we traveled to Boston for the beginning of my work at MIT.

I was a young boy in the 1950s, when “the coming of the space age” was a regular topic in newspapers, magazines, and TV. My parents often took me to the Hayden Planetarium in New York City, which whetted my interest in astronomy. My undergraduate (Amherst College '66) and graduate school time coincided with the beginning of NASA's human spaceflight program. Watching the exploits of the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo astronauts, I imagined how exciting it would be to go into space, but I realized that these astronauts were all military pilots, which was not a profession I was aiming for. Astronomy may have been in a sense a parallel way of working in space. I was interested in high-energy astrophysics, X-ray and gamma ray astronomy, which were brand new fields back then, and I knew that every time astronomers opened a new portion of the electromagnetic spectrum it led to exciting new discoveries. Also, because this high-energy radiation does not penetrate the atmosphere, we had to launch our telescopes in high-altitude balloons, which I did for my PhD, in sounding rockets, which I did at Leicester, or in satellites, which I did at MIT. I was at least sending instruments into space, even if I couldn't go there myself.

It was, indeed, an exciting time in X-ray astronomy, and after three years of productive research I was nearing the point in my career to consider looking for a tenure-track faculty position. This never happened, however, because while I was working at MIT, NASA was building and

testing the then brand-new Space Shuttle. One critical difference between the Shuttle and previous spacecraft was that the Shuttle could take a crew of seven, and it only needed two pilots. So, when NASA put out its first call for astronauts to fly on the Space Shuttle, they specifically said that in addition to pilots, they were

My first space flight was originally scheduled for June 1984; however, in those early days of Shuttle flights, cancellations and crew switches were common. We were bumped from the June flight due to an earlier flight cancellation and subsequent crew reassignment, and the next two flights we were assigned to both



Repairing the Hubble Space Telescope

looking for qualified scientists, engineers, and medical doctors.

It was a “wow” moment when I realized that I could legitimately apply to be an astronaut, so I did, along with 8,000 other people. I was fortunate enough to be one of the 35 selected as the first Space Shuttle astronauts. It turned out that four of us were astronomers, including Sally Ride, which made us very happy, since astronomy is a relatively small science, but there were more astronomers in our group than from than any other science. The influx of so many non-military pilots changed the complexion of the Astronaut Office, and, of course, becoming an astronaut completely changed my life. I put aside my academic aspirations and moved to Houston in the summer of 1978, where we lived for 19 years.

ended up being cancelled. We finally flew in April 1985 on our fourth assigned mission. It turned out that the flight was worth waiting for, however, as one of the two telecommunications satellites we deployed failed to activate, and Mission Control sent me and my EVA (extra-vehicular activity = spacewalk) partner outside on NASA's first ever unplanned, contingency spacewalk in an attempt to repair the satellite. The view through the Shuttle's windows is amazing, but being outside in a spacesuit is a whole different experience of being in space.

My second space flight, where I was one of four PhD astronomer-astronauts operating an ultraviolet observatory, would have been the next flight after the Challenger disaster, but all flights were cancelled for several years, and we finally

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An Astronaut on the MIT Faculty
Hoffman, from preceding page



Professor Jeffrey Hoffman

flew in December 1990. My third flight was the initial attempt to deploy the U.S.-Italian Tethered Satellite, which was designed to be deployed from the Shuttle but remain attached by a 20-km electrically conductive wire. We planned to study tether dynamics and plasma physics, but mechanical problems prevented us from deploying the tether more than a few hundred meters. At one point, the tether became jammed, and we started preparations for what would have been another unplanned EVA to pull in the tether manually. Alas, Mission Control came up with an alternative way to retrieve the tether, and we stayed inside.

