Mission Statement
The MIT Women’s League, founded in 1913, strives to connect women in the MIT community through activities, interest groups, and volunteer opportunities, enriching their lives and the broader MIT Community.

Annual Meeting
Wednesday, May 18th, 2022
Emma Rogers Room
Room 10-342
Program
12:00 pm  Welcome: Jennifer Fleming, Officer for Social Activities
          Remarks by Cheryl Vossmer, Chair
          Election of Officers: Ellen Stordy, Nominating Officer
12:15    Remarks by Jupneet Singh
12:30    Remarks by Allison Lee
12:45    Q&A with Jupneet Singh & Allison Lee
1:00     Event end

Lunch, prepared by Chef Tim Healey, will be provided to take away.
**Jupneet Singh**
PKG Fellow, Chemistry and History (‘23)

Jupneet is a third-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.

**Allison Hannah Lee**
PKG Fellow, DUSP (G)

Allison completed her Master in City Planning degree from MIT DUSP in February 2022, with a focus on design and development. Prior to MIT, she worked in architectural preservation and heritage conservation in Hong Kong, with a focus on community systems, local economic growth, and inclusive development. She was involved in cultural heritage protection projects with UNESCO Nepal, UNESCO Bangkok, and The University of Hong Kong, often blending digital mapping, archival narratives, data visualization, and traditional methods/materials knowledge. She is currently based in San Diego as a Senior Planner with MIG.
Friends,

As we enter our third year of living with the pandemic, and we remember the tremendous numbers of those sickened or lost, there has been a lot to still be thankful for. For the scientists who research new treatments, front line workers, and all those who work diligently behind the scenes for our safety. In recent months, it’s been a joy to once again see smiling faces, and greet those we haven’t seen for a long time with a hug.

The Women’s League continued to work — remotely and in-person to continue to help and care for the MIT community. Some of these efforts included:

**Fall Fashion:**
In 2020, we were forced to make a huge shift to an online-only model to accommodate the needs of so many of our students. It seems that winter arrived early this year and a few new students were stunned by the cold New England weather. Again, with thanks to our Program Officers Mary Linan and Elise Perkins-Noel, and Manager Kirsty Bennett, these students were provided a warm coat, hat, and gloves, care of members of our community. The success of matching needs with donors again is a monumental task but probably less than the previous sorting, cleaning, moving, event day logistics and clean up. Thanks to all involved for making this a successful giving event. I’m sure the recipients were grateful with the cold and snowy weather this winter. More than 200 items of winter clothing were provided to students, and we’re grateful to all of those who gave.

**Wreath Making:**
The tradition of gathering to make the huge wreaths which adorn 77 Mass Ave. was once again a reality. It brought together several new volunteers who wanted to learn how it’s done, and to be involved with a WL community event. There was laughter and happiness, children, and holiday cheer. Thank you to all who volunteered! The abundance of glitter pinecones, huge bows, the wonderful fragrance of balsam boughs certainly was fun.
**Open House:**
We were delighted to this year host our Open House as a hybrid event. The event could only be staffed by Kirsty, Jennifer Fleming, Officer for Social Activities, and myself. An invitation was sent to new women of the community and although only a handful participated it was a wonderful way to get to know them and for them to learn about the WL. We were able to host in the Emma Rogers Room, with a to-go lunch provided for those who attended. Our talented Jennifer also zoomed the program to a few additional participants!

**WISDM:**
The Women in Innovation and STEM Database at MIT (WISDM) promotes the visibility of women in our current academic community, increases gender diversity in innovation and entrepreneurship, and makes it easier to find talented and diverse speakers for various events. WISDM supports women and gender non-conforming MIT community members and upholds the Institute’s efforts to foster community, equity, and inclusion. This year we hosted eight women speakers on Zoom, offering them a speaking opportunity as well as giving out community the chance to hear from these incredible women as they embark on their careers in research. This program was a great success, and we hope it will continue for years to come.

**Breakfast Series:**
Twice each year, women in the MIT community are invited to informal “breakfast talks.” Known as the Breakfast Series, these are occasions when women faculty and administrators explore the role of women in the academy, sharing the pathways their professional lives have taken, and the people and events that have influenced their direction. This year, we played host to Professor Heather Paxson and Professor Susan Murcott.

Two years ago, we didn’t know if we could survive six weeks of being home with spouses, kids, or all alone. We didn’t know if we should cross the street if someone approached us. We didn’t think the pandemic would last this long and yet we still are doing the best we can to be kind and understanding. As we open our hearts to those who need our assistance during these difficult world events, I remain confident in humanity. Let me close in saying that it has been truly an honor to serve the WL as the Chair these past four years. Thank you for this opportunity and humbling experience. The WL and the MIT community will be well-served by the new Chair — you are in good hands and heart.

Consider yourself hugged!

My best,
Cheryl

Cheryl Vossmer, Chair
SCHOLARS AND AWARDS

PKG Women’s League Scholars Summer 2021

The Betty Johnson Fellow

Allison Hannah Lee, Urban Studies and Planning (G)

During the 2021 summer months, Allison worked with The Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts and Growing Places nonprofit to plan a regional food hub that increases access to local affordable produce while also improving agricultural job stability and quality of work. This project asked the question, “What does an economically and environmentally sustainable food system look like?” while addressing equity, inclusion, and the local cultural context. Allison spent the summer engaging with relevant stakeholders, big data, and support agents to strategize a conceptual design, operation and phasing plan, financial model, and public charrettes event. She will continue on with the project in fall 2021 as a DUSP planning-in-practice student and intends to incorporate the work into her Master of City Planning thesis.

The Becky Vest Fellow

Jupneet Singh, Chemistry and History (’23)

Jupneet is a third year student majoring in Chemistry and minoring in History who wants to go into a career in medicine with a strong integration with policy. This summer, Jupneet started Pathways to Promise, a program that gives children who are affected by domestic violence a continued space to express their passions and plan their future. This program was held in her hometown, a few miles from her high school, so Jupneet hoped to help children in the community she grew-up in to achieve their goals. Many of the children affected by domestic violence do not believe they can attend a four-year college or pursue a real career. The program has three components to help children reach their educational or vocational goals: field trips, keynote speakers, and college-bound workshops. Along with the events, mentors are a constant presence throughout the program. This summer she created a framework for Pathways to Promise to be implemented year after year. This project was in partnership with the Ventura County Family Justice Center.
IAP 2021

Our January 2022 IAP fellows were unable to complete their fellowships due to the Omicron surge. Funds from this program will be used for summer 2022 fellowships.

Laya Weisner Awards

The 2022 Laya W. Wiesner Award is presented to:

Danielle Geathers ’21

The 2022 Laya Wiesner Community Award is presented to:

Noelle Wakefield, Assistant Director, MSRP & Diversity Initiatives

Our warmest congratulations to all of our awardees!
Programs 2021–2022

Interest Group Chair’s Meeting
September 8

Women’s League Open House
September 29

Fall-Fashion-Free-For-All
October – December

WISDM Speaker Series:
Kayla Storme
October 5

Honorary League Virtual Event with John Ochsendorf
October 21

WISDM Speaker Series:
Jessica Ingabire
October 28

WISDM Speaker Series:
Krista Pullen
November 9

WISDM Speaker Series:
Mara Freilich
November 18

Wreath-Making
December 1

Breakfast Series with Professor Susan Murcott
December 8

WISDM Speaker Series:
Meghana Ranganathan
February 17

WISDM Speaker Series:
Padmini Pillai
March 1

WISDM Speaker Series:
Heather Kosakowski
March 8

WISDM Speaker Series:
Sophia Liu
April 5

Honorary League Virtual Event with Christine Reif
April 6

Breakfast Series with Professor Heather Paxson
April 13

Virtual Volunteer Appreciation
April 26

Women’s League Annual Meeting
May 18
EXECUTIVE BOARD 2021–2022

Christine Reif  Honorary Chair
Cheryl Vossmer  Chair
Elise Perkins-Noel and
Mary Linan  Officers for Programs
Danielle T. Reddy  Officer for Service Projects
Jennifer Fleming  Officer for Social Activities
Pamela Schickling-Buckley  Treasurer
Ellen Stordy  Nominating Chair

Sandra Boynton
Paula Cronin
Mary DesPrez
Jane Howard
Alison Hynd
Deborah Liverman
Chris Santos
Laurie Scott
Zahida Taher

WOMEN’S LEAGUE OFFICERS 2022

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following slate of Elective Officers for the Women’s League Executive Board.

For two (2) years
Chair
Danielle Reddy

Officer for Social Activities
Jennifer Fleming

Officers for Programs
Mary Linan
Elise Perkins-Noel

Treasurer
Pamela Schickling Buckley

For one (1) year
Nominating Officer
Ellen Stordy

We are pleased to welcome to the Board: Nancye Mims as Chair of the Honorary League Committee, and Minerva Tirado as Member-at-Large.

