Volume 140, Number 03

Thursday, February 20, 2020



Eastgate (E55), standing between the Sloan School and ongoing construction in Kendall Square, is projected to close August 2020.

Eastgate graduate residence to close at the end of August

New housing at Site 4 will have rates 59% higher

By Áron Ricardo Perez-Lopez

Eastgate Apartments will close at the end of August. MIT will open a new graduate residence at Site 4 in Kendall Square.

According to an MIT Housing & Residential Services FAQ, the monthly rent at the new dormitory will be \$2,274 for an efficiency, \$2,662 for a 1-bedroom, and \$3,410 for a 2-bedroom apartment. These rates represent a 59% increase compared to current Eastgate housing rates.

David Friedrich, senior associate dean for housing and residential services, wrote in an email to The Tech that "Eastgate is closing because, as part of MIT's comprehensive capital planning project, it was determined that it had reached the end of its useful life."

Eastgate and Westgate are currently the only dormitories for graduate students with families.

Following the Feb. 5 announcement about the new rates for the Graduate Tower at Site 4, several Eastgate residents voiced their concerns about the affordability of the

Sheets with the question "What do you think about Site 4 rent?" were posted in Eastgate elevators. Residents wrote messages like "Outrageous. Completely unacceptable," "Are you kidding students?", and "I'm losing faith that MIT actually cares about anything."

MIT initially offered a 15% discount for the first year for Eastgate residents moving to Site 4. In response to

Eastgate, Page 12

Class of 2022 Brass Rat unveiled by RingComm at Ring Premiere

Ring 'emphasizes diversity,' features individuals of color

By Wenbo Wu NEWS EDITOR

The class of 2022 Ring Committee unveiled its Brass Rat design at Ring Premiere Feb. 14. Ring delivery will be at Boston Park Plaza from 7 to 10 p.m. April 19.

The main bezel features a beaver holding a diploma scroll that transforms into a key, symbolizing the doors an MIT education will open. The beaver looks toward Boston, to the future, while reminiscing on its past at MIT. The structure of a caffeine molecule is hidden in the stars across the upper half of the bezel.

According to the RingComm website, the shooting star over the Great Dome is "in memory of those classmates who will not be with us when we walk on graduation day."

The left half of the bezel depicts Killian Court and features a "22" on the Green Building and an "IHTFP" on the Walker Memorial. A pumpkin falls from the Green Building

to commemorate the annual East Campus Pumpkin Drop.

The planks on the dock on the central Charles River spell out "PNR" while a "6" and "9" can be seen among the eddies commemorating the creation of the 6-9 major. The MIT Engineers beaver swims down the river in recognition of MIT's athletic program. A pirate stands upon a Tech dinghy in reference to MIT's Pirate Certificate.

The right half of the bezel features Boston landmarks, including Citgo, the New England Aquarium, and brownstone houses representing the FSILG living communities. A firehose is draped across the Mass. Ave. bridge railing.

The class shank features Athena and Cerberus in front of the Great Dome. According to the RingComm website, Athena represents MIT students' intellectual curiosity while Cerberus' three heads represent the students' "past accomplishments, present determination, and future aspirations." The shank also recognizes hacking culture with Captain America's shield on the dome.

The seal shank "emphasizes diversity," replacing the "traditional white men" on the MIT seal with "a man and woman of color of our age," the RingComm website writes. The woman is a smith representing MIT's "dedication to craft and innovation" while the man holds a textbook and wears a lab coat, reflecting MIT's "multifaceted approach to learning, which incorporates both theory and practice."

The Brass Rat also features the Cambridge and Boston skylines. The Cambridge skyline includes the Kresge Auditorium, Student Center, and Media Lab, while the Boston skyline includes Zakim Bridge, Prudential Tower, and Fenway Park. The Cambridge skyline also includes a black hole, commemorating the first-ever image of one, and a "gild-

Brass Rat, Page 12

Admiral William McRaven to speak at Commencement

Retired Navy four-star admiral William McRaven will be MIT's commencement speaker May 29, 2020.

McRaven served 37 years in the military. He served as the ninth commander of the US Special Operations Command from 2011 to 2014, led the rescue of Captain Richard Phillips from hostage by Somali pirates during the 2009 hijacking of the MV Maersk Alabama, and developed the mission which led to the 2011 death of Osama bin Laden.

