Schoolwide News

“You Are Welcome Here” Campaign is Brought Back with the Help of an MIT Sloan Student

Works with 20 other MIT students to increase diversity awareness

By Sarah Foote

As you walk around the MIT campus, take a look at the new, colorful “You Are Welcome Here” cards that can be seen on office doors and windows. According to Jimena Almendares Dorantes, MBA ’11, the organizer who helped re-launch the campaign, these cards stand for openness and diversity at MIT.

The campaign was developed years ago to show people with diverse backgrounds that they are welcome at MIT. Cards with rainbow colors and the words “You Are Welcome Here, LBGT@ MIT” were seen in many offices across campus. However, with new faculty and staff, thousands of incoming students per year, new programs, several new buildings, and people moving to different offices, the campaign gradually lost visibility and momentum.

Given the recent suicides of several gay youths across the country, Jimena saw this lack of awareness – and compassion in some cases – as a problem she could act on. “You never know who is dealing with stressful problems related to diversity,” Jimena noted. “One out of 10 students who are members of the LBGT community drop out of school because of bullying; moreover, recently, I have met MIT undergrads who almost had to quit school after their parents stopped paying for their tuition because they came out to them.” Seeking to improve things for the generations to come, Jimena recruited almost 20 students from all over campus, from undergraduates to post-docs, and organized a new campaign focused on awareness, education, and openness.

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With the help of MIT’s Rainbow Lounge, Jimena brought awareness not only to lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender students, faculty, and staff, but also to the vast amount of diversity at MIT. “By creating a new image that featured more than the acronym LBGT, we felt that we could reach out to a larger population,” Jimena said. “Most importantly, we created a website and an informational tri-fold brochure to help educate members of the MIT community so they have a common ground of knowledge concerning sensitive subjects such as transgender issues or practical information on how to deal with someone coming out to you.”

In addition, the group worked with MIT President Susan Hockfield, who has endorsed the campaign. President Hockfield sent a letter to the entire MIT community explaining why the new campaign is important. She encouraged faculty and staff to display the card on doors or in their offices—all in an effort to accept diversity. The “You Are Welcome Here” information was mailed out to 12,000 MIT faculty and staff members, and for the first time in the campaign’s history, to 7,000 residential students. The campaign was able to reach out to a very large population from different backgrounds and countries.

The new brochure has several elements. For instance, it describes what LBGT means; it also outlines 10 steps to becoming an ally to a transgender person and offers many statistics so people know and understand the relevance of acknowledging diversity. Anonymous quotes from people across campus further help to explain the importance of the project, and detail people’s experiences with coming out. Jimena noted, “The more I worked on the campaign, the more inspired I was with the testimonies of students, staff, and professors describing what the campaign meant to them. MIT already offers a great support network in terms of resources and student services; however, there are many things that can be improved. Our goal is to see that these types of efforts are relevant and mobilize not only LBGT or diverse students, but the whole community.”

You Are Safe Here
In that respect, Senovio Shish, MBA ’11, Jimena, and all of the members of the MIT Sloan LBGT group, are working on bringing “Ally stickers” to the classroom by providing them to MIT Sloan students. Students have placed the colorful stickers on their nameplates to show their support. “I don’t think that overstating that MIT Sloan is a safe and diverse place is a problem. Sometimes people do not come out because they are afraid,” Jimena said.

“You never know what is going through the mind of someone sitting next to you in class. Putting the Ally sticker on your nameplate is a simple gesture, but it means a lot to others who might be afraid or who do not know how others will react. The sticker and the card let everyone know that MIT Sloan is a safe place. That is why this is important and why we need to make an effort to say this is a campus that is open and a community that values diversity,” she said.
Jimena would like to thank all the students, faculty, and staff who worked with her to revitalize the “You Are Welcome Here” campaign. If you would like to participate in the campaign by posting a sign in your office or workspace or would like more information, please e-mail lbgt@mit.edu or visit either Student Life Programs, located in W20-549, 617-253-6777, or the Rainbow Lounge, located in 50-005, 617-253-5440.

