Presidents Message from Sandy Yulke
This has been an extraordinary year for MIT alumnae. In April, the Alumni Association sponsored a Women’s Leadership Conference and the Early Alumnae of McCormick Hall and the alumnae of the Women’s Independent Living Group (WILG) held their reunions on the same weekend so that it was truly a celebration of women at MIT. Only one week later, I traveled to Cambridge again for the inauguration of Susan Hockfield as the president of MIT. I had the good fortune to know Susan Hockfield as a member of the (small) community of women in science at Yale and can attest to her genuine interest in women’s issues. I urge you, if you have not already done so to view the Webcast of the Inauguration at http://web.mit.edu/inauguration/webcast.html.

Where does AMITA fit in all this? The Leadership Conference echoed the AMITA Career Conferences of the past in both form and content. For the Conference this year, AMITA provided an open house in the Cheney Room on Saturday, and an opening reception on Friday for an exhibit, MIT Alumnae Many Dimensions of Success. The exhibit was created by AMITA from more than 200 vignettes that alumnae from all over submitted to us. The conference this year was a one-time event, next year the Alumni Association is going to sponsor an event for graduate alumni. So there is an opportunity for AMITA to resume our role as a conference organizer for the alumnae community.

An AMITA group in New York has been organizing professional development meetings in response to local alumnae concerns and career interests (details are in an article in this newsletter). As the first AMITA president to live outside of the Boston area, I am particularly interested in fostering such groups and giving AMITA more of an active national presence; please contact me if you are interested in such activity in your area.

More and more from young alumnae, I hear questions about the career and family dilemma (for lack of a better word). Talking about this issue has been a staple of AMITA programs over the years, and will again be part of our Life after MIT event during IAP. For older alumnae, the family members of concern are not children, but parents. Of whatever age, women are still the family caregivers.

And, of course, there is still the issue of the paucity of women, particularly at higher levels, in technical fields so pointedly raised by Larry Summers ’75 earlier this year. MIT alumnae have long been a resource for each other in coping with the day-to-day realities of this issue, and AMITA has been a venue for this activity.

So there is a lot we can do during my final year as AMITA president. The Board of AMITA cannot do all this without the involvement of alumnae like you. We invite you to join AMITA (see the membership form below) and to be part of our continuing mission, so ably expressed by the founders of AMITA in 1899:

(1) to provide a means for former women students of M.I.T. to maintain communication with each other and with the Institute, and to undertake such activities of common interest and purpose as are deemed appropriate by the membership; (2) to encourage high standards of achievement among the women students and to advance their general welfare; and (3) to maintain such relationships with the Institute as will support M.I.T.’s constructive role in our society.

AMITA Membership
Our membership drive has started off well this year with a lot of activity generated by the new Smartrans™ reminder system. You may have already received an email explaining how the membership expires July 1 each year and reminding you to renew. The emails are supposed to
go only to annual members who have not yet renewed and seem to work from the small number of complaints I have received. If you received a reminder and haven’t made it to Smartrans™ yet please join your fellow alumnae and support AMITA so we can continue our work supporting you.

Recent graduates in particular are encouraged to take advantage of our complementary first year membership. Just fill out the form on Smartrans™ or use the attached form to join. I want to send a big thank you to our life members for having taken the step of making a life long commitment to the organization. Annual members may want to consider switching over with a one-time $350 contribution you no longer need to remember to renew each summer.

Kate Zebrose, Membership Chair

Alumni Leadership Conference, Sept. 23-24, 2005 Musings by Susan L. Kannenberg ’61

The MIT Alumni/Alumnae Association held its annual fall Leadership Conference and, as usual, there was lots to learn and many interesting events. I will provide a brief summary, with my own observations and commentary, and if you are interested in more details about the event itself, please visit the Alumni/ae Association Web site.

This year, for the first time, the awards ceremony was held at dinner on Friday evening, instead of the usual luncheon on Saturday. In as much as I live in the local area, there was no inconvenience caused by this change and there were some advantages. This dinner is not only a celebration of the award winners, but a big social event, so sometimes its difficult to get back to work afterwards, a possible disadvantage of the midday event of the past. On the other hand, people had to get to Cambridge for Friday dinner instead of mid-Saturday, which might have presented a logistical problem. I heard no complaints, however.