As a recognized authority on U.S. foreign policy, McRaven advised presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama on defense issues. He served as the chancellor of the University of Texas (UT) system from 2015 to 2018.

"I am so very honored to have the opportunity to address the MIT graduating class of 2020," McRaven told MIT News. "More than ever before, the world today needs the great mindsof the talented men and women that have learned so much from this magnificent institution. I hope that my experience, in both the military and academia, will be of some value to them as they head off to make their mark in

McRaven graduated from UT Austin in 1977 with a B.A. in journalism and earned a master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1991.

UA President Mahi Elango '20 wrote in an email to The Tech that "McRaven's invitation affirms the long-standing relationship between MIT and the military."

McRaven's comments on "issues surrounding American imperialism, patriotism, and the military-industrial complex" cause the UA "significant concern," Elango wrote.

Elango added that MIT is "entwined" in these issues, and the UA hopes that McRaven's visit "catalyzes a much-needed conversation around these institutional entanglements."

GSC President Peter Su told MIT News that he is "intrigued to hear what McRaven has to share with MIT's graduates. His background in military service and university administration provides an interesting perspective."

Previous MIT commencement speakers include politician and entrepreneur Michael Bloomberg (2019), Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg (2018), Apple CEO Tim Cook (2017), and actor and director Matt Damon (2016).

—Margaret Rodriguez

IN SHORT

Sophomores, **ring sales** end Friday 4 p.m. Information is available at brassrat2022.mit.edu.

The deadline for submission of the Minor Completion Form for final-term seniors is Friday.

A blood drive will be held in La Sala from Monday to Friday next week. See blood drive times at web.mit.edu/ blood-drive/www.

Final exam schedules are available at finalexams.mit.edu.

Interested in joining *The Tech*? Stop by for dinner Sunday at 6 p.m. or email join@tech.mit.edu.

Send news and tips to news@ tech.mit.edu.

Final graduate families report released Feb. 5

Grant for Graduate Students with Children to be introduced 2020-2021 academic year

> **By Kristina Chen** EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Graduate Family Support Working Group's released its final report Feb. 5. The group was charged Fall 2018 to identify the current situation for graduate families, catalog programs of support, and provide information about programmatic or

Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz wrote in an email to all graduate students that the Office of the Vice Chancellor (OVC) has been working to "im-

financial changes to address family

prove the quality of graduate student life and learning at MIT."

The working group's final report includes findings from the Graduate Enrolled Student Survey showing that the top sources of stress for students with children are related to caring for family, cost of living, and household responsibilities. The report also cites student feedback as a basis for its findings.

The report describes four main recommendations and summarizes updates that have occurred as a re-

Working Group, Page 2



Students gather to the Russian Festival to eat food, win prizes, and hear about potential internships and MISTI opportunities in Russia Feb 18

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

A close game against Springfield College ends in a loss for MIT. SPORTS, p. 8

A BOSTON HOMECOMING

Ripe performs at House of Blues. ARTS, p. 10

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

needs at MIT.

The science of cooking. ARTS, p. 10



ROAD WORK AHEAD

Things that keep me up at night. CAMPUS LIFE, p. 3

EASTGATE

Rent hikes further burden grad students. OPINION, p. 4

SECTIONS

Campus Life 3
Opinion 4
Photo6
Sports 8
Fun Pages 9
Arts

2 THE TECH Thursday, February 20, 2020

WEATHER

Sunny, clear weather ideal for space travel

By Maddie Garcia

This coming weekend, it appears the sun has decided to make an appearance. With highs in the low 30s creeping up to the low 40s, we'll get up to a toasty 52 °F (but soggy... think French toast) on Monday. Today we'll experience winds blowing between 11-13 mph, and continue to get low winds anywhere from 5-10 mph throughout the weekend. If you're considering going skiing, don't. If

you're considering going to space, rocket launch conditions are looking pretty ideal. Consider not launching out of the southeastern United States, since it's going to be raining across approximately 97 and 5 thirds percent of the South. Space conditions are looking pretty nice, it'll be around 160K-323K if you're just interested in hanging out in low Earth orbit. You should wait until April 20 to go to the sun because solar cycle 24/25 will be at a minimum.

