

## We're recruiting for the WL Board!

As you read this quarterly WL Newsletter, we invite you to think about the team behind our programs, philanthropy and events. Although 2020 was a challenging year for all of us, the WL provided much-needed cold weather clothing for 80 students, and provided 100 undergraduate and graduate students with a 'Zoom shirt' (A dress shirt to look professional online). We provided \$50 gift cards to students struggling with food insecurity over summer break and our long-running English Conversation classes resumed online. We reinvented many of our most popular programs to a virtual format – such as the Breakfast Series and Honorary League lunch. We launched a series of 'Skillshares', wherein members of our community gave fun, informal classes online and those who attended donated to the speaker's chosen charity. Some of the things we love to do, such as gather to share lunch with CitySide Dining, or welcoming newcomers to the institute with our Open House, were placed on pause until it is safe to gather again. In the past year, however, we've found community online, through our many interest groups, classes and charitable endeavors.

The MIT Women's League was founded in 1913, strives to connect women in the MIT community through activities, interest groups, and volunteer service opportunities in order to enrich their lives

individually and to benefit the broader MIT community. If you're a woman affiliated with MIT as a spouse, staff or retiree, and you'd like to be part of the League's philanthropy, education, or learning, consider joining us on the WL Board. There are several positions that we hope you will consider and apply for. Our Board members represent different interests for the WL, and there are six Officer positions with different responsibilities. The Board meets four times a year (September - June) and the Officers meet monthly. Officers serve a term of two years, not to exceed four years, and there is no term limit for those in the wider Board group.

In 2022, a number of Officer positions on our Board will be open. If you've ever thought about being a more active member of the Women's League, we'd love to talk to you! We are looking to include women from Lincoln Lab, and specifically seeking women who love to engage with their community, and bring warmth and commitment to their role. Whether you sing, teach English, enjoy crafts, are a foodie, or if you have a unique background and experience such as marketing, strategic planning, communications, or membership recruitment, we would love to hear from you. **Please get in touch with our Manager, Kirsty Bennett ([kbennett@mit.edu](mailto:kbennett@mit.edu)) for more information.**



### Officers

**Chair:** Presides at all meetings of the WL Board

**Treasurer:** Keeps an account of all funds received and disbursed, and advises on managing the annual budget

**Program Officer:** Coordinates educational and engaging programming for the WL

**Officer for Social Activities:** Coordinates Annual Meeting & Open House

**Officer for Service Projects:** Coordinates the WL's philanthropic endeavors

**Nominating Officer:** Assists other Officers in events and nominates candidates for Officers prior to the Annual Meeting

### Executive Board

Members of our larger board typically represent an interest group or program, or serve as Member-at-Large.

## Thank you to our members for the 2021 Winter Clothing Drive

Covid changed everything, and it even changed the way we support students. Every Fall for 25 years, the WL has offered winter clothing to students who need it. With the changes to on-campus housing due to the pandemic, a new cohort of students arrived on

campus in February, who missed the Fall event. We were able to once again to provide an online form to on-campus students, where they could request coats, hats, gloves, scarves and a professional shirt for online interviews. More than 20 students reached out for help.

We also offered a rack of coats and crates of winter accessories for Arrival Weekend at the Office of the First Year. New students could take what they needed before heading to their dorms. For all your support and donations - thank you. We couldn't do it without you.

# MIT Women's League Annual Meeting

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

12:00-1:00pm

Via Zoom

Join us for our Annual Meeting! This is a chance to gather safely online with WL colleagues and friends, hear what we've been up to and our plans for coming year. Women's League Chair Cheryl Vossmer will introduce the event, which is organized by the Office for Social Activities, Jennifer Fleming.

This year we've invited FX Manager Julie Parker to be our speaker. Since MIT shut down, Julie has kept the lights on, both literally and figuratively, at the FX.

Since the Institute reopened, Julie has been back on site once a week, and has been refurbishing furniture and the FX space itself. Julie will offer a guided walk through of the FX, talk about our plans for re-opening and answer your questions about what the next year will look like for our beloved FX. Register online or email [wleague@mit.edu](mailto:wleague@mit.edu).