Indeed, beginning at noon on Friday, there were several alumni events, including Club Presidents lunch, Club Leaders meeting, showcase of MIT Public Service Center Programs. And the featured address, by Alex Padilla ’94, was held at 5 PM in Kresge.

Alex’s address was interesting as it was unusual. Instead of focusing on technology, or business, he focused on leadership as something available to every person who makes the effort, illustrated by his experience representing an underserved Latino community in his role as a City Councilor in Los Angeles. Alex told of the difficulties in solving the problems of such a community and encouraged all in attendance to consider the challenge of leadership in serving communities, especially those in most need. You can find a transcript of Alex’s remarks, along with a record of the rest of ALC at http://alum.mit.edu.

On Saturday, Alumni Leaders heard reports from administrative leaders (Beth Garvin, EVP and Scott Marks, ’68 President, MITAA addressed Alumni Activities, Tom Davis ’84 talked about the Alumni Fund and Susan Hockfield, President of MIT gave her report. The second half of the morning plenary offered exciting tastes of some of the research going on at MIT which is what gets our blood going and makes us remember why we still are enthusiastic supporters of MIT! Bob Horvitz, ’68, told about Programmed Cell Death, his work which earned him the Nobel Prize in Physiology. He made a plea for support for basic research, commenting about the accidental nature of his own discoveries. Safrira Goldwasser in Computer Science talked about research into ways of proving identities without giving away secret information, and indicated the wide variety of applications that need such methods. Claude Canizares, showed slides of his astronomical observations which were all the more exciting because they LOOKED like science fiction, although they were the real thing! As usual, all of these academic leaders were well received and 10-250 was buzzing with questions and enthusiasm of the group.
A working lunch, consisting of catered box lunches, included tables set aside for various interest groups ranging from Large Clubs, Medium/Small clubs, Affinity Groups, Fraternities, Sororities and ILGs, Enterprise Forum Chapters, Educational Council, and Class officers. I attended the Affinity Group table, together with Sandy Yulke, AMITA President. The demographic makeup of our group was telling, and probably reflective of some of the issues AMITA faces all the time. At our table there were FOUR members of BAMIT (Black Alumni of MIT), 2 representatives of Arab Alumni, one rep from the Gay alumni organization. Of this group, all were men except for one of the Arab Alumni. The discussion was centered around the problems in reaching, and attracting our respective constituencies. While some of the problems were common to all groups, such as the fact that all alumni have multiple affiliations and often don’t have time for more than one activity, no one responded to my question whether any other groups found their constituency positively unwilling to identify with them. (The Gay alumni group had a special issue of self identification, but that was not directed at the organization. There was a representative of the Alumni Association at each table responsible for making a report of the doings at that working lunch, so we should expect to see the results of these meetings in the near future.

After lunch, there was an afternoon-long demonstration of Alumni Site builder and other Alumni Association tools and products available, coterminous with two sessions of workshops, led by Association staff. At each session, issues such as fundraising, strategic event planning, engaging young alumni, and the future of undergraduate living groups, Enterprise Forum, Educational Council, Reunion Event Planning. The second session included a repeat of several of these topics, as well as a couple new ones, such as inclusion of graduate student participation. I attended the session which addressed marketing and learned that many of the ideas I have been thinking of have already been in place in other clubs!!

The Closing reception was held, as in the recent past, at the Z (Zesiger) Athletic Center. This place is truly a magnificent place to behold, and to enjoy watching sporting events, or even participating. Usually, Candace Royer, the outstanding Director of Athletics at MIT, arranges for alumni to be able to use the facilities during Alumni events, giving us an opportunity to marvel at how amazing the facilities nowadays are for women (men too, but I’m from the days when women could only use Alumni Pool during Family and staff times!).