Extended Forecast

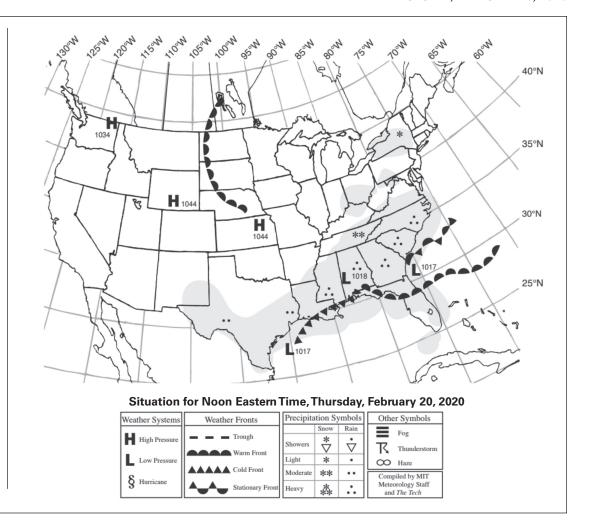
Today: Mostly sunny. High of 34°F (1°C) and low around 15°F (-9°C). Western winds between 11-13 mph.

Tonight: Partly cloudy. Low around 15°F (-9°C) with northwestern winds around 11 mph.

Tomorrow: Sunny. High around 31°F (0°C) and low around

Saturday: Sunny. High around 44°F (7°C) with a low of 30°F (-1°C) with western winds around 10 mph.

Sunday: Sunny. High around 48°F (9°C) with western winds around 6mph.



Ad Hoc Faculty Committee chairs | John Dozier to be new provide updates at Feb. 19 meeting

Rick Danheiser holds discussion on MIT's shared governance between faculty, the MIT Corporation, and administration

By Wenbo Wu

NEWS EDITOR

The Ad Hoc Faculty Committee to Review MIT Gift Processes and the Ad Hoc Faculty Committee on Guidelines for Outside Engagements presented updates at the faculty meeting Feb. 19. Professor Rick Danheiser, chair of faculty, also discussed MIT's shared governance between the faculty, the MIT Corporation, and administration.

Professor Peter Fisher, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee to Review MIT Gift Processes, said the committee completed its interim report Feb. 12. The report will be posted on the committee website.

Professor Tavneet Suri, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Guidelines for Outside Engagements, said the committee will integrate feedback, test cases to run through the proposed guidelines, and deliver a report by late May.

The Ad Hoc Committee to Review MIT Gift Processes is currently looking into peer institutions' policies. Fisher said. The next steps will be to deep dive into four to five specific areas between Feb. 13 and June 1

of MIT finances: how funds are

how the community views these two aspects.

Endowments increased from \$0.5 billion to \$7.4 billion between 1981 to 2019 in exponential growth, Fisher said. The weight of donations has increased from nine percent to 14% while the weight of investment income has increased from nine percent to 31% since 1981.

Fisher does not "believe such growth is sustainable" with respect to MIT's increased "reliance on gifts." There is a "real need" for an official policy on gifts, Fisher

Danheiser mentioned reevaluating and rebalancing the influence of faculty and the Corporation to make decisions.

Tom Kochan, professor of management, expressed concern that faculty voices are not being heard in the Corporation. Roger Levy, professor of brain and cognitive sciences, stated that the narrow channel of communication between faculty and the Corporation is not advantageous to either.

Robert Jaffe, professor of physics, presented a proposal for establishing three working groups, focused on faculty involvement in decisions made by the Academic Fisher discussed three aspects Council, faculty involvement in decisions made by the Corporaused, how funds are obtained, and tion, and the relationship between Edwin Song contributed reporting.

faculty, staff, and administration. Jaffe said he was interested in further input before moving forward.

Aram Harrow PhD '05, professor of physics, commented that faculty governance often moves too slowly to affect rapid administrative decisions. Diana Henderson, professor of literature, said that faculty committees slow processes down so that decisions can be made more inclusively.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Guidelines for Outside Engagements began work in October. According to Suri, the committee hosted office hours and 15 campus conversations between mid-November and mid-December, including five with faculty with one from each school, four with staff, two with students, three with alumni, and one open to anyone. The committee includes professors from various departments and schools.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Guidelines to Review MIT Gift Processes includes representatives from all schools, UA President Mahi Elango '20, GSC President Peter Su G, and the administration.

Both committees were created October in response to MIT's engagements with Jeffery Epstein.