Furthermore, the website (yawh.mit.edu) has been updated and enhanced as a resource for everyone. It includes LBGT resources available on MIT’s campus, national LBGT information, proper use of transgender pronouns, and diversity efforts. Other helpful links include: ACLU, the AIDS Action Committee, Student Support Services, and the MIT Ombuds office. The new website also offers people the opportunity to sign up for a monthly e-newsletter from the group.

MBA Student Recognized in Fast Company

By Jenara Nerenberg, Fast Company

The LGBT India Foundation is the first of its kind to bring the subject of homosexuality into the public sphere in India, including the workplace. India only decriminalized homosexuality last year, which may indicate a rather phobic populace and government. But one “out” entrepreneur, Nitin Rao, MBA ’11, is on a mission to break the silence and make homosexuality an accepted part of Indian culture.

Riding on the heels of the “It gets better” project – a collective effort to raise awareness and put an end to bullying-induced suicides – Rao launched his LGBT India Foundation to help bring the same kind of public support found in the United States to India.

“While there have been valuable efforts in grassroots-level activism, as a social entrepreneur, I sensed a ‘white space’ in the college and workplace settings. This was also a segment where I had the most credibility to apply my entrepreneurial background to make a difference,” Rao tells Fast Company.


In a recent update Nitin said, “The foundation was selected as the partner charity for the MBA Class of 2011 Charity Auctions to be held on December 9 in Walker Memorial. This is based on a tremendous wave of supportive recommendations from across the student community to back our cause. The work we’re doing is in many ways the first of its kind, and we’re essentially building the fundraising market itself in India, so this is especially valuable.”

To read more about Nitin visit: http://mitsloan.mit.edu/pdf/NewsAtMITSloan_Issue163.pdf.
MIT150 Symposia to be held on January 27-28

Economics and Finance: From Theory to Practice to Policy is one of six in a series of symposia that are being held as part of the MIT150th celebration that begins in January. Organized by MIT’s Department of Economics and MIT Sloan, From Theory to Practice will celebrate the role of MIT’s faculty and students in advancing the fields of economics and finance, in putting the latest developments into practice, and in contributing to the design of public policy. A series of six panels, which will include Nobel laureates, policy makers, and industry experts, will address three broad questions:

• What are the key recent scientific developments and the major unresolved issues of economics and finance?
• What are the central challenges in economic policy?
• How can one assess the contributions of, and limitations of, recent advances in financial economics?

Faculty leads
• Andrew W. Lo, Harris & Harris Group Professor, MIT Sloan
• James M. Poterba, Mitsui Professor of Economics, MIT
• Robert M. Solow, MIT Institute Professor, Emeritus

The program will begin on the morning of Thursday, January 27, 2011 and concludes with a luncheon on Friday, January 28.

Registration is free for MIT faculty, staff, and students, and although there is no charge, registration is still required. To register, please visit: http://mit150.mit.edu/symposia/economics.

PUBLIC SERVICE CENTER UPDATES

Would you like to thank a high school teacher who inspired you?

Nominate your favorite high school teacher for the MIT Inspirational Teacher Award and get the chance to connect that teacher with a great bunch of MIT resources. Nominations are due before December 15. Visit http://web.mit.edu/inspire/nomination.html to complete the online nomination form.

Last year’s winners hailed from 15 different states around the country, as well as Malaysia, Canada, England, and Turkey. One hundred and one high school teachers have been honored since the award was inaugurated in 2007. Those who are selected receive a celebratory certificate and access to a variety of resources at MIT.

Develop a proposal for a Davis Projects for Peace $10,000 fellowship!

Davis Projects for Peace is offering a $10,000 fellowship for an MIT undergraduate student project that promotes peace, to be implemented in the summer of 2011. The aim is to “help young people launch
some immediate initiatives that could bring new thinking to the prospects for peace in the world.” MIT will select several compelling proposals to send forward, and at least one is guaranteed to be funded. Think creatively, innovatively, and entrepreneurially – this is a chance to formulate and test ideas for peace. Proposals should be e-mailed to davis-peace@mit.edu by 9:00 a.m. on Friday, February 4.

If your proposal is selected, assistance will be available to help you refine it. You should be available to make final revisions before February 11. See http://www.davisprojectsforpeace.org/ for more details of the program, examples of past winners, and FAQs.

Have questions? Need help planning or writing? Contact Alison at hynd@mit.edu.

PhD NEWS

Lynn Wu (left), SB ’02, SB ’03, MEng ’03, a current MIT Sloan PhD candidate and RA at the Center for Digital Business, recently presented a talk to staff and faculty on her research, “The Social Network Effects on Objective Performance and Layoffs.” The research is forming the basis for her dissertation, which will study the before-and-after effects of a new social networking tool implementation in a large IT firm.

CLUB NEWS

Happy Belly Club Hosts Chef Michael Schlow

One of MIT Sloan’s newest clubs, the Happy Belly club, welcomed its first guest speaker to MIT Sloan last week. Speaking in front of a capacity crowd of students, Michael Schlow, Chef and Owner of many Boston restaurants such as Via Matta and Radius, spoke about his “Recipes for Success.”

Named “Top Chef” by Boston magazine, Schlow spoke about the restaurant business, and how he first tried cooking—by creating bologna and cream cheese omelets for his siblings and forcing them to try it! He advised students to pursue their passion, because they must love what they do to be successful.
Schlow got his start in the restaurant business as a dishwasher and then moved on to host and later to chef. He said he has worked every job in the restaurant business, and that in part has helped him to become successful. He advised students interested in opening a restaurant or opening any type of business to, “Always hire people who are smarter than you, because being rich doesn’t mean you will necessarily be happy. Work for the best companies and people you can find. If you are not constantly learning at your job, you should leave it,” he said.

Leigh Spoon, MBA ’11, Chef Michael Schlow, and Sandra Chow, SB ’03, MBA ’12. (Photo by Sarah Foote)

STS CORNER

Have an Idea to Improve MIT Sloan’s IT?

Then you should form a team and submit a proposal; you may receive financial and product management support to make it happen.

Student Motivated IT Innovation (SMITI) has been created to help with these endeavors. The IT innovation fund will henceforth be associated with MIT Sloan Tech Ventures. A consistently positive response is being heard as the Tech Ventures concept meanders through the student body by word-of-mouth.

For more information, visit: sloanpoint.mit.edu/TechVentures.

MBA NEWS

Canadian Leadership Orientation Program

The Canadian Leadership Orientation Program for first-year MBA students is designed to familiarize the next generation of North American business leaders with Canada. Current HKS/MBA students Leland Cheung and Jonathan Gensler participated the past two years. MIT Sloan has been invited to nominate a candidate for the 2011 program, which will take place the week of May 29 – June 3, 2011. All travel and accommodation costs are covered for participants.

If you are a U.S. citizen and would like to be considered for nomination, please send a resume with a cover letter to Maura Herson, mherson@mit.edu, detailing how your professional and/or personal goals for your MBA would be enhanced by the experience. The deadline is Friday, December 10.

For more information about the program visit: www.telfer.uottawa.ca/canadianleadership.
MIT Sloan Students:

MIT Sloan’s Diversity and Community Committee invites your participation in an IAP project to create updated bystander training teaching materials. Part of MIT Sloan’s repertoire of diversity initiatives, these three-to five-minute improvisational video vignettes cover themes such as race, LBGT, gender, bullying, inclusivity/exclusion, etc. New videos will be used in an upcoming SIP workshop. Successful videos require enlisting the enthusiastic participation of faculty, students, and staff in the design and acting of these scenarios.

Day 1- An introduction to the background and concepts of bystander training, providing context for how these videos will be used and allowing participants an opportunity to engage with proposed themes and frameworks. Participants will receive a pre-reading to provide background and help launch day 1.