The most significant thing I accomplished as an astronaut was no doubt repairing the initially flawed Hubble Space Telescope, in December 1993. NASA took all measures possible to reduce the risk of failure for this critical mission, including the requirement that only people who had previously done spacewalks could be on the Hubble EVA crew, and due to the unplanned EVA I had done on my first flight, I had my “EVA union card.” Being on the Hubble rescue

mission was particularly moving for me as an erstwhile astronomer, since many of my former astronomy colleagues had devoted years of their lives to the Hubble project and often contacted me during our training for reassurance that we might actually be able to fix Hubble’s problems. As everyone knows, despite being the most complex Shuttle mission NASA had ever attempted, the mission was completely successful, and Hubble has gone on to be NASA’s most productive science mission ever, providing the public with glorious images and rewriting astronomy books many times over.

I had one more flight after the Hubble mission – a reflight of the Tethered Satellite. We were able to deploy it to almost 20 km, when a short circuit caused electrical sparking that melted the tether’s Kevlar strands, causing it to break. Before the break, however, I was treated to an incredible view of the wire stretching upwards and disappearing into the sky. I felt like Jack looking up at the beanstalk! On this flight, I became the first astronaut to log 1,000 hours on the Space Shuttle.

Following my fifth space flight, I was offered the choice of staying in Houston and flying once or twice more to work on the initial construction of the International Space Station or going to live in Paris for four years to work at the U.S. Embassy as NASA’s diplomatic representative for Europe. I love space and would have loved to fly again, but the Paris offer was too tempting to turn down. My wife and I spent a wonderful four years in Paris, where I learned a lot about the European space community and worked to increase cooperation between NASA and our European partners.

During my time as an astronaut and while in Paris, I made periodic visits to MIT to give talks about my work. I had gotten to know Professor Larry Young before I went to NASA, and he ended up

spending a lot of time in Houston training to be a payload specialist astronaut. We became close friends, and during several visits to Paris while I was there, he got me thinking about returning to an academic career. Not having done any astronomy research for 25 years, I could not resume my previous scientific work. Fortunately, I had met Professor Ed Crawley, who was Aero/Astro Department Head at the time. He felt that, since the department deals with space flight, it would be good to have someone in the department who had actually flown in space. I was invited to join the Aero/Astro faculty as a Professor of the Practice, where I am still working after more than 20 years.

In coming to MIT, I was excited about being able to work with the best and brightest faculty and students and hoped that I would be able to stay involved with space exploration. That hope has been realized, as I have worked on numerous interesting space projects and am currently Deputy Principal Investigator of the MOXIE oxygen-producing experiment on NASA’s Mars2020 Perseverance rover. (MOXIE = Mars Oxygen ISRU Experiment, where ISRU = in situ resource utilization.) I’ll never get to Mars myself, but it is gratifying to work on an experiment that ultimately will enable human exploration of the Red Planet. At the age of 77, I am fortunate to continue to have challenging and exciting projects to work on. I am grateful to MIT for the opportunity to work here and thank Professor King and the *Faculty Newsletter* for allowing me to introduce myself to the MIT community. ■

Jeffrey Hoffman is Professor of the Practice of Aerospace Engineering, Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics (jhoffma1@mit.edu).

Editor’s Note: This is the first in a series of faculty self-profiles we plan to feature in the *Faculty Newsletter*.

Creating the MIT Values Statement

Dear Colleagues,

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO share with you the [MIT Values Statement](#) (see next page), the product of more than a year's worth of broad consultation and serious debate by a group we were privileged to lead, the [MIT Values Statement Committee](#).

Fittingly, the statement now lives on [MIT's About page](#), right next to the Institute's mission. As President Reif wrote when [he introduced it to the community](#) on April 12th, the values statement is not a code of conduct nor a cudgel for enforcement. Rather,

it expresses a promise we make to ourselves and to each other about the kind of community we aim to create together. All of us, in every role, make daily decisions large and small. The statement offers a

shared foundation for grounding those decisions, a touchstone for how we aspire to be as we pursue MIT's mission.

The committee carefully reviewed past efforts to capture the values of MIT, from our 1861 founding to the present, as well as contemporary community surveys and reports on instances when the Institute fell short. Through meetings with units across MIT, direct written submissions to the committee, and our webcast presentation last fall, we engaged more than 2,000 members of the MIT community, pored over hundreds of candid, thoughtful comments on our preliminary draft, and reworked it extensively in response.