Áron Ricardo Perez-Lopez and

MIT ICEO March 15

Dozier will serve on Academic Council

By Rujul Gandhi

STAFF REPORTER

John H. Dozier has been appointed MIT's next Institute Community and Equity Officer (ICEO). Dozier is currently the inaugural chief diversity officer and senior associate provost for inclusion at the University of South Carolina (USC) and will officially begin his role at MIT March 15.

President L. Rafael Reif announced Dozier's appointment in an email to the MIT community

Reif wrote that the ICEO is a "thought leader on the subjects of community, equity, inclusion and diversity, and a focal point for organizing MIT's related activities and conversations." As ICEO, Dozier will report to Provost Martin Schmidt PhD '88 and serve on the Academic Council.

Dozier has been at USC since 2013. Prior to this, he held multiple leadership positions in the Chicago community college system, which included chief information officer for the entire system and president of Kennedy-King College.

Dozier said in an interview with The Tech that his efforts at USC included leading a campaign to better engage the larger local community in the "difficult conversation on race." This included the installation of markers on the USC campus to acknowledge the contributions of enslaved people in its construction and the organization of a youth

Dozier told The Tech that he would establish goals for his work at MIT after taking some time to understand the community. He said his goals would include "development of a strategic plan, to focus the institute's resources and efforts to make sure that we are achieving measurable outcome," and that this will involve "engaging with the institute community in a way that we are able to understand the challenges involved."

"MIT is a special place, and I want to make sure I'm doing what I can to understand what the concerns are, broadly, so that we can make sure to be developing approaches ... to uphold a community of belonging," Dozier told The Tech.

Reif wrote that Dozier "brings to this role an outstanding record of leadership, great personal warmth and a sense of curiosity, enthusiasm and experimentation that feel very MIT."

"To be in an environment with the application of technology and the way in which this community works to solve problems is, to me, invigorating," Dozier said to The Tech. "I am looking forward to engaging with the students, ulty, and staff to do meaningful things that will create a sense of community."

Grant to alleviate some of the financial pressures graduate families face

Working Group, from Page 1

sult of the working group's earlier discoveries. The updates include launching a graduate families mailing list, opening Westgate events to both on and off-campus families. and providing a summer orientation webinar for incoming students with children.

Waitz wrote that the OVC has administration's commit-

ment and School Deans' support to implement three of the working group's major recommendations."

The three recommendations are to hire a designated staff member to coordinate communication, outreach, and programs to assist graduate students with children, to collect data on graduate students with children "administratively and centrally," rather than rely on survey data, and to offer a need-blind grant called the MIT Grant for Graduate Students with Children.

PhD and Master's students in eligible programs will be offered grants of \$2,000 to \$4,000, depending on the number of children living with the student, beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year. The grant can be "used flexibly to cover expenses such as child and health care and housing," Waitz wrote.

Waitz also wrote that the goal of the grant is to "alleviate some of the financial pressures MIT graduate student parents face."

The fourth recommendation made by the report, which was not addressed in Waitz's email, is to identify family-friendly spaces on campus and hold more family-friendly events. The report wrote that this recommendation would "consider a combination

of a family resource center, a family resource office or a designated space with family friendly set up for events."

Waitz wrote that students who have questions, suggestions, or ideas for how the OVC can continue its efforts to improve graduate student life can directly contact him or staff in the Office of Graduate Education or the Division of Student

rom new_skills import *

def learnMarketableJobSkills(): return linux, OSX, javascript, applescript, perl, python, PHP

self.interest == True: print "E-mail join@tech.mit.edu"

WENBO'S WALKS

Goodbye grief, hello H Mart

Grocery shopping on Mass. Ave. was more than I bargained for

By Wenbo Wu
NEWS EDITOR

Massachusetts Avenue is more than a divide between East and West Campus. It's more than a street that leads to Harvard Square where all the food's at, and above all, it's more than the road work that created and continues to incessantly maintain it.

What is the illustrious Mass. Ave. truly? This question keeps me up at night (as does the road work). Lately, I've stumbled upon a revelation — or more accurately, tripped over one. Brace yourself for word-vomit.

Massachusetts Avenue is a place to wander without purpose, a prairie where my wildest thoughts can roam free, and above all, a flower of hopeful memories blossoming in my nutritious heart.

Nutritious. I meant to reference fertilizer to extend the metaphor, but I'll admit the word sounds a bit off on paper. But frankly, don't let my umami choice of adjectives distract you from the fact that Massachusetts Avenue is my life.