In recent years, the Alumni Association has assessed a $25 fee for participation in this Leadership Conference, and I think it is quite reasonable. While there are some alumni who object to paying, having enjoyed MITs largesse for many years cost-free, I think its worth remembering that the reason we are all working so hard to support MIT is to benefit its mission, and to spend significant amounts on wining and dining alumni is not consistent with this purpose. I don’t think paying $25 implies that our efforts aren’t valued; rather this small fee (less than the cost, per person, of running the event) helps to defray costs that would otherwise come from MIT’s operating budget, an even less attractive prospect, in my opinion.

AMITA EATS
Following the ALC closing reception on Saturday afternoon, a group of AMITA and other women met for dinner at the Cambridge Brewing Company at One Kendall Square. Several board members were in attendance, including some who had just returned from out of town and unable to be at the ALC. In addition to Sandy Yulke ’74, Susan Kannenberg ’61, Kim Vermeer ’82, Sze-Wen Kuo ’73, and Sarah Simon ’72 other attendees included Camila Chaves ’91, a photo-video artist who has a full photo history of the construction of the Stata Building and who is the photographer for the Zakim Bridge and the Big Dig. We were joined by a group of young ALC alumnae who responded to the notice placed in the ALC brochure for post ALC get togethers for various alumni groups. The young alumnae included Ida Wahlquist-Ortiz ’04 in genetics from Ecuador, Rose Radin ’02 working for Oxfam, Madeline Close ’02 from Virginia in Aero, and Zahra Kanji ’01 who is the newsletter editor for the Club of Boston. The group was so congenial, and had such a good time, we even welcomed Susan Kannenberg's young cousin, Sarah Baszto,
who just moved from rural upstate New York to spend a graduate year at the school up the river.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY, MONEY!!!

FUNDS FOR WOMEN STUDENTS AND FACULTY AT MIT
There was some discussion during the Women's Leadership Conference of setting up funds for activities for women at MIT. AMITA has been establishing and administering such funds for many years. The range of activities covered is broad, and they are all clearly aimed at supporting the activities of women students and faculty, in accordance with the mission of AMITA. Please consider supporting one of the funds described below. Donations may be made to these funds via the Alumni/ae Fund (simply write the fund name as the designation on the check). Please contact the AMITA treasurer if you would like additional information.

Funds which AMITA administers include:
The Alice Brown Tyler Fund, Women’s Dormitory Fund and Lillie C. Smith Fund. These three funds, established by alumnae bequests are used by AMITA to make the annual student academic award, support the IAP career guidance meeting and other events that AMITA sponsors for students, in accordance with the restrictions on the bequests.

There are other funds for the benefit of women students administered by MIT:

AMITA STUDENT AID FUND
AMITA established this fund, administered by the MIT Financial Aid office, to increase the amount of scholarship money available to women students.

AMITA/MARGARET MACVICAR MEMORIAL ORAL HISTORY FUND
AMITA established this as an endowment fund to support the collection of oral histories of MIT Alumnae. The income is used by MIT to cover costs of tapes and equipment, travel expenses, and salaries of student interviewers via UROP.

There are also two endowed chairs for women: The Abby Rockefeller Mauze Chair, and the Ellen Swallow Richards Chair. The latter was established by AMITA as part of the Ellen Swallow Richards Centennial celebrations in 1973.

Upcoming AMITA Events

ART OPENING
MIT alumna Camila Chaves Cortes presents her photography and painting/collage works at the Gallery at Cambridge Seven Associates. The works focus on Boston and the Big Dig project and describe the magic and mythological spaces of this project.

The opening of the show is Wednesday, November 9 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Cambridge Seven Associates, 1050 Mass Ave, Cambridge. No RSVP needed.

The show will be installed through January 31, 2006.

