

## MIT Institute Awards

The MIT Awards Convocation honors MIT students, faculty, staff, and community members who have made outstanding contributions to the shared life of the Institute. For the first time in two years, we will gather for an in-person celebration, on Monday, May 2nd, 2022. Two of these 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."

Winners for the 2022 Institute Awards will be announced in April. Visit [awards.mit.edu](https://awards.mit.edu) for more information on the ceremony.

### Our 2021 Award Recipients



The 2021 Laya W. Wiesner Award was presented to **Anjali Nambrath** (21) a member of the Physics Values Committee and the Present of the Society of Physics Students. As a partner activist, Ms. Nambrath is without peer. She worked directly with faculty to improve the remote learning experience for students in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, her research work with Prof. Or Hen on understanding the nuclear physics effects of neutrino interactions has been significant, and she organized this summer's student-led research conference, PRISM.



The 2021 Laya Wiesner Community Award was presented to **Dr. Amy Brand**, the visionary Director of the MIT Press. Amy made the documentary *Picture a Scientist*, which has had a remarkable reception and impact. It won a 2020 Tribeca Film Festival Award, and has been shown in over 50 countries to over 100,000 people. The power of this film to move people emotionally, to promote productive discussions about gender and race issues in the workplace, and to change people's thinking has been stunning. Like Mrs. Wiesner, Brand is a person who invents the future at MIT including a more inclusive university community and world.



### Fall Fashion Exchange 2021 Recap

The Fall Fashion Exchange took place virtually this year providing winter coats, hats, and gloves for MIT students. Students let us know what they needed, and donors signed up via a spreadsheet to send items to the students directly.

Through the support of generous donors we were able to provide over 200 winter items to 78 students. Thank you to everyone who participated!

# WISDM

Powered by MIT Innovation Initiative

## Spring Speaker Series

This semester, the Women's League is proud to be continuing our partnership with WISDM, the Women in Innovation and STEM Database at MIT and the MIT Innovation Initiative to continue our popular speaker series.

WISDM is an initiative aimed at promoting the visibility of women researchers within the MIT community. The goal of WISDM is to provide a curated searchable online database of MIT women in STEM, making it easier to find talented and diverse speakers

for conference talks, panels, news stories, outreach events and podcasts. This Spring, we will be hosting four women graduate students giving talks about their careers and research, all held via Zoom. **Register for these events at [wl.mit.edu](http://wl.mit.edu).**

**Tuesday April 5th: Sophia Liu**  
via Zoom, 12-1pm

Sophia Liu will discuss her career path, current research in developing tools for studying cell interactions across time and space, and the most useful

Sophia graduated in 2017 from MIT with a BS in Chemical-Biological Engineering. She is currently a PhD candidate at Harvard Biophysics and affiliated with the Harvard-MIT HST program, co-advised by Fei Chen and Eric Lander. As an undergraduate, she worked in Robert Langer's Lab on a microfluidic device for antigen delivery and in Alex Shalek's Lab on single-cell sequencing for neuronal nuclei. She is broadly interested in developing methods for measuring cell interactions in space and over time in immune contexts.



## Breakfast Series Spring 2022: Professor Heather Paxson

**Wednesday, April 13 2022**  
**08:00am**

**Via Zoom. Register for this event at [wl.mit.edu](http://wl.mit.edu)**



Professor Heather Paxson

Twice-yearly women in the MIT community are invited to informal "breakfast talks." Known as the Breakfast Series, they are occasions when women faculty and administrators explore the role of women in the academy, sharing the pathways their professional lives have taken — the people and events that have influenced their direction.

**Heather Paxson** is interested in how people craft a sense of themselves as moral beings in their everyday lives, especially through activities having to do with family and food. She is the author of two ethnographic monographs: *Making Modern Mothers: Ethics and Family Planning in Urban Greece* (University of California Press, 2004) and *The*

*Life of Cheese: Crafting Food and Value in America* (University of California Press, 2013), analyzing how craftwork has become a new source of cultural and economic value within American landscapes of production and consumption. Her current work concerns the practical and semiotic work of moving perishable foods across international borders. After serving as Area Editor for the James Beard Award-winning *Oxford Companion to Cheese*, in 2018 she began a 5-year term co-editing *Cultural Anthropology*. At MIT, Heather teaches courses on food, family, craft, ethnographic research, and the meaning of life. She received a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Stanford University and a B.A. from Haverford College.

# Annual Meeting 2022: In-Person!

Wednesday, May 18th

12:00pm

Emma Rogers Room (10-340)

We're so excited to be able to host an in-person Annual Meeting for the first time since 2019! This is long overdue, and we're delighted to be able to gather with friends.

The 2022 Annual Meeting will feature student speakers who have been recipients of PKG Center Fellowships, which the Women's League helps to fund. There will be a chance to learn about the work these students are doing, as well as a Q&A session after the talk.