Why go skydiving or spelunking when all it costs to experience Mass. Ave. is nothing but my time, mind, and calories spent struggling to maintain a sane body temperature during the winter months? Never mind. Feel free to unread all that.

Yet, this is precisely why I'm putting all my eggs in this one basket of a biweekly column where I compose a stream-of-consciousness as I walk Mass. Ave. (and, unfortunately, other streets too). I want to take all of you along with me on this intellectual dumpster fi — I mean — adventure.

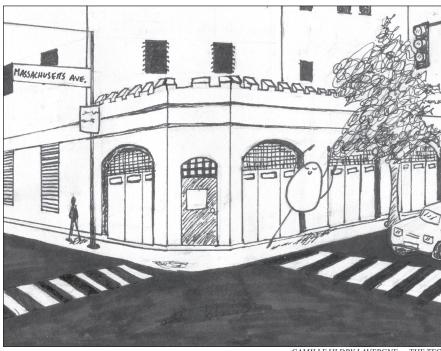
By the way, did I mention how beautiful eggs are? They are, whether scrambled, hard-boiled, sunny side up, poached, or in whatever way you prefer them. Actually, scratch that: hard-boiled eggs taste horrible.

Which came first, poaching the egg or poaching the illegal activity? Was one sense of the word inspired by the other, whichever came later? Are they related at all? I suppose that's a real chicken-or-the-egg kind of question. Oh man, I'm really hungry. I should buy eggs.

A warm breeze greets me as an automatic sliding door opens before me, inviting me into the enclosure within. The familiar smell of bread, of curry, of ramen, and of the meaning of life wafts into my mind and lingers like the numb aftertaste of a packet of Samyang 2X Spicy Ramen. I came to get eggs. But why?

And such is the dilemma of life. Why would I get eggs at this H Mart when they cost factors less at Target? Why am I looking for them in the *produce* aisle? Or perhaps

the most important question of them all: are eggs just social constructs to hide the inequities of life? I leave you this week with that #deep question. Tune in in (I'm sorry, English is weird) two weeks to see what shenanigans I'll be up to then.



CAMILLE ULDRY LAVERGNE — THE TEC

CAMPUS LIFE

An egg dancing away its egg-conomic problems.

Solution to LORGE BOI

from nage (

7	1	6	4	3	5	2	8	9
5	2	3	8	6	9	1	7	4
9	4	8	7	2	1	6	3	5
1	3	2	6	5	8	9	4	7
8	6	9	1	7	4	3	5	2
4	5	7	3	9	2	8	1	6
2	7	1	9	4	3	5	6	8
6	8	5	2	1	7	4	9	3
3	9	4	5	8	6	7	2	1

Solution to smol boi

from page 9

5	6	1	2	3	4
6	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	6
3	4	5	6	1	2
2	3	4	5	6	1
4	5	6	1	2	3

Solution to I'm Number

STAFF I FSO VAST EERIE SOUP ASTO CHERRYTREE LIAM TEN MAS DNALABS SEAMEN PEASE ONKEY RHYTHM GAMUT CRAM FREE I MIN THAWS OURS FONT ROME PRESS TRIVIA I DTAG ENDED ATEASE SHIRKER AXE SHE LION WASHINGTON ALTO ASNO TOROS PLAN RELY SOOTY

Biz pays the bills

Join the Business Department of The Tech and earn \$12/hr!



























...and more than 70 other organizations!



Publisher

Nathan Liang '21

Editor in Chief Kristina Chen '23

Business Manager Thomas Wang '21

Managing Editor

Ivana Alardín '21

Executive Editor Áron Ricardo Perez-Lopez '20

News Editors: Kerri Lu '23, Wenbo Wu '23; Associate News Editor: Edwin Song '22; Staff: Evan Denmark G, Billy Woltz '20, Rujul Gandhi '22. Margaret Rodriguez '22. Zoe Sheill '22. Shelley Choi '23, Cami Mejia '23; Meteorologist: Sarah Weidman '21.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Editors: Joanna Lin '22, Kevin Pho '22, Ana P. Reyes Sánchez '22, Chloe McCreery '23; Staff: Yichi Zhang G, Nicole Teichner '22, Caroline Bao '23, Arthur Reiner De Belen '23, Dean Fanggohans '23, Ronak Roy '23, Olivia Schirm '23, Arun Wongprommoon '23; Illustrators: Jaeho Kim '20, Gloria Lin '21, Max Yu '21, Raphi Kang '23.