ANNUAL POST-HOLIDAY POT-LUCK
Extend the Holiday Season at the Annual AMITA Get-together. This event will be Sunday January 8th, 2006, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. in the Brown Living Room at McCormick Hall. Spouses and kids are welcome. Please bring an appetizer, light snack or something sweet to share. Non-alcoholic beverages provided. Due to McCormick security procedures it is essential to RSVP by Wednesday January 4 through SmartTrans or directly to Kim Vermeer (PH: 617-267-2522/kvermeer@alum.mit.edu).
Cost:
AMITA Members with Guests (free for all)
Non-AMITA Members ($5.00 per person)

ANNUAL IAP ALUMNAE/STUDENT SPEED NETWORKING NIGHT
Join us on Thursday, January 19, 2006 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. in the Vannevar Bush Room (10-105) for the always-popular chance to share your wit and wisdom with women students over supper. Whether the questions are about graduate school, career choices, or other life issues, students welcome the chance to meet and talk with alumnae in an informal setting. We'll provide tables by topic and light supper refreshments. You'll provide opportunities for students to pick your brain about what's next for them. Sign up through SmartTrans™.

Cost: Free for AMITA members; $5.00 for non-members

NEW YORK NEW YORK ITS A WONDERFUL TOWN.
AMITA New York has had a busy year. In March, we kicked off 2005 with the 15 Second Pitch Workshop with Laura Allen. The interactive seminar gave participants advice on how to pitch one-self quickly and effectively. In the summer, AMITA hosted a lively seminar by Malla Haridat on how to think like an entrepreneur. Malla's dynamic presentation planted many participants with inspirations on how they could launch their own businesses. We have also collaborated with New York Academy of Science and the MIT Club of New York. In the spring, AMITA members attended a panel discussion on Women in Science that featured MIT's own Professor Nancy Hopkins. This fall, members attended a NY Academy of Science symposium on how to establish a career in the private sector. In October, AMITA will collaborate with the MIT Club New York for MIT President Susan Hockfield's visit. AMITA New York has also found collaborative partners in the tri-state area and back at MIT. Recently, the New York Academy of Science invited AMITA New York to nominate members for a focus group on the bio-pharma industry. The diversity and the talent of the MIT alumnae have shone through in all of the events and we are eager to bring more of you together.

What's brewing for the springtime? Interviewing, assertiveness, women's health and negotiating skills workshops! We also hope to facilitate outreach to high schools in the community. Please contact us for event ideas--volunteers make our events happen! Tell all your friends to join AMITA! We have enjoyed meeting all of you, and hope to meet more of you in the future.

Co-chairs, AMITA NY Programs
Sachiko Hirosue
Tara Fernando-Bishop

Renew your Membership or Join AMITA now!
Why should you join AMITA?

The Association of MIT Alumnae is dedicated to providing a means for former women students to maintain contact with each other and MIT. On campus, AMITA is active in supporting current women students at MIT with our various on campus activities. Off campus, AMITA events held in Boston, New York, San Francisco, and other cities are bringing together women from MIT for exciting and fun events.

AMITA also sponsors several student activities and awards, including the AMITA/MacVicar Oral History Project and the AMITA Senior Academic Award. The AMITA Senior Academic Award is given for achievement, and was established in 1958 to highlight the achievement of women students at the Institute. AMITA publishes a newsletter to keep our members up to date on what is happening with each other and at MIT, particularly with respect to women's issues. AMITA
membership is available to any woman who has attended at least one semester at MIT as either an undergraduate or graduate student. You can also check the Alumni Office Smartrans Web page to sign up at https://alum.mit.edu/smarTrans/dues-login.vhtml?groupId=182.

To join AMITA by check please send your contact information and a check for $25 (or $350 for life membership) made out to AMITA to:

AMITA
C/O Kate Zebrose, Membership Chair
26 Josephine Ave
Somerville, MA 02144

For more information on joining AMITA, visit the Web site at http://alumweb.mit.edu/groups/amita/.

AMITA Jobs listserv
Are you looking for a job or know of a position that is available? Would you like to discuss career and life balance related issues? Join the AMITA Jobs listserv on the MIT alumni website or post your job description (don't forget location and contact information) to amita_jobs@mitvma.mit.edu. For any questions, please contact Sarah Simon at sarah.simon@alum.mit.edu.

For information on upcoming AMITA events check the AMITA Web site at AMITA Events: http://alumweb.mit.edu/groups/amita/events.html.
AMITA Jobs listserv: amita_jobs@mitvma.mit.edu
AMITA Web site: http://alumweb.mit.edu/groups/amita/