The final text represents our best attempt to produce a statement of values that could unite the whole community.

We encourage you to read the statement, as well as [our report](#), which discusses the deep questions we wrestled with and offers practical thoughts on ways to infuse these values in the daily life of MIT.

At the Institute, the past several years have been marked by some distressing and divisive moments. We hope and believe the values statement may help people across MIT refocus on how much we share, on how we aspire to live and work together, and how fortunate we are to be part of this uncommon community.

Sincerely,

Daniel E. Hastings SM '78, PhD '80, Professor and Head, Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Associate Dean of Engineering for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Tracy Gabridge '88, Deputy Director, MIT Libraries (retired this spring)

MIT Values Statement

Excellence and Curiosity

We strive for the highest standards of integrity, and intellectual and creative excellence. We seek new knowledge and practical impact, in service to the nation and the world.

We prize originality, ingenuity, honesty, and boldness. We love discovery and exploration, invention and making. We delight in the full spectrum of human wisdom.

Drawing strength from MIT's distinctive roots, we believe in learning by doing, and we blur the boundaries between disciplines as we seek to solve hard problems. Embracing the unconventional, we welcome quirkiness, nerdiness, creative irreverence and play.

We accept the risk of failing as a rung on the ladder of growth. With fearless curiosity, we question our assumptions, look outward, and learn from others.

Openness and Respect

We champion the open sharing of information and ideas.

Because learning is nourished by a diversity of views, we cherish free expression, debate, and dialogue in pursuit of truth – and we commit to using these tools with respect for each other and our community.

We strive to be transparent and worthy of each other's trust – and we challenge ourselves to face difficult facts, speak plainly about failings in our systems, and work to overcome them.

We take special care not to overlook bad behavior or disrespect on the grounds of great accomplishment, talent, or power.

Belonging and Community

We strive to make our community a humane and welcoming place where people from a diverse range of backgrounds can grow and thrive – and where we all feel that we belong.

We know that attending to our own and each other's wellbeing in mind, body, and spirit is essential. We believe that decency, kindness, respect, and compassion for each other as human beings are signs of strength.

Valuing potential over pedigree, we know that talent and good ideas can come from anywhere – and we value one another's contributions in every role.

Together we possess uncommon strengths, and we shoulder the responsibility to use them with wisdom and care for humanity and the natural world.

MIT Opens Learning for Refugees

Masic, from page 1

“I’ve been studying for the SAT so I can apply to your university,” before grabbing my visit card, turning back and disappearing into the nameless group of boys. The jarring moment transports me back in time.

It is 1992, I am in a refugee camp in Croatia, by the seaside, having just escaped the horrors of war that was devastating my homeland in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am playing endless rounds of table tennis with other kids in the camp, because, as a refugee, I am not allowed to go to school. After months of pleading, my mom finally convinces a local high school to take me in as an auditor, and I substitute the hours of ping pong with hours spent solving chemistry equations. My future career was born out of a mixture of luck and desperation. I felt like I was living in a parallel world of discrimination and suffering, without rights or money, and most importantly, without prospect for a better future. The only thing that eventually gave me hope was the universal value of education.

Back at MIT, I am sitting in my office and looking at the diplomas and chemistry awards I would go on to win in those refugee years, thinking back on the key moments that shaped my trajectory: the school principal that extended compassion to me and finally allowed me to enroll in school, winning the local chemistry competition, the Open Society Institute Croatia scholarship award that gave me so much confidence, the volunteers that took me under their wing and brought me to Italy, and the endless list of humanitarians who supported me on my way to finishing my PhD.

I am overwhelmed with gratitude at having made it to MIT, a place that values innovation, science, and excellence, but also with a sense of responsibility. There are millions of people forcibly displaced every year – for political, economic, social, or more recently climate change related reasons. How can I do my part to support those who have come after me? How can

we open the pathway to that young boy at the 48-hour collection center in Italy, to get a quality education? How can we make education a vessel for a better life for those in the wake of displacement, disruption, and loss? Can technology indeed transform our capacity to democratize education? As MIT Vice President for Open Learning Sanjay Sarma asked in a recent podcast about his book *Grasp*, how can we bring water to those thirsty for education through digital learning? These types of questions were the catalyst that drove me to start the MIT Refugee Action Hub (ReACT).

Through the support of the MIT community, ReACT has grown from a former refugee’s dream to a worldwide movement encompassing seven hubs (Jordan, Uganda, USA, Colombia, Uruguay, Afghanistan, Greece) and learners from 29 countries.

ReACT is an effort to develop global educational programs that target the needs of refugees, migrants, and economically disadvantaged populations. ReACT applies an Agile Continuous Education (ACE) approach to provide holistic support for talented refugee learners in online, cohort-based, certificate programs. ReACT invests in emerging youth leaders who are embedded within local innovation hubs around the world, supporting these learners to be catalysts of change where they are and nurturing their journeys to higher education and meaningful careers. As Hala Fadel, chair of ReACT’s Advisory Council puts it, we want to create role models among refugees to break barriers and “ceilings of hope” for others.

Through the support of the MIT community, ReACT has grown from a former refugee’s dream to a worldwide movement encompassing seven hubs (Jordan, Uganda, USA, Colombia, Uruguay, Afghanistan, Greece) and learners from 29 countries. Within this vibrant ecosystem of digital learning, learning sciences, and leading education design, ReACT is

growing the reach and impact of MIT OpenLearning. Built out of a combination of MITx courses, OpenCourseWare resources, and MIT Bootcamps entrepreneurship workshops, ReACT weaves these educational assets together into yearlong virtual certificate programs. We started with the Certificate in Computer and Data Science, now in its fourth year. Last year, ReACT had nearly 2,000 applicants for its Certificate in Computer and Data Science program. This very competitive program, with an admission rate of 7%, provides a platform for the top talent in the world to come together in an inten-

sive yet supportive community learning environment.

ReACT students thrive in the MIT *Mens et Manus* environment, applying what they learn in experiential projects and internships. The majority are employed immediately following the program at companies like Microsoft, Facebook, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), and Hikma, just to mention a few. ReACT opens up new opportunities through open learning for learners whose traditional education has been disrupted, talented individuals who truly believe in education as the key to their success. And with this stamp they naturally become catalysts of change in their communities. Like Jesse Inga, the young Congolese woman who I recently met in Kenya. After completing ReACT, she co-founded the Solidarity Initiative for Refugees, a community organization that provides education access and livelihood training using digital learning to refugees in Kakuma refugee camp. “Education gives us hope,” Jesse shared. And it does, for all the other ReACT students who are pivoting in their

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MIT Opens Learning for Refugees

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disrupted careers or looking to launch their own businesses (75% of alumni are considering entrepreneurial ventures).

As of this writing in March 2022, in just one month, more than four million people have fled Ukraine. Seeing the sequence of events happening in Ukraine these days feels, for me personally, like history repeating itself. I remember vividly the images of my home burned to the ground, and long cold nights spent in the basement of our friend's house. We would stay up and argue about how many rebar concrete floors it would take to stop a missile from killing us. The sirens blaring outside still induce fear and give me chills if I hear them now after 30 years, coming from a YouTube video covering the war in Ukraine.

We at ReACT are actively working on expanding opportunities for those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine to join our programs. We are also working with the MIT community and our global networks to identify and support collaborative efforts to expand our support of refugee learners and educators worldwide through our convening of the [Migration Summit](#) at

MIT this April. I can't stress highly enough the importance of us being human, humanitarian, and close to the fleeing people of Ukraine and all migrants to make sure they do not enter those parallel worlds, and help them overcome the limbos and challenges of being displaced today.

We at ReACT are actively working on expanding opportunities for those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine to join our programs. We are also working with the MIT community and our global networks to identify and support collaborative efforts to expand our support of refugee learners and educators worldwide through our convening of the Migration Summit at MIT this April.

I remember every single person who I talked to about ReACT, and who somehow helped to make it what it is now. I learned through my experience the importance of knowing for yourself that you were there when someone desperately needed you. Very much like the Italian volunteers that were coming to my camp, and literally changed my life. Because humans thrive through humanitarianism. And our MIT community through

ReACT once again showed its core nature, people ready to give a hand, generous and skilled, efficient and reliable, but most importantly human and humanitarian. For me, as a former refugee and active part of this community, this latter is what truly matters. We have created a new model of education that can holistically

support vulnerable and historically marginalized learners, opening agile continuous education pathways to new knowledge that will serve a better world. We have brought MIT's values to the brightest learners, to those thirstiest for education in the world. Imagine what we could do next. ■

Admir Masic is an Associate Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (masic@mit.edu).

letters

On the Cancellation of Dorian Abbot

To The Faculty Newsletter:

AS THE FATHER OF A recent MIT grad (class of 2021) I heartily agree with the open letter from numerous MIT

faculty regarding Prof. Abbot's canceled lecture. Further, I will not ever donate a cent to MIT again until MIT publicly

announces policy that will prevent such a despicable act from ever happening again.
Gary Geil, MD

To The Faculty Newsletter:

THE RIGHT TO SPEAK FREELY is absolutely, totally independent of any institutional affiliation. Such affiliation should be based only on their objective professional competence.

So called "experts" on normative expression are no more than self-appointed priests purporting to know the will of god. They are at best, useless, and at worst, very dangerous. Saint or monster,

anyone has a right to speak and we have the right to listen or ignore, but NOT to suppress them.

Bill Charles

Elevating Design at MIT Through the Morningside Academy

John Ochsendorf
Maria Yang

MIT HAS AREAS OF tremendous strength in design education and research, but we have not been greater than the sum of our parts. Over the last 18 months, faculty and staff have come together to envision new opportunities for design. Now, thanks to a \$100 million gift, a new cross-cutting entity – the MIT Morningside Academy for Design – will become a hub for advancing the many facets of design across the Institute.

A Committee to Envision the Future of Design at MIT

In the fall of 2020, Deans Hashim Sarkis and Anantha Chandrakasan charged the two of us with developing a new path forward for design at MIT. With input from the deans of the five Schools and the College, we created a committee of faculty and staff who are engaged in design from across the Institute. During eight online committee meetings throughout the winter months, we heard from students and colleagues about MIT's many strengths as well as noticeable gaps, and we converged on a series of actionable recommendations for the future. We also built community and found connections across MIT that we were not aware of previously, generating optimism during a time of profound challenges.

In April of 2021, our committee released a white paper with recommendations on Envisioning the Future of Design at MIT (available [here](#)). Specifically, we recommended to:

1. Grow the footprint of design education through courses, awareness, and access;
2. Enhance the profile and visibility of design excellence, across campus and around the world;

3. Elevate societal impact through MIT designs and designers;

4. Create a new center to support design opportunities for our students and faculty, as well as for our colleagues and communities.

Throughout 2021, we participated in departmental and School faculty meetings across the Institute to seek feedback on our recommendations, culminating in a presentation to the Institute faculty meeting on December 15, 2021. This led to a rich set of conversations with broad enthusiasm for our committee's recommendations, as well as clear suggestions for ways to sharpen our thinking and broaden the impact of design. It was heartening to have so many colleagues embrace the vast potential to elevate the Institute's commitment to design education and research.

A Gift from the Morningside Foundation

During the summer of 2021, we also shared our recommendations with Dr. Gerald Chan, a remarkable educational philanthropist and a trustee of the Morningside Foundation, the charitable arm of the T. H. Chan family. Gerald and his family grasped immediately the power and the potential for design education to help students and faculty translate innovation into actions for the benefit of society. And as the Morningside Foundation outlined the goals of a transformative gift for design, they encouraged us to think bigger than our own campus and to find ways to scale the impact of design from MIT to the world.

To ensure a lasting and powerful presence for design at MIT, the Morningside Foundation has provided a \$60M endow-

ment, which will support design activities for perpetuity through the MIT Morningside Academy for Design. In addition, \$40M will support initial expenses to launch the Academy as well as capital expenses for renovating the Metropolitan Warehouse to serve as a design hub. This farsighted gift will enable us to achieve many of the recommendations of our committee's white paper from last April. It required many colleagues to support this vision and to secure this remarkable gift, and we are extremely grateful to the Morningside Foundation for making this possible.

The Role of the Morningside Academy for Design

The Morningside Academy for Design will promote collaboration and innovation in design across MIT, with links to all five Schools and the College, and it will be administered by the School of Architecture and Planning in close collaboration with the School of Engineering. Following the healthy model provided by other cross-cutting centers at MIT, the Academy will build bridges and community, support the lively exchange of knowledge and ideas, and help raise the profile of design at MIT. In broad strokes, the Academy will support student fellowships, public outreach, and entrepreneurship. It will provide a convening space where thinking and making can come together, whether through coursework, research projects, exhibitions, or events. We will shortly issue a call for graduate fellowships in design open to any enrolled MIT graduate student and we ask that you encourage talented applicants to apply.

The Morningside Academy will be housed in the renovated Metropolitan

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**Elevating Design at MIT Through
the Morningside Academy**

Ochsendorf and Yang, from preceding page

Warehouse, the future home of the Department of Architecture and other units of the School of Architecture and Planning as well as Project Manus, with a dramatic new maker space. Slated to open in 2025, the revitalized iconic building will position the Academy at a key crossroads of campus with strong links to our residence halls and the City of Cambridge. It

is our sincere hope that the Morningside gift will help to elevate the Met Warehouse as a design hub for MIT, Cambridge, and the world.

Launching the MIT Morningside Academy for Design will be an act of co-creation with colleagues across campus and around the world. While the Academy's goals, activities, and governance structure are still evolving, via continued discussions with faculty, staff, and students from around the Institute, we

welcome your input. Please write to us at jao@mit.edu and mcyang@mit.edu with your suggestions and comments as we move forward together. ■

John Ochsendorf is the Class of 1942 Professor of Architecture and Civil and Environmental Engineering (jao@mit.edu);

Maria Yang is the Gail E. Kendall Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Associate Dean of the School of Engineering (mcyang@mit.edu). Together they will serve as the founding director and associate director of the MIT Morningside Academy for Design.

In Memoriam Leo Marx



LEO MARX DIED A FEW WEEKS ago at the advanced age of 102. He was one of the leading scholars of his generation in America, a classic humanist, using the literature of great minds and the contingencies of history to think through current problems about the effects of technology on society.

With the exception of Noam Chomsky, Leo was probably the most significant thinker to grace the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences in the last 50 years. But rather than detail his books and articles, ably done elsewhere, I want to write about him as a *colleague*, for there, too, he exemplified the best of our profession. To begin with, he was a brilliant teacher; his remarks in the classroom illuminated the words of many an American author for genera-

tions of students. Moreover, he was always willing to share his love of writers like Emerson and Thoreau and to visit one's class as a guest lecturer. Those occasions transformed the quotidian into celebrations, full of light and pleasure for everyone, as he communicated his joy in the work and his delight in entralling the rest of us.

Not that we agreed about everything. Although he had been radical in his school days, an admiring student of F. O. Matthiesson at Harvard, for a long time he had no women writers on his syllabi in American literature. He staunchly supported women in the workplace, but declined to include them on his reading lists. I argued the case for Sarah Orne Jewett's New England classic *Country of the Pointed Firs* at the very least, and urged other women writers of the nineteenth century on him. Eventually, under pressure from students as well, he yielded the point; but he asked me to guest lecture on Jewett at first and it took a while for him to thoroughly appreciate this part of the intellectual world. But he did change his mind and his personal literary canon expanded as he grew older.

Leo was exceptionally kind to younger scholars and shared his influence wher-

Ruth Perry

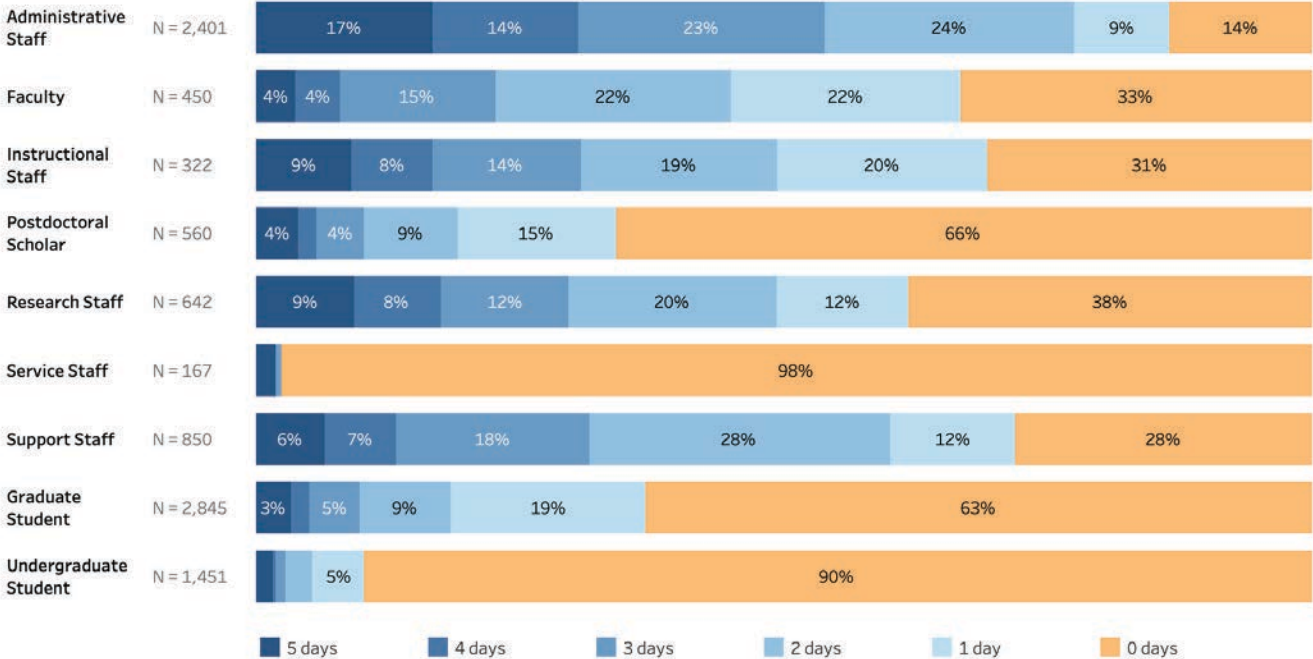
ever he could, with a letter or a recommendation or a contact where it would do the most good. He would read the jejune works of those who came to admire him even when he had no institutional responsibility to do so – and then took the time to give good practical succinct advice. Open to most everyone who called, he gave his time and attention to hundreds of would-be scholars, teachers, and students over the years. He did not protect himself from visitors the way most busy and influential scholars do but was courteous to the young and unknown, the awkward and shy, the fearful and bold alike.

Leo was also a loving and thoughtful friend. I still cherish the MIT sweatpants that he and Jane (his incisive partner of 62 years) brought me in the hospital after a hip replacement. He gave me essential advice on the first chapter of my last book. I daresay there are hundreds of people today who could tell such tales of his generosity. Besides being a *mensch*, he wrote deeply meaningful essays and books about things that matter, and his inspired writings will live on long after these stories of his kindnesses have faded with the tellers. ■

Ruth Perry is the Ann Fetter Friedlaender Professor of Humanities, Emeritus; MacVicar Faculty Fellow (rperry@mit.edu).

M.I.T. Numbers from the MIT 2021 Commuter Survey

Number of days worked/studied remotely



Limited to respondents who answered mode of travel for all five days of the week.
 Data as of October 2021.

Source: Office of the Provost/Institutional Research