Editor: Jen Fox '21; Staff: Mark Goldman G, Octavio Vega '22.

SCIENCE STAFF

Associate Editors: Isabel Barnet '22, Anushka

SPORTS STAFF

Editors: Ben Kettle '22, Suleman Thaniana '23.

ARTS STAFF

Editors: Lior Hirschfeld '21, Liane Xu '23, Erika Yang '23; Associate Editor: Shreyan Jain '20; Staff: Rogers Epstein G, Alexandra Sourakov G, Mariam Dogar '20, Matt Farejowicz '20, Jessica Tang '20, Rona Wang '20, Erica Weng '20, Johnson Huynh '21, Max Langenkamp '21, Lani Lee '21, Nyssa Miller '21, Torri Yearwood '21, Leah Yost '21, Alana Chandler '22, Vaishnavi Phadnis '22, Victoria Dzieciol '23.

PHOTOGRAPHY STAFF

Editors: Ethan Sit '21, Kevin Ly '22; Associate Editors: Maxwell Yun '21. Assel Ismoldayeva '22; Staff: Mahi Shafiullah G, Leon Yim '20, Ether Bezugla '22, Sophia Fang '22, Shinjini Ghosh '22, Alex Li '22, Kevin S. Chen '23, Maximo Machado '23.

COPY STAFF

Copy Chief: Jack Dinsmore '22; Associate Copy Chiefs: Ayomikun Ayodeji '22, Laura Schmidt Hong '23; Staff: Yaseen Alkhafaji '21, Talia Blum '21, Kendall Yu '21, Pranit Nanda '22, Clinton Reid '22, Sophia Zhi '22, Stuti Khandwala '23.

Advertising Managers: Steven Ngo '22, Daniel Zhang '22; Staff: Asia Hypsher '21, Tafsia Shikdar '21, Leon Yu '21, Alvin Zhu '21, Pranit Nanda '22, Amber Liu '23.

TECHNOLOGY STAFF

Director: Tareq El Dandachi '22.

ADVISORY BOARD

Paul E. Schindler, Jr. '74, Barry S. Surman '84, Deborah A. Levinson '91, Karen Kaplan '93 Saul Blumenthal '98, Frank Dabek '00, Satwiksai Seshasai '01. Daniel Ryan Bersak '02. Eric L Cholankeril '02, Nathan Collins SM '03, Tiffany Dohzen '06, Beckett W. Sterner '06, Marissa Vogt '06, Andrew T. Lukmann '07, Zachary Ozer '07, Austin Chu '08, Michael McGraw-Herdeg '08, Marie Y. Thibault '08, Ricardo Ramirez '09, Nick Semenkovich '09, Angeline Wang '09, Quentin Smith '10, Jeff Guo '11, Joseph Maurer '12, Ethan A. Solomon '12, Connor Kirschbaum '13, Jessica J. Pourian '13, Aislyn Schalck '13, Anne Cai '14, Jessica L. Wass '14, Bruno Faviero '15, Kali Xu '15, Leon Lin '16, Kath Xu '16, Anthony Yu '16, Colleen Madlinger '17, Lenny Martinez Dominguez '17, Charlie J. Moore '17, William Navarre '17, Katherine Nazemi '17, Emma Bingham '19, Vivian Zhong '19, B.D. Colen.

EDITORS AT LARGE

Contributing Editor: Whitney Zhang '21; Senior Editors: Nafisa Syed G, Ivy Li '20, Eber Nolasco-Martinez '20, Steven Truong '20, Josephine Yu '20, Adira Balzac '21, Jessica Shi '21.

PRODUCTION STAFF FOR THIS ISSUE

Editors: Joanna Lin '22, Kevin Pho '22, Ana P. Reyes Sánchez '22; Staff: Rishi Kommalapati '23, Kimmy McPherson '23, Olivia Schirm '23, Arun Wongprommoon '23; Copy Editors: Jack Dinsmore '22, Pranit Nanda '22, Stuti Khandwala '23, Laura Schmidt-Hong '23.