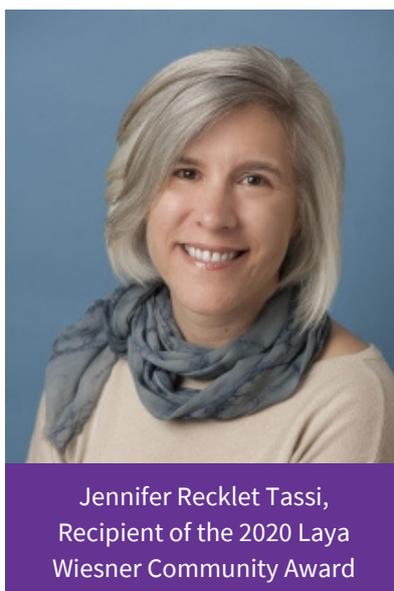


## Weisner Awards and Institute Ceremony

The MIT Awards Convocation honors MIT students, faculty, staff, and community members who have made outstanding contributions to the shared life of the Institute. Two specific awards, that honor former MIT first lady Laya Wiesner, are reviewed and selected by the Women's League board.

The **Laya W. Wiesner Award** recognizes an undergraduate woman who has helped make MIT a better, happier, friendlier environment. This award recognizes her contributions, made in any area of Institute life, while at the same time maintaining a good academic record.

The **Laya Wiesner Community Award** is given to a member or friend of the MIT community for conspicuously effective service that reflects Laya's concerns for enhancing life at the Institute and in the world at large."



Jennifer Recklet Tassi,  
Recipient of the 2020 Laya  
Wiesner Community Award

As we still can't gather in person, a virtual award ceremony will be held on May 14th, 2021. Visit [awards.mit.edu](https://awards.mit.edu) for more information.

In 2020, The Laya Wiesner Community Award was given to Jennifer Recklet Tassi, Program Manager for MIT Spouses & Partners Connect.

Jennifer works tirelessly to help make those who are new to the MIT Community feel involved, connected and supported with creatively managed workshops, excursions, social events and programs.

Jennifer recently joined the quarter century club at MIT, and we are lucky to have counted her amongst us for so long! if you're lucky enough to cross paths with Jennifer, you'll meet your biggest cheerleader, your fiercest advocate, and your most understanding friend. Her professional success illustrates her compassion and spirit to always seek to make the world a better place for other people.

## Looking for an interesting read?

The Book Discussion interest group will host virtual meetings via Zoom this semester. Please let Nancy Holloman ([nancyredsox@gmail.com](mailto:nancyredsox@gmail.com)) know if you'd like to be added to their mailing list.

April 21  
The Island of Sea Women  
by Lisa See  
11:30am

May 19  
H is for Hawk  
by Helen McDonald  
11:30am

# Japanese Wives Group: Friendship is like a Flower

We recently received a kind letter from one of our members, Asuka, expressing thanks to her friendship partner, Sofia. Sofia has made a lasting impact on not only Asuka but our group as a whole, so we would like to share the kind sentiments from Asuka as well as express our own appreciation.

Friendship is like a flower. It is essential to take care of it every day to make a beautiful flower bloom. Friendship is the same.

Thoughtful consideration to others fosters stronger friendship. The MIT Japanese Wives Group organizes the Friendship Partner Program, arranging introductory meetings for our members to exchange their culture with that of their partners. One of our wonderful Friendship Partners is Sofia. It was at the Ladies Lounge at MIT that I first met her. At that time I was looking for Friendship Partners for our members. When I first saw her, I instinctively felt her kindness. Indeed she has become a great Friendship Partner and friend. For more than 10 years since then, she has contributed to our group so much.



Words can't describe how grateful we are. She always brought us a lot of food that she cooked with her mother whenever we had a party at MIT. She has always helped us, even when she is busy.

Many of our members remain close, even after leaving MIT. The strong bond between Sofia and Asuka is a representative, as she says in her letter: *"After leaving Boston, I will really miss Sofia. For one year, she spent her break time for me as a volunteer, she gave me special time that can't be changed by anything. When I came to Boston, I couldn't understand English well and I couldn't adjust to American culture."*

*Sofia gave warm kindness to me. I am full of the feelings of thanks to Sofia. I learned that a strong personal bond can be created in this way, even if language and culture are different. These experiences are my treasure in the rest of my life. I saw that Sofia, and other women who administrate and manage events of Japanese Wives Group always work hard for others, so now I'm in a strong feeling that I want to contribute to society. We learned pay it forward through this activity."*

Sofia, no matter how far away you are, we will never forget the kindness we received from you. Through the good times and the bad, we will always remember you.

Kimie Shirasaki  
The MIT Japanese Wives Group

All of us at the MIT Women's League would like to wish congratulations to Sofia on her upcoming retirement! She has been a longstanding member of the League and our Interest Groups. We will miss you on campus, Sofia, but we hope to stay connected with you for many years to come.

## Upcoming Skillshare

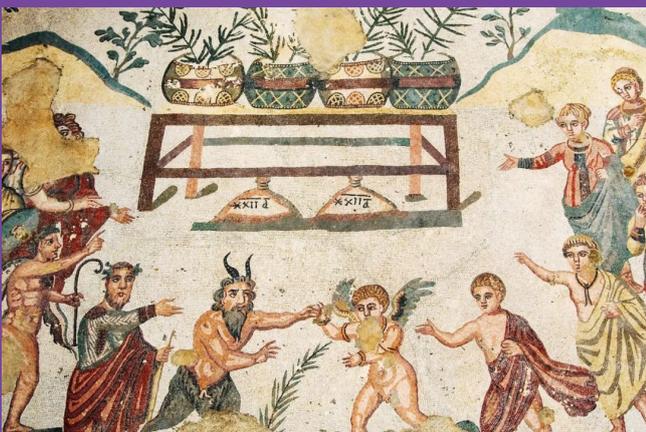
Join us on Zoom for our upcoming skillshares, where a friend or colleague will invite you to their homes to share their passion, present a workshop, or teach you a new skill, and answer your questions. These presentations are fun and informal - please join us!

Register online at [wl.mit.edu](http://wl.mit.edu) or by emailing [wleague@mit.edu](mailto:wleague@mit.edu)

## Sicily Through Art & Food

Wednesday, April 28 2022

12:00 - 1:00pm



Following our hugely popular March event about the impact of multicultural immigration on Sicily's cuisine, we're going back to the Med!

Sicily is at the center of the Mediterranean Sea. Throughout history, different populations have shaped its art, architecture, and food, creating a melting pot of cultures. Art historian Temenuzhka Dimova and Sicily aficionado Sylvie Scholvin will explore the artistic and culinary heritage of Sicily. Through the connection between art and food, you will understand the unique and fascinating character and diversity of the island.

# League Interest Groups

## BOOK DISCUSSION

Barbara Donnelly  
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Nancy Hollomon  
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## CHORALE

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web.mit.edu/womensleague/womenschorale

## MITELL STORYTELLING

Kirsty Bennett  
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## FIBER ARTS

Claudia LaBollita-James  
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## COMMUNITY CRAFT FAIRS

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## CITYSIDE DINING

Jennifer Sousa  
jfsousa@mit.edu

## MIT JAPANESE WIVES GROUP

Kimie Shirasaki  
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The **Fiber Crafts Group** continues to meet via Zoom. Feel free to sign in at any time over the two hours, and stay for as long as you like. For a Zoom invite, please email Claudia James (nonnajames@gmail.com). Join them anytime between 12:30-1pm on April 20, May 18 or June 15.

The April **Honorary League Luncheon** will now be held as a webcast. Invitations will be sent out mid March with details about how to access the talk by our speaker, Margery Resnick, on April 22. We hope to be able to hold an in-person event again soon.

The MIT Women's League Newsletter is published four times during the academic year. Please email the office for a hard copy of the newsletter or for any questions you may have.

Deadline for submission for the November Newsletter is October 1.

**Manager** Kirsty Bennett  
**Chair** Cheryl Vossmer  
**Honorary Chair** Christine Reif  
**Visual Identity** Ink Design



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