This event will also be a chance to thank and say farewell to our outgoing Chair, Cheryl Vossmer, who has been at the helm of the Women's League since 2017. We've been so lucky to have her guidance and support over the past four years, and she will be greatly missed.



Due to the changing nature of the pandemic, all attendees will be given a lunch to go, prepared by Chef Tim Healey, and we're waiving the usual cost of attending the meeting.

We hope to see you there! Email [kbennett@mit.edu](mailto:kbennett@mit.edu) to reserve your space.

## Annual Meeting Speaker: Jupneet K. Singh

Jupneet is a 3rd year student majoring in Chemistry and minoring in History. She is in Air Force ROTC and is currently Operations Group Deputy Commander (Cadet Lt Col).

She founded a program in her hometown called Pathways to Promise, that provides educational and vocational support for children affected by domestic violence, in partnership with the Ventura County Family Justice Center. She received four fellowships totaling \$8400 to support this program.

Jupneet is a Burchard Scholar, Co-President of Project Sunshine MIT, and is on the MIT Mock Trial Executive Board, and an All-National Attorney. She has done research at the Ventura County Medical Center, Nolan Lab, and Shalek Lab. She hopes to be a trauma surgeon in the Air Force.

### Pathways to Promise

Jupneet founded and is currently Director of Pathways to Promise, which is an educational and vocational mentorship program for children affected by domestic violence.

Pathways to Promise is in partnership with the Ventura County Family Justice Center, and we built it from scratch starting in Summer 2021. Pathways has an educational and vocational focus, ranging from activities that provide social support to career-focused support. Jupneet's project had various key accomplishments, including a partnership with a local national park, Channel Islands National Park, and kids science museum kidSTREAM, and a speaker event with a local artist who uses art as a healing tool, Bell Arts Factory.



# Supporting Ukraine



Our very own Julie Parker, Manager of the MIT FX, is raising money for Refugees International and Doctors Without Borders to support their efforts in Ukraine. In her Etsy shop, she is selling infinity scarves in the colors of Ukraine's flag, with all proceeds going to these charities. She has raised \$1,250 so far!

This isn't the first time that Julie has used her crafting skills to help others. In the early stages of the pandemic she joined with other women to help make masks and caps for front line workers and for the unhoused community.

With her Ukraine scarves, there are a range of fabrics and patterns to choose from! To support Julie's effort and buy a scarf, visit her Etsy shop, BlueMeridianCrafts.

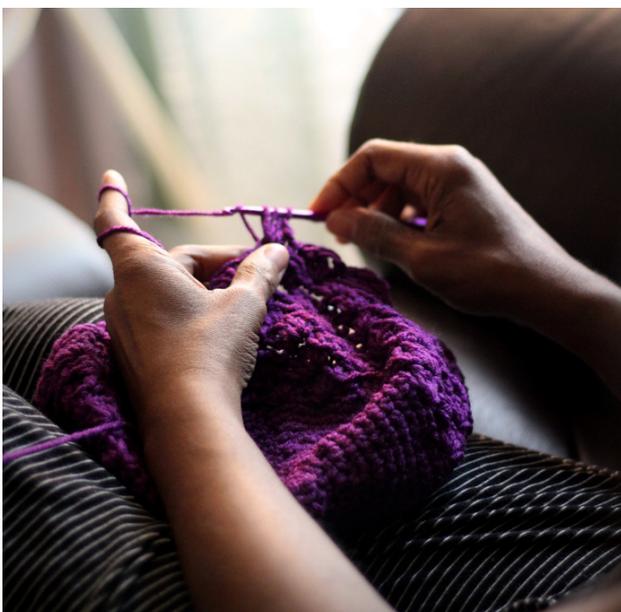


## Looking for an interesting read?

The Book Discussion group will host virtual meetings via Zoom. Please write to Maxine Jonas (jonas\_m@mit.edu) to be added to their mailing list.

**April 20**  
*Klara and the Sun*  
Kazuo Ishiguro

**May 18**  
*The Greater Journey - Americans in Paris*  
David McCullough



## Fiber Crafts Group

It's a good time to get creative and finish that project! The Fiber Crafts Group offers the space to craft online with friends. Meetings will be held throughout the Fall semester via Zoom. Feel free to sign in at any time over the hour, and stay for as long as you like. For a Zoom invite, please email Claudia James (nonnajames@gmail.com). All events are held 12:30-1:30pm.

**2022**  
April 19  
May 17  
June 21

# League Interest Groups

## **BOOK DISCUSSION**

Barbara Donnelly  
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Maxine Jonas  
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## **CHORALE**

Mary Shetterly  
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## **MITELL STORYTELLING**

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## **FIBER ARTS**

Claudia LaBollita-James  
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## **COMMUNITY CRAFT FAIRS**

Brenda Blais  
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## **CITYSIDE DINING**

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## **MIT JAPANESE WIVES GROUP**

Kimie Shirasaki  
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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.

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### **Find us online!**

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