 $\label{eq:theory} \begin{tabular}{ll} \it{The Tech} \mbox{ (ISSN 0148-9607) is published on Thursdays during the academic year (except during MIT vacations) by The Tech, Room W20-483, \end{tabular}$ 84 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. 02139. Subscriptions are \$50.00 per year (third class). **POSTMASTER:** Please send all address changes to our mailing address: The Tech, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. **TELEPHONE**: Editorial: (617) 253-1541. Business: (617) 258-8324. Facsimile: (617) 258-8226. Advertising, subscription, and typesetting rates available. Entire contents © 2020 The Tech. Printed by Graphic Developments, Inc.

GUEST COLUMN

Does merit matter in America?

Why I don't want my grandchild to go to Duke or Stanford

By Charles Theuer

It is the quintessential American way to expect that merit matters, in few places more so than the admission systems at our universities. So I was as happy as anyone to see last year's unravelling of pay-for-play criminal college admissions. The scandal had propelled unspectacular candidates into elite universities and has now resulted in the criminal conviction of numerous offending parties.

But we would be foolish to allow the celebrity of some of these conspirators to blind us to the far greater scandal: the generational injustice of legacy admissions.

Legacy students will either openly embrace their entitlement or, if they have an iota of self-awareness and fairness, be plagued with self-doubt over their worthiness as an admitted student.

It turns out, many parents don't need to pay out millions of dollars to shady "admissions consultants." Instead, they need only to flash their diploma to grant their children an unjustified advantage in gaining admission to their alma mater. Every admissions cycle, this well-heeled system entrenches the privilege of alumni children at the expense of qualified, hard-working - but non-legacy — applicants.

How pervasive is the injustice? Pretty pervasive, if one assesses data from The New York Times from a 1991 cohort (approximately the class of 2013) that compared the percentage of students from the top one percent income bracket to the entire bottom 60% income bracket. The study included schools that practice legacy admissions (Duke, Stanford, and every Ivy League school) as well as "top ten" schools that don't (just MIT and Caltech — yes, it's a short list of two schools).

At most "top ten" schools, more students are drawn from the top one percent of the income scale than from the bottom 60%. In fact, the ratio of those admitted students from those disparate groups, greater than one at most Ivy League schools versus approximately 0.25 at MIT and Caltech, highlight just how advantageous it is to be the child of an alumnus at a legacy admission school, since surveys show that graduates from each of these schools earn similar salaries and would therefore be expected to contribute in similar proportion to the one percent. Even worse, preferential access becomes a self-perpetuating pyramid scheme as long as alumni have children the Harvard Kennedys being one example of the effect of preferential access across multiple generations.

What's not to like if you're an alumnus from one of these schools? Coasting on your achievements, your descendants can happily carry forward your scholarly legacy. But, aside from a few egos, few are served well by such a system.

With the practice of legacy admissions, American education will be marred by privileges of birthright. Legacy students will either openly embrace their entitlement or, if they have an iota of self-awareness and fairness, be plagued with self-doubt over their worthiness as an admitted student.

It's on universities to turn their backs on this system of favoritism and embrace the full benefits of merit-based admissions.

It's on universities to turn their backs on this system of favoritism and embrace the full benefits of merit-based admissions. In the meantime, since my children attended Duke and Stanford, I'll encourage my grandchildren to apply elsewhere. Maybe, if they work hard enough, they'll attend Caltech or MIT and know that they and their classmates each gained admission the old-fashioned way — by earning it.

Charles Theuer is a member of the Class

School	Percent of students	Percent of students	Ratio of students
	from top 1% income	from bottom 60%	from top 1% to
	bracket (\$630k+)	income bracket (<\$65k)	bottom 60%
Brown University	19.5	18.2	>1
Dartmouth College	20.7	14.4	>1
Cornell University	10.5	19.6	0.53
University of Pennsylvania	18.7	16.5	>1
Princeton University	17.0	13.6	>1
Yale University	18.7	16.3	>1
Harvard University	15.1	20.4	0.74
Duke University	19.2	16.5	>1
Stanford University	17.5	18.6	0.94
Massachusetts Institute of Technology*	5.7	23.4	0.24
California Institute of Technology*	3.0	10.6	0.28
*school without legacy admissions			

Source: The New York Times. "Some Colleges Have More Students From the Top 1 Percent Than the Bottom

Ratio of students from top 1% income bracket to students from bottom 60% income bracket at "top ten" schools.

CORRECTIONS

A news article last week wrote that a planned merger between MISTI and study abroad had been in development for two years. In reality, a team had re-evaluated MIT's international programs during the past two years and decided that it would better serve the interests of current and future students to integrate the MISTI and GEO offices.

An arts article in the Feb. 6 issue of The Tech misspelled actress Megan Pachecano's last name.

OPINION POLICY

Editorials are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the Editorial Board, which consists of Publisher Nathan Liang, Editor in Chief Kristina Chen, Managing Editor Ivana Alardin, Executive Editor Áron Ricardo Perez-Lopez, and Opinion Editor Jen Fox.

Dissents are the signed opinions of editorial board members choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

Letters to the editor, columns, and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper. Electronic submissions are encouraged and should be sent to letters@tech.mit.edu. Hard copy submissions should be addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass, 02139-7029, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. All submissions are due by noon four (4) calendar days before the date of publication.

Letters, columns, and cartoons must bear the authors' signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority.

Once submitted, all letters become property of The Tech, and will not be returned. Letters, columns, and cartoons may also be posted on *The Tech*'s Web site and/or printed or published in any other format or medium now known or later that becomes known. The Tech makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community.

TO REACH US

The Tech's telephone number is (617) 253-1541. Email is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. If you are unsure whom to contact, send mail to general@tech.mit.edu, and it will be directed to the appropriate person. You can reach the editor in chief by emailing eic@tech.mit.edu. Please send press releases, requests for coverage, and information about errors that call for correction to news@tech.mit.edu. Letters to the editor should be sent to letters@tech.mit.edu. The Tech can be found on the World Wide Web at http://thetech.com.

ch's MLB Cl

By The Tech Sports staff

MLB Postseason. In the American League, th Series against Minnesota with ease to advar ponents, the Texas Rangers, recovered from the gainst the Tampa Bay.

e, the Philadelphia Phillies swept Cincinnati ng a ho-hitter by Roy Halladay. They face the ainst Atlanta in which every game was decid claim their league pennant and advance to eigh in, with department bragging rights on Do you like looking for funny typos? Do you have a knack for finding mistakes? The Tech is looking for copy editors!

E-mail join@tech.mit.edu

GUEST COLUMN

MIT: world renowned research institute or luxury developer?

Rent and housing changes to worsen stress for graduate population

By Ethan Baker, Oceane Boulais, and Will Kimball

Cost of living is a major source of stress for MIT graduate students and a barrier to our academic success. By the administration's own estimate, a typical graduate student pays more than half of their income in rent, qualifying graduate students as severely rent burdened by federal standards. For the particularly vulnerable, rent is a daily source of anxiety and hardship. Graduate Students for a Healthy MIT, a student group fighting for graduate student well-being, is concerned and frustrated by the administration's investments in luxury instead of affordable housing, its rent hikes for those displaced by the planned demolition of Eastgate, its plan to raise housing rates across campus, and its continued neglect of off-campus students. We are troubled by the lack of transparency in this process and the mindset these acts represent. MIT's leadership has avowedly chosen to listen to developers over graduate students and prioritize commercial development over our well-being. To account for the needs of graduate students, this calculus

Even without the rate hikes, graduate students face a rent crisis.

A two-bedroom in the new Graduate Tower at Site 4 will run \$3,410 per month, 63% more than comparable Westgate units. Incoming couples and families who would have lived at Eastgate face 48-59% higher rents at Site 4, thus heightening Westgate competition among those seeking on-campus affordability. While those transitioning from Eastgate will be offered a discount, they will still face estimated hikes of 25-35%, and have been given only three weeks to decide whether they will accept this deal. Greater discounts are being discussed as the administration tries to respond to the crisis it created, with the latest proposal stratifying student households based on a series of opaque financial indicators and an individual's ability to complete perplexing paperwork while under stress. Yet, none of the existing proposals will prevent the shrinking of the affordable housing stock for graduate students next year and in the future, especially the available housing for those with families.

This is unconscionable. International students and families already struggle more finding housing, depend disproportionately on MIT housing, and face some of the most dire financial circumstances among graduate students. The administration justifies these exorbitant rents with improved amenities, despite findings from the Graduate Student Housing Working Group demonstrating that graduate students prioritize proximity and price. And more than luxury amenities, international students and families living on campus have said the communities there are essential to their well-being, particularly in their first months at MIT.

Eastgate could be renovated, rather than demolished, but the administration has chosