Fall Fashion Free-For-All, reinvented!

This year is the 25th year of the Fall Fashion Free-For-All, a program launched by Women's League members to make sure that students have all they need to get through the tough New England winter and the professional clothing they need for interviews. Over the years, the program has expanded beyond its original mandate of helping international newcomers to serving students with a greater financial need.

This year, we had to get creative to make sure we could help those in need. Working with Student Support Services, we got word out to students in the First Generation Program, Pell Grant, Questbridge and CASE programs, to ask those on campus exactly what items they needed to get through the winter. For those off-campus, we offered a "Zoom Shirt" for looking professional online.

More than 80 students responded to our invitation, requesting over 130 pieces of clothing. These requests were sent out in a spreadsheet to our community, and the response was incredible! Women's League members shared the request far and wide, reaching departments all across MIT, and requests were filled in only a few weeks.

Once donors selected a student to help, they were given an address to mail items directly to students. While we can't gather in person for this event, it's been a delight to see the generosity and kindness of the Women's League and wider MIT Community.

Thank you to everyone who was part of this initiative this year. We intend to bring back this program in January for the new cohort of students arriving on campus in 2021.

Honorary League goes all-online

Twice annually, the Honorary League would gather at the Samberg Center to catch up, enjoy a delightful meal, and hear a talk from a member of MIT's faculty or research staff. It’s a highlight on the calendar, and the opportunity to gather is greatly missed. However, while we couldn't be together in person, we were able to offer a talk via webcast. Our Speaker, Ritu Raman, was originally scheduled to join us in the Spring, but our April event was cancelled. We were so pleased when she agreed to join us for the Fall webcast.

Hosted by Honorary League Chair Chris Santos, the event featured Ritu Raman introducing attendees to her fascinating work in biological engineering.

Questions submitted by attendees were answered in a Q&A at the end, and we were delighted that 60 Honorary League members were able to join us.

The Honorary League hopes to hold another event in the Spring, with details to be determined.
Since the 1930s, the Women's League has made the holiday wreaths that hang at the 77 Mass Ave entrance. This year we cannot safely gather together to make the wreaths.

After exploring several options, the WL offered a donation to Buildings & Grounds to cover the cost of on-campus staff putting up the holiday decor. We were delighted to get news in the first week of November that MIT’s gardeners will be making the wreaths on our behalf, and Ground will hang them in the first weeks of December. We’re thrilled to be able to bring a big of twinkle and sparkle to those still on campus at the institute.

Many thanks to Sogna Scott, Buildings & Grounds and MIT’s gardeners for taking this on!

Celebrate 20 years of the McGovern Institute

The McGovern Institute for Brain Research is hosting their inaugural Story Slam, featuring seven storytellers telling true personal stories from their lives.

The event will be moderated by Kirsty Bennett, who runs the Women’s League storytelling interest group MITell. Judges will be Tina Hesman Saey, Editor of ScienceNews, and Maggie Sofia, host of NPR’s Shortwave, and the storytellers are all advisors, postdocs and graduate students at the institute. Register online to attend via zoom. https://mcgovern.mit.edu/storyslam/

STORY SLAM: RESILIENCE

Seven McGovern storytellers share true, personal stories of grit, perseverance, and resilience.

Thursday, November 12, 2020

Moderator
Kirsty Bennett
Founder, MITell

StoryTellers
Jill Crittendon
Dipon Ghosh
Kirsty Johnson
Shannon Johnson
Heather Kosakowski
Ola Ozemov-Palchik
Mahdi Ramadan

Judges
Tina Hesman Saey
Editor, ScienceNews
Maddie Sofia
NPR Host, Shortwave
A collaboration between MIT Spouses & Partners Connect and the MIT Women’s League

So far, our Fall Skillshare has been a huge success! We’ve learned about the English Language, homeschooling, how to better understand ourselves with Gretchen Rubin’s Four Tendencies and how to get started with embroidery. Coming up, we’ll tackle holiday wreaths and Astrophotography!

Learn a little, give a little.

For more information on these events, and invites to register, please sign up for the WL mailing list via our website, wl.mit.edu. You can also email wleague@mit.edu and ask to be added.

Tuesday, December 1, 12:00pm

Astrophotography with Amanda Bosh

Learn a new photography skill: astrophotography! Take photos of the cosmos that celebrate its beauty and highlight our place within the universe. Explore three techniques, each of which highlights a different aspect of the night sky.

Thursday, November 19th, 2:00pm

Making a holiday wreath for your door

Brenda Blais (in collaboration with MITAC)

Learn how to make a festive wreath in this online workshop, with time for a Q&A after the event to make sure your decor is secure and your bows are perfect.

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) know if you’d like to be added to their mailing list.

Dec 2
Lost Garden
by Helen Humphreys
11:30am

Jan 20
Deep South
by Paul Theroux
11:30am
Furniture Refurbishing at the FX!

Down at the FX, Manager Julie Parker is still working away, refurbishing furniture ready to sell when we are able to reopen. Julie recently completed work on this bureau. Once the veneer was stripped, it was time to paint!

First up, clean with bureau with TSP cleaner and remove the hardware. Remove drawers, and number them so you know the order to put them back in.

Where you removed the hardware, you'll want to tape up the holes so paint doesn't leak into the drawers. Julie then primes with a shellac primer. This is important, especially for furniture made before 1940. They have red/yellow tannins that can bleed through your paintwork, or unfinished wood that has knots and is very “thirsty”. Finally, paint and wax!

And as for that hardware - clean it in a bowl with a mix of hot water, dawn detergent and vinegar. Let it soak for a few hours. Finally, scrub with fine steel wool to clean it up!

Above: Hardware before and after cleaning
Below: drawers mid-primer, and the beautiful bureau in beautiful blue chalk paint!
MIT Women's Chorale

The Women’s Chorale continues to meet via Zoom under the leadership of our Music Director, Daniel Mahoney. While the delay inherent in the internet means that they will not be able to sing the usual sorts of music together, the emphasis in our sessions will be on trying to achieve in other ways a sense of singing together.

New members are welcome.
For further details, please contact us at sdef@mit.edu.

MIT Women's League Newsletter

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.

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Chair Cheryl Vossmer
Honorary Chair Christine Reif
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