Day 2- A full day of acting or role-playing. Multiple takes of each scenario are filmed exploring different bystander responses.

This event will take place Wednesday, January 12 and Thursday, January 13, 2011, from 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (full participation both days is required), in E62-2nd floor. Lunch and snacks to be provided. Students will receive three units of P/F independent study (15.960) credit during IAP.

To sign up or for more questions contact Debbie Berechman, dberech@mit.edu.

Last Town Meeting of Fall Semester Held

Gerry Hough, MBA ’11, and Senate Co-President, welcomed students and staff to the last Town Meeting of the fall 2010 semester held Wednesday, December 1. With a very full agenda, the meeting began with the announcement of the Peer Recognition Award winners. Rita Chao, Jaebeom Lee, Shirley Li, Shih-Hung Chen, and Yuanying Huang organizers of the Asia Business Club’s first-ever conference were recognized for their hard work putting together the successful conference. It was noted that there were many great submissions for the Peer Recognition Awards this month and an e-mail is forthcoming to recognize all of the nominees.

Next a new feature, Sloanie Storytelling, was introduced to Town Meetings. Michelle Guerette, MBA ’12, told about her experience as a rower in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the challenging decisions she had to make over the course of her rowing career. She encouraged her classmates to recognize that the difficult decisions over choice of classes and job offers are all wonderful challenges to have, given that most students are successful. Michelle also noted that she is offering rowing lessons as part of the charity auctions that will take place later this week.

Nitin Rao, MBA ’12, also told his story to the audience. He said that he spent part of the summer reflecting on the last 10 years of his life and what made him the happiest. While he enjoyed working for startups prior to attending MIT Sloan, his recent challenge of creating a foundation for LBGT people in India has been very rewarding. (See his story on page 3) Nitin also reminded his classmates that they are never too old to become a mentor.

Ulf Oesterlin, MSMS ’11, provided students with an update on the work of the MIT Sloan Student Senate. Many students recently participated in a “Thank-a-thon” where they called alumni and thanked them for their donations to the School. Regarding facilities-related updates, he reminded students that 100 Main

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This month’s Peer Recognition Award Winners: The organizers of the Asia Business Conference, from l-r: Shih-Hung Chen, MBA ’11; Shirley Li, MBA ’11; Rita Chao, MBA ’11; Yuanying Huang, MBA ’11, and JaeBeom Lee, MBA ’11.

MarketPlace is offering 50-cent refills on soda; swipe card access to E62 has now been resolved, and the Senate continues to work on issues concerning study rooms – locking and booking them. The Senate will continue to work on these issues and will provide an update at a future Town Meeting.

Sue Kline, Director, MBA Career Development, told students that the job market is rebounding and appearing stronger for both internships and jobs. She gave students an update on the employment status for the Class of 2010. At graduation time, 84 percent of MBA students had a job offer. Three months after graduation 95 percent of students had job offers, Sue said, noting that this was the highest among MIT Sloan’s peer schools. She also noted that 33 students from the MBA Class of 2010 started their own businesses.

Jenifer Marshall from MBA Student Affairs mentioned that ClubFest will be held for the first time ever during the spring semester. The event will be held on Friday, February 11, in the Ting Foyer. Club transition month will be held in February and new club leader orientation will take place in March. For more information contact Jenifer, jmars@mit.edu.

Paul Buckley, also from MBA Student Affairs, informed students about an upcoming night of relaxation and recharging. Sleep and stress presentations, yoga classes, tai chi classes, acupuncture sessions, massages, a tea bar and refreshments will be offered to students on Tuesday, December 7, from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., in E51 classrooms and lobby. This program will be open to all MIT Sloan programs. Sign up for some activities and sessions will be required.

Patrick Flynn, MBA ’12, is a finalist in TIAA-CREF’s Raise the Rate Contest. Patrick’s idea is currently third out of 10 finalists. He needs just over 300 votes per day to win, so he needs your help. Vote for him on Facebook now through December 9. Vote here: http://www.facebook.com/tiaa-cref?v=app_114844345212122.

MIT Sloan Lecturer Jason Jay gave a brief update on the Sloan Sustainability initiative encouraging students to engage via course selection and attendance at monthly lunches – the next is Monday, December 6, 12 - 1 p.m. in E62-233, or attendance at their speaker series events. Students can learn more about requirements for completing the Sustainability Certificate and career options as well.

The next Town Meeting will be held February 2, 2011. Good luck next week on finals.
MIT Sloan Students Win Nokia Case Competition

Nokia hosted its first Case Competition at MIT Sloan together with the MIT Sloan Marketing Club. Thirty-three students formed 11 groups to compete against each other.

The Nokia team, led by Liron Markus, MBA ’09, analyzed all the cases and later chose the top three. The three finalists presented their ideas in front of Nokia team, classmates, friends, and family. The Nokia judges had a tough decision to make, stating that all the presentations were extremely impressive.

Three students, Natalia Sutin, Vikram Anreddy, and Mayank Kapoor, all members of the MBA Class of 2012, won the competition by presenting their usage model that helps Nokia compete in the low end based markets where counterfeiters and competitors are copying phone designs.

The MIT Sloan second place team: R.E.M
Rahul Golani, MBA ‘12
Molly Gannon, MBA ‘12
Eugene Min, MBA ‘12

The MIT Sloan third place team: Sloan Night Owls
Hyeri Maria Park, MBA ’12
Jaewon Kahng, MBA ’12
Min Hwang, MBA ’12

Both first and second place teams won Nokia N8 or Nokia C7 devices.

SDM NEWS

Analysis of Value Creation and Value Capture in the Microfluidics Market


In the last two decades, microfluidics has been changing the shape of genomics, drug discovery, proteomics, and point-of-care diagnostics. Advances in the technology have resulted in faster analysis time, increased throughput, and reduced cost, among other important benefits. However, Yadav reports that the life sciences end-users and the microfluidics players themselves are far from fully capturing the value of these advances. Yadav will analyze the current state of the market and discuss why genomics and point-of-care diagnostics have captured the most value from the technology while drug discovery has seen the least. He will also recommend short- and long-term strategies for increasing value capture and accelerating the adoption of microfluidics.

To participate in this webinar:
Call-in info: December 6, 12:00 p.m.
Event number: 643 713 498
Event password: MITSDM
Event address for attendees: https://mitweb.webex.com/mitweb/onstage/g.php?d=643713498&t=a

Teleconference information: Call-in toll-free number (U.S./Canada): 1-866-699-3239
Access code: 643 713 498

For further information contact Lois Slavin, SDM Communications Director, 617-253-0813, or e-mail: lslavin@mit.edu.
Three Fast Friends. Diego Ceballos, Hector Ortega, and Claudio Tapia, are all 2008 graduates of Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile, where they received master’s degrees in engineering. Prior to coming to MIT Sloan for the M.Fin. program, all three worked at RiskAmerica. In their spare time, they enjoy football and exploring Boston and Cambridge. (Photo by Sarah Foote)

Professor Leonid Kogan joins students at the Faculty Club for the first annual M.Fin. Thanksgiving dinner.
15 DEGREES
Alumni Notes & Updates

To learn more about recent graduates who participated in the entrepreneurship and innovation track who started their own businesses watch them on TechTV. Visit: [http://techtv.mit.edu/genres/20-entrepreneurship/videos/9510-the-magic-40---4-months-after](http://techtv.mit.edu/genres/20-entrepreneurship/videos/9510-the-magic-40---4-months-after).

MOVIES
Now Playing on Campus...

*Scott Pilgrim vs. the World* (2010)

Based on Bryan Lee O'Malley’s Oni Press comic book of the same name, *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World* follows the eponymous slacker rocker on his colorful quest to defeat his dream girl’s seven evil ex-boyfriends. Twenty-two-year-old Scott Pilgrim (Michael Cera) may not have a job, but rocking the bass for his band, Sex Bob-omb, is a tough job unto itself. When Scott locks eyes with Ramona Flowers (Mary Elizabeth Winstead), he knows she’s the girl he wants to grow old with. But Ramona has some serious baggage; her supercharged exes rue the thought of her being with another man, and they’ll crush any guy who gives her a second glance. Now, in order to win Ramona’s heart, Scott will do battle with everyone from vegan-powered rock gods to sinister skateboarders, never losing sight of his gorgeous goal as he pummels his way to victory. *Shaun of the Dead’s* Edgar Wright directs the film from a script he penned with Michael Bacall. Superhero veterans Chris Evans and Brandon Routh co-star in the action comedy as two of the seven ex-boyfriends.

Showing on December 9, at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. in 26-100 and again on December 10, at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. in 26-100.

*From the Lecture Series Committee website. Most movies are just $4.*
Argentine Tango

Experience the wistfulness, sensuality, and sophistication of Argentine Tango. This is the original form of tango that developed in Argentina in the early 20th century. Its elegant and graceful leg movements, subtlety, and aesthetic appeal are nowadays treasured by numerous tangueros around the world.

Dancing takes place Monday, December 13, 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., in 36-156, and is open to the MIT community only. For more information, contact Simonida Cekovic-Vuletic, 617-497-5568, or visit: www.TangoAffair.com.

Quote of the Week:

“Character isn’t something you were born with and can’t change, like your fingerprints. It’s something you weren’t born with and must take responsibility for forming” — Jim Rohn

Tis the Season

You may not have put up your holiday tree yet, but it’s a good time to consider how you will recycle it. According to the Sierra Club, each year 10 million trees end up in landfills. Don’t let yours be one of them. Many communities will recycle trees to turn them into mulch or wood chips. Visit www.earth911.org to locate a tree-recycling program in your town. (Source: www.sierraclub.org)
That Mary Freed, Administrative Assistant in the MIT Sloan Office of Communications, is involved in local community theater?

Mary was a founding member of Theatre@First, an all-volunteer, non-profit community theater in Somerville that performs between five and seven shows a year in the Davis Square area. Theatre@First (http://www.theatreatfirst.org/index.shtml) originated back in 2004 when a group of local residents – including Mary – realized that Somerville had no theater at all. “We were quite sure that there were all kinds of untapped talent and energy that could be brought together, and that’s exactly what we did,” she said.

The mission of Theatre@First is to provide affordable theater for all, as well as to serve as a creative conduit for those who want to be involved in the theater. The organization doesn’t own its own space, but works out of various church basements and the Elizabeth Peabody House in Somerville.

Theatre@First has around 250 members overall, but a core group of about 50 are actively involved with most of the productions. Volunteers are free to work on shows in any capacity they choose – as actors, directors, producers, set designers, writers, or stage crew hands. “Theatre@First is here to let people try things. I’ve seen people who have only ever done stage crew go on to get an acting role, and vice versa. All of us learn new elements of the theater together,” Mary said. She herself has done some directing, acting, and writing for the group.

Specifically, she has directed one-act plays and has played characters in The Merry Wives of Windsor, and Much Ado About Nothing. Mary has been interested in the theater since her college days, but like many who dream about acting as a career, she turned toward more realistic vocational goals. Community theater, however, has remained a creative outlet for her.

The shows performed by Theatre@First are affordable (ticket prices are between $10–$15 for adults) and seniors and students receive a discount. Furthermore, no one is ever turned away if they don’t have the money. “This is theater for everyone,” Mary said.

Upcoming shows include The Lady’s Not for Burning, which will run from February 10-February 26, 2011 at the Unity Church of God in Somerville. Alas, as Mary is busy with her new job here in the Office of Communications, she will not be a part of this production.

—Amy MacMillan

Mary Freed, MIT Sloan Office of Communications (Photo by Amy MacMillan)
This is the last issue of News@MIT Sloan for the year. Good luck on finals and we’ll see you next year! —Sarah and Amy

Scenes to come, no doubt! (Photos by Sarah Foote)