The Board continues the League’s tradition of nurturing the growth of new ideas, which, in turn, supports the needs of MIT’s community of women.
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

In the spring of 2021, social activities were able to return in a limited capacity as the League hosted our very first Virtual Volunteer Appreciation on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 1pm. The online event included many thanks to our volunteers who work on behalf of the League all year long to make our programs successful. A special presentation, “Herbs: From the Garden to the Glass”, was offered by our friends at MIT Endicott House and featured an interactive talk and demonstration on gardening, harvesting, and cooking with herbs. We appreciate everyone that was able to attend and participate in the virtual event, and prizes were given away to a few lucky winners.

On Tuesday, May 11, 2021, we continued with a virtual format for our first ever Virtual Annual Meeting at 12pm via Zoom. The focus was on “in-house” topics, with the usual business reporting and voting, followed by a live tour of the MIT Furniture Exchange (MIT FX), hosted by Julie Parker. Julie took us through all of the offerings available at the MIT FX, focusing on unique pieces, and highlighted the work being done by volunteers to keep things going during the pandemic.

In the fall of 2021, we took another step towards normalcy with a hybrid Open House event. On Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 12pm, League Manager Kirsty Bennett and League Chair Cheryl Vossmer welcomed guests in person in the Emma Rogers Room for a socially distanced chance to learn about the MIT Women’s League. Simultaneously, Jennifer Fleming hosted a Zoom event in the same location so that folks could log on virtually as well. Folks who were able to stop by in person enjoyed lunch to take away from Chef Tim Healey and his team. Working together with campus partners and AOs, we continue to grow interest in the Women’s League, keeping in touch via emails, newsletters, and mailing lists.

I would like to express my gratitude to Kirsty and Cheryl for their continued support and great ideas – these events would not be successful without your valued input and hard work!
WISDM Speaker Series
This past year, we were proud to launch a new speaker series, in partnership with The Women in Innovation and STEM Database at MIT (WISDM) and the MIT Innovation Initiative. WISDM promotes the visibility of women in our academic community, increases gender diversity in innovation and entrepreneurship, and makes it easier to find talented and diverse speakers for various events.

These events offered speaking opportunities to graduate and post-doctoral students at MIT, giving them the chance to share their current work and research with a friendly, enthusiastic audience from the Women’s League community. This past year we hosted speakers Kayla Storme, Jessica Ingabire, Krista Pullen, Mara Freilich, Meghana Ranganathan, Padmini Pillai, Heather Kosakowski and Sophia Liu. Topics included climate change, the science of glaciers, vaccine development, neuroscience, ocean currents and immunology, to name just a few. As well as learning about their research, we had to chance to get to know these wonderful women and how they came to be at MIT. This series was popular with our members, and many of the speakers gave thanks for the chance to give a talk in the early stage of their careers.

We hope to continue this event in the next year, and work with our partners to host in-person events when it is safe to do so.

Kirsty Bennett

Breakfast Series
Twice a year, we invite members to hear from a woman in the Institute, describe her career path and work at MIT. Due to the pandemic, this year we held the events virtually. A major benefit of being virtual was the ability to increase the number of attendees as we were not restricted by the limitations of the Emma Rogers Room, our usual space.

Our Fall speaker was Prof Susan Murcott, a world traveler, free spirit, and non-traditional student, who received her Bachelor and Masters of Science from MIT. In 1999, she became a lecturer at MIT and began leading month-long projects for students who wanted to be part of her work in developing countries. Prof. Murcott leads the “Safe Water for 2 Billion People” project which works to manufacture and market E.coli test kits in Nepal. She has also been honored by MIT graduate students as Committed to Caring. She led a fascinating discussion about her work and the work of her students. The event was well-attended and she was authentic, engaging, and inspiring.

Our Spring speaker was Professor Heather Paxson. Professor 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 talk took us on a journey through her varied career. She was a warm, friendly and fascinating speaker.

Zahida Taher, Chair

SERVICE PROJECTS

For over 100 years, service to the MIT community has been, and continues to be of primary importance to the League. In this unusual year, service was a particular focus, and our volunteers were engaged in the following League service projects. We are proud and incredibly grateful to have had their support, dedication, energy, and enthusiasm. These are remarkable women who make time, especially in a global pandemic, to make significant contributions to our community.

Danielle T. Reddy, Officer for Service Projects
**English Conversation Classes**

WL English Conversation Classes continue to provide international visitors the chance to practice English and connect with others at MIT in a welcoming environment. Basic, intermediate, and advanced levels met twice a week via Zoom in both the fall and spring semesters.

We had 53 and 49 students registered for the fall and spring terms, respectively; about half of those attended regularly each term. Registrants came from 20 countries representing 4 continents. A number of students signed in to Zoom from China, Japan, Korea, Turkey, and, in the US, Arizona and Georgia.

While many students would welcome in-person classes if available, the Zoom format has been a boon to students who either live too far away to attend in-person — whether outside the US, outside Massachusetts, or in a too-distant suburb — or who have young children at home.

The most popular part of the Conversation Classes is the opportunity to be part of the English Partner Program. Thanks to the dedication and leadership of Kara Cunningham and her remarkable cadre of volunteers, once again every student who requested a partner was matched.

We would welcome hearing from anyone who is part of the MIT community and would like to learn more about our Zoom or in-person teaching opportunities, whether as a regular teacher or a substitute.

Finally, and most important, many thanks to the dedicated teachers who have made our Zoom classes a success: Srirupa Mitra, Fran Hutchinson, Laura Mali-Astrue, Vanitha Singh, Ellen Stordy, Mary Desprez, and Mariana Castro. They are the program.

Respectfully,

Laurie Scott, *Coordinator*
English Partners Program
The English Partner Program (EPP) continued remotely for the 2021–2022 academic year. Over the course of the academic year, 58 pairs of volunteers and students were introduced to practice conversational English. There were 34 pairs matched in the fall and 24 in the spring. 17 matches were continuing pairs who were introduced in a previous term. The students who elected to participate came from the intermediate and advanced English classes and the volunteers came from numerous departments and offices on campus.

Volunteers were enthusiastic promoters the program in their own areas. Their networks were very helpful for recruitment of new volunteers at the start of each term. Many employees, myself included, are working a hybrid schedule. The reduced number of employees on campus and restricted access make it difficult to have casual meetings to recruit new volunteers. Supporters of the program who were unable to commit to meeting with a partner were some of the most enthusiastic promoters in their individual areas. I believe the personal connections were essential for volunteer recruitment this year. I will work to support and strengthen these informal networks in the coming year.

The English partner matches used the virtual format to their advantage. I received updates stating that some pairs were holding virtual cooking classes together, visiting museums virtually, and watching and discussing television shows together. I shared these ideas with the current volunteers in case they were having difficulty connecting with their partner on Zoom. The English conversation partners used the virtual format to their advantage and found new, creative ways to connect.

Several volunteers reached out to ask if it would be ok to meet with their partner in person. I confirmed that they would be able to, provided that they and their partner were comfortable. None of the partners were able to consistently meet in this way over the past few months due to the changing restrictions, but it signaled the commitment from both our partners and their students.

MIT has started to remove a number of its pandemic restrictions. It is uncertain at this time whether the program will continue virtually or return to in-person meetings. However, I am certain that the volunteers will continue to adapt, work hard, and foster community regardless of the program’s format. The past two years are a testament to their adaptability and strong support of the EPP.

Kara Cunningham, Volunteer Coordinator
Furniture Exchange
The mission of the Furniture Exchange (FX) continues to be serving the communities we encompass — MIT, Harvard, Boston Suffolk, Tufts, and Emerson while promoting sustainability and raising funds through our sales to support the MIT Women’s League Scholarship Fund.

This year we were able to reopen in August 2021 to many eager customers while following MIT’s Covid protocols. While we were closed the first half of the 2021 calendar year, improvements were made to the FX’s physical appearance such as painting the exterior façade and floor as well as rehabbing a ton of furniture that all sold in the first month that we were open. We were able to post more frequently and both our social media platforms grew, with our Facebook and Instagram followers at 3,963 and 744 respectively. Please visit our sites at fx.mit.edu, facebook.com/MITFX and on Instagram as @mitfx.

The success of the Furniture Exchange stems largely from the support of our wonderful volunteers who keep the FX running smoothly, organize and clean the many pieces of inventory, wait on customers, and rehab furniture. They are: Bette Johnson, Gloria Pless, Irwin Pless, Zarrin Foster, Natasha and Lisa Paltseva, Fran Miles, Carolyn Truant, Zoe Petropoulos, and Keiko Kanda.

And we are of course very grateful to our loyal customers and generous donors.

A special thank you to Kirsty Bennett, an amazing person who is always a huge help and bright light to the me and to MIT FX. Thanks too to Cheryl Vossmer for her kind words, generous donations, and sage advice, and to all the members of the Women’s League for their help and support. We are hoping that after one year of being reopened in August 2022, we can make a donation to the MIT Women’s League Scholarship Fund.

Warm regards,
Julie Parker, Manager
Fall-Fashion-Free-For-All (FFFFA)
The 26th year of the FFE was another wonderful year supporting students who needed warm winter attire. Due to continued concerns around Covid-19, instead of offering an in-person clothing drive, we built on the success of reimagining this program last year. This year we continued to support students by mailing winter clothing to those in need.

The Office of the First Year and CASE (Class Awareness, Support & Equality), helped distribute a form to students who identified as having the greatest financial need to request winter clothing. Students filled out the form, and their data was anonymized. An email went out to WL members and friends with a link to a spreadsheet of requests. Those who were interested signed up on the spreadsheet and then they were connected directly with a student to mail them what they needed.

This program was a huge success. Our members passed on the email asking for donors around their various departments, and a number of people responded to the call to help. In total, we were able to provide over 200 winter items to 78 students.

Elise Perkins-Noel and Mary Linan
Interest Groups and Activities

Several of our Interest Groups have continued to gather for a second year on Zoom enjoying camaraderie and mutual interests in spite of the continued pandemic shutdowns and inability to meet in person. We particularly want to thank the group coordinators helping with the technology to make this happen. The group leaders all met by Zoom in the fall to discuss their group’s plans for the academic year.

The Book Discussion Group continued to meet monthly thanks to Maxine Jonas who coordinated the Zoom notifications. The meetings were well attended, the books diverse, and the discussions animated. The MIT Women’s Chorale also continued on Zoom. Mary Shetterly is the new contact person and this spring, an outside in-person concert, coordinated online, is planned. In addition, the Fiber Arts Group, Claudia James, coordinator, continued to gather and share their work on Zoom meetings. MITell Storytelling, introduced by Kirsty Bennett a few years ago, offers opportunities to the MIT community for events and storytelling gatherings sponsored by different MIT departments. The Japanese Wives Group, ably led by Kimie Shirasaki, supports and connects Japanese women, both in Cambridge and Tokyo. The twice-yearly meetings of the Honorary League, chaired by Chris Santos, have occurred in the form of two interesting webinar speakers. At the spring meeting, Christine Reif reflected on her tenure as MIT’s First Lady.

Community Craft Fairs (coordinated by Brenda Blais) and Cityside Dining (Jennifer Fleming) are dependent on in-person opportunities and have been on hiatus for two years with the hope that they will continue when everyone can return to the MIT campus.

Below are the reports of each interest group. The League invites anyone who wishes to learn more or join any of the groups, to email the coordinators for information. Attend once, or come each month! Also, if you have an idea for a new interest group or class, please email Kirsty and we can talk and make plans to arrange meetings for the group.

Sandra Boynton
Coordinator, Interest Groups
**Book Discussion Group**

The Women’s League Book Discussion group meets eight times each academic year from September to May, traditionally on the fourth Wednesday of the month. We choose the books for discussion in the year ahead through a group vote — a mix of fiction, non-fiction, and classic titles — and participants take turns volunteering to lead each discussion. In 2021–2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic, our book discussions were held via Zoom, with 12 to 18 members attending each lively gathering.

All are welcome to join — as one-time visitors or as enthusiastic regulars! Our membership comes from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, which enriches the discussions with the expression of many viewpoints and interpretations.

Occasionally, we invite authors to present about books we have read. It’s a unique opportunity to learn about their technique, construction, and research. Sometimes, we also gather in the summer, for instance to visit a site related to a book or to watch a movie adaptation of a book we have read. These additional interactions strengthen the conviviality, warmth, and trust of our Book Discussion interest group.

Barbara Donnelly, Sandy Boynton, and Maxine Jonas

**MIT Women’s Chorale**

The Women’s Chorale began our pre-season with a nail-biting couple of weeks while our beloved pianist, Leona Cheung, waited to learn the fate of her visa. It was approved in July and this was indeed a happy turn for the Chorale. In addition to being very much liked by our members, Leona is an extremely talented and capable accompanist.

During the summer of 2021 the chorale gathered twice outdoors at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Park near Harvard Square for some very pleasant in-person singing, with vaccinations and mask wearing required. These gatherings were small, in spite of our having invited members of a few other choral groups. However, our numbers were well balanced, and we attracted a small, happy audience of people who had been strolling by.

In September we were very sorry to learn that Sally DeFazio had decided to resign from her position as Executive Administrator of the MIT Women’s Chorale. Sally has been a treasure and a beacon of warmth, optimism, and positive energy for the Chorale. Every member seems to say and seek out a hello from her when we meet. Sally is a very capable organizer and has kept our mailings and contacts up to date since she began working in this role in 2008. Sally’s high expectations of us as individuals and as a group are an important source
of our focus and self-discipline. A few members of the Chorale have taken on Sally’s responsibilities.

The Women’s Chorale began meeting weekly via Zoom in late October of the 2021-2022 academic year, following a survey which showed a preference among members for Zoom meetings with occasional face-to-face singing. Our Zoom gatherings are organized by our electronically capable and musically very capable Music Director, Daniel Mahoney, often assisted by Leona Cheung on piano. Attendance runs around 20-25. Although 2 in-person events were planned for fall semester, we met once, in December in Boston at the Boston Children’s Chorus, with vaccinations and face masks required. Daniel and Leona organized the music for that event. We are planning an additional in-person gathering and performance for late April, again with vaccinations and masks required. Leona has also shared a few performances for us to watch and listen to on Zoom during our weekly gatherings.

We continued to collect dues this year at our regular rate, since the dues are used to pay Daniel and Leona and for rental of spaces where we gather. The dues are $25 for students/postdocs and $50 for non-students. In keeping with our electronic leanings, our treasurer, Anastacia Feldman, has mastered Venmo and Zelle and can now accept dues digitally from chorus members. Our sign-up form for participation was also digital.

This year Sally passed along greetings from several former members who had moved on from MIT from England, Paris, Portland, Oregon, Baltimore, and Hong Kong. As happens every year, some of our Chorale members from last year left MIT over the summer for new jobs and educational opportunities. Several new members joined in October, and more in December and January for the spring semester. They are all looking forward to being able to work face-to-face with Daniel, Leona, and the whole Chorale.

CitySide Dining
Due to an ongoing combination of state and MIT guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety, no CitySide Dining events were hosted in 2021. As the weather warms up for outdoor dining and folks begin to feel more comfortable, we plan to restart in 2022!

Jennifer Fleming
Honorary League
Still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Honorary League continued its practice of holding remote gatherings. On October 21, 2021, John Ochsendorf, Class of 1942 Professor of Architecture and Engineering, delivered a fascinating and lively presentation, “Learning from the Past to Design the Future,” on the work of Spanish building engineer, Rafael Guastavino, and how it informs architecture today. The Zoom format gave participants the opportunity to ask their questions “live.” Approximately 15 Honorary League members attended.

The spring virtual gathering featured MIT’s First Lady, Chris Reif, who will reflect on her tenure and share her perspective of life at MIT as seen through the windows of Gray House. During the Zoom presentation, we were able to learn the answers to many questions, with Honorary League Chair Chris Santos as host of this and last autumn’s sessions. Should the pandemic situation allow, we hope to resume in-person luncheons in the fall.

As my extended term as Chair comes to a close, I wish to thank both of the Honorary League Vice Chairs – Diana Garcia-Martinez and Nancye Mims (who will succeed me as Chair) – as well as Women’s League Manager Kirsty Bennett for making my job so much easier. (I will remain on the committee for one year to facilitate the transition.) Finally, as always, deepest gratitude is extended to the Office of the President for its continued generous support of the Honorary League.

Chris Santos, Honorary League Chair
**Fiber Crafts Group (FCG)**
The Fiber Crafts Group met monthly via Zoom during the past academic year as well as during the Summer of 2021.

Emails are sent each month to people who attend meetings as well as people requesting to be informed of meetings. This past year 6 women requested to be added to our email list/group. Even with the meeting date change, attendance remains low each month. This hands-on type of group is best in an in-person setting. We hope that when all group members are allowed on campus for meetings, our attendance will increase; perhaps we could have hybrid meetings to include Lincoln Laboratory members and others who cannot come to campus for various reasons but want to remain involved with the group.

Members worked on knitting, crocheting, cross stitching, embroidery, and quilting projects.

We look forward to meeting again in person — in the meantime we will continue to connect via Zoom.

Claudia LaBollita-James, *Co-Chair*
Olimpia Estela Caceres-Brown, *Co-Chair*

**Wreath Making**
This year we were able to gather in person to make the large holiday wreaths that hang at 77 Mass Ave. Volunteers joined us in the Student Center in December to assemble the wreaths, and it was a chance for old friends to once again meet in person, and welcome newcomers to this annual tradition.

With holiday music playing, it took around two hours to build the wreaths, that were then hung by the wonderful team at Buildings and Grounds. Our thanks to them for all their support for this program.

Many thanks to Brenda Blais and Jennifer Fleming, for making sure we had all the materials we needed on the day, and to Ron Hoffmann for once again taking such beautiful photos that we shared online and through our newsletter.

Kirsty Bennett
MIT Japanese Wives Group
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. Due to the pandemic, in person meetings were no longer possible and as an alternative, we have launched a Pen Pal Program between members both here at MIT and in Japan. Our members exchange emails and share experiences from their different environments, and we hope they can build meaningful friendships through this program. Our current Pen Pal members are: Megumi Enokido, Sofia Caloggero, Asuka Yasutomi, Sharon Lin, Bette Johnson, Kristin Griffin, Kirsty Bennett, Norie Takada, Michiko Yoshida, Kyoko Maruyama, Takako Suhara, Yuko Tsay, Yuko Asano, Atsuko Pien, Clare Lee, Tseh- Hwan Yong, Misao Tanaka, Kimi Shirasaki and Kimie Shirasaki.

We have learned how important it is to feel close to each other through this program. We hope this will give our members many opportunities to help build lasting international friendships. Through this program, we were able to create strong ties in difficult times. No matter how far apart we are, we will always remember each other. While some people prefer email as a method of communication, others tend to prefer speaking over the telephone or via Skype.

For that reason, as a next step we would like to establish the Tancho Link program, which will facilitate cultural and experience exchanges via phone or Skype. In addition to MIT Japanese Wives Group-specific activities, we will also enjoy contributing to MIT activities throughout the year. Megumi Enokido, Asuka Yasutomi and Kimi Shirasaki donated origami for crane card making and more. Members in Japan are very happy to continue supporting their MIT counterparts and look forward to continuing to foster international friendships.

We had many more events planned for the year, both at MIT and in Japan that were unfortunately put on hold due to the pandemic. We were going to have group luncheons and a cherry blossom viewing party (Ohanami) in Tokyo this Spring. While those were not possible, we will continue to look for a good place for our next meeting in Tokyo, whenever that becomes possible.

This year our great Friendship Partner, Sofia Caloggero, retired from MIT. We wish we could have expressed our deep gratitude to her with an appreciation party. We will never forget her kindness.
I wish to express my thanks to Sofia Caloggero, Sharon Lin, Megumi Enokido, Keiko Noda, Chizu Ikeda, Asuka Yasutomi, Etsuko Hasegawa, Ritsuko Koide and Kimi Shirasaki for all of their help during the year.

I want to extend my special thanks to Kate Baty, Sandra Boynton, Keiko Kanda, Dee Ippen, Sis de Bordenave, Ellen Shapiro, Jennifer Recklet Tassi, Kristin Griffin, Bette Johnson, Tseh-Hwan Yang, and Kirsty Bennett for their advice and counseling.

Kimie Shirasaki, Chair

**MITell — Storytelling**

This past year MITell continued with some virtual workshops, but I was delighted to return to teaching in person in the fall of 2021. I ran several programs for SHASS, in their Reading and Writing Autobiography course, and hosted a special workshop as part of the Graduate Women at MIT (GWAMIT) Empowerment Conference. We once again collaborated with FAIL!, with invited speakers and academics sharing the impact of failures on their careers, and what they learned.

Kirsty Bennett
The MIT Women’s League is administratively a division of the Office of the President, which pays the League’s salaries and some office expenses. The League meets other expenses with income from its seven endowed funds, gifts to the annual appeal, and fees for programs and events offered throughout the year.

ENDOWED FUNDS

Emma Moore Fund
In 1916, Emma Moore, an Institute friend and board member of the Emma Rogers Association of Technology Matrons (the original name of the MIT Women’s League), established the “Matrons Tea Fund” to underwrite teas offered to all women in the MIT community regardless of their ability to pay. Later she offered the income from the fund for “any use, social or otherwise” to be at the discretion of the League Executive Board. Today that income supports many League activities including the English Classes and the two League fellowships in the Priscilla King Gray (PKG) Public Service Center.

- Rebecca M. Vest PKG Public Service Center Fellowship
- Elizabeth W. Johnson PKG Public Service Center Fellowship

Margaret Compton Fund
The Margaret Compton Fund was established in 1949 to honor Margaret Hutchinson Compton, whose husband, Karl Taylor Compton, retired that year as President of MIT. During her lifetime, Mrs. Compton allocated the fund’s income to such activities as the Westgate Nursery School and the Technology Children’s Center. MIT has since taken over the management of the Institute’s childcare facilities. Today income of The Compton Fund provides unrestricted resources for League activities at the discretion of the League Executive Board. The fund has provided financial support for our Fall Reception for New Women at MIT, the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, Wreath Making, and the Student Clothing Program.

Laya W. Wiesner Fund
Laya W. Wiesner, wife of Jerome Wiesner, 13th president of MIT, was an ardent supporter of women at MIT and of the League. Laya wanted to recognize the contributions of individuals who helped shape the Institute’s quality of life. Upon Mrs. Wiesner’s retirement as First Lady of MIT in 1980, the League established this fund to show its esteem for her. To express appreciation for her leadership and her many years of service to MIT, the fund’s income supports two individual awards.

The Laya W. Wiesner Award is given annually to an undergraduate woman “who has most enhanced
MIT community life, while at the same time maintaining a good academic record.” This year, Anjali Nambrath was honored with the award.

The Laya Wiesner Community Award, was established by the League in 1999 to honor Laya’s legacy at MIT. This award recognizes “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.” This year, Amy Brand was honored with the award.

Lucille M. Ravven Memorial Music Fund
Dr. Robert Ravven established this fund in 1988 in memory of his wife Lucille, who conducted the MIT Women’s Chorale from 1968 until 1980. It supports the Chorale including the purchase of its music.

Catherine N. Stratton Lecture Fund
The Women’s League established this fund in 1994 to honor Kay Stratton’s 50 years of commitment to the Institute and her tireless work to establish and sustain the Stratton Lecture on Critical Issues (no longer held), and the Stratton Lecture on Aging Successfully typically held each spring. Mrs. Stratton, the widow of Julius Adams Stratton, the 11th president of MIT, was an active member of the lecture committees and of the League as well as the MIT Council for the Arts (another of her initiatives). The fund has received generous donations from current and retired MIT faculty members, the Green Foundation, the Exxon Foundation, and the MIT Women’s League itself. Income from the endowment supports the lectures, which are free and open to the public. Funds in excess of the amount required for the lectures may be used for other League activities as voted by the League Executive Board.
**Women’s League Discretionary Fund**
The Women’s League Discretionary Fund was established in 1999 by Cleo and Paul Schimmel to support activities of the MIT Women’s League at the recommendation of the chair. A former chair of the League Executive Board, Cleo’s fondest dream has been to strengthen the “ties that bind” among League members and with the rest of the MIT community.

**The Priscilla King Gray Fund**
The Priscilla King Gray Fund, established in 2013 by the League on the occasion of its 100th anniversary, honors Priscilla, wife of Paul E. Gray, MIT’s 18th president. Priscilla was honorary chair of the League at the time of this anniversary. Income from this fund has been used to supplement the two League fellowships in the Public Service Center. Priscilla, a co-founder of the Public Service Center, remains an active advocate for its work. The PSC was renamed the Priscilla King Gray Public Service Center in 2015.

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

**MIT Women’s League Scholarship Fund**
Established in 1960 as the Technology Matrons’ Student Aid Fund and later known as the MIT Student Loan Fund, this endowment is now the MIT Women’s League Scholarship Fund. The interest from the fund provides scholarship aid annually for undergraduate women. The fund benefits from the proceeds of the Furniture Exchange and the Community Holiday Craft Fair. The League Scholarship Fund now exceeds $1 million and in 2022 is expected to support 3 undergraduate women.
TREASURER’S REPORT

The annual budget for the MIT Women’s League in FY 2022, less personnel related expenses, and totaled $53,739. Sources of funds included an MIT allocation of $6,500, allocations of $39,439 from expendable balances in League endowed fund accounts, and $7,800 from the League’s Programs and Activities Fund. This year at the end of the third quarter, the annual appeal had raised $13,035 in gifts for the Women’s League. The League is extremely grateful to all donors for their generous support and confidence in the League’s programs and services to the MIT community.

Through these funds the League provides many benefits to the Institute including a contribution of $8,800 to the Priscilla King Gray Public Service Center for the Rebecca M. Vest and Elizabeth W. Johnson Fellowships, and the awarding of the annual Laya Wiesner Awards of $2,500 each to an MIT undergraduate student and a long-time staff member. Other League services in FY2022 included virtual English Conversation Classes, Interest Groups, and Breakfast Series offered via Zoom; partnered with WISDM on a Speaker Series; coordinated the Fall Fashion Exchange; and were able to gather in person to assemble the holiday wreaths that decorate 77 Massachusetts Avenue.

At the end of the third quarter of FY2022, the combined fund value of the League’s seven endowed funds was $378,220. This includes $82,475 in the Priscilla King Gray Fund. Expendable income from these funds supports the Wiesner Awards, both the Vest and Johnson Fellowships in the Priscilla King Gray Public Service Center, the MIT Women’s Chorale, and the League’s annual operations.

This data reflects third quarter results for FY2022. The final Women’s League Treasurer’s Report will be available in the Women’s League Office, soon after the MIT fiscal year closing on June 30, 2022.

Pamela Schickling Buckley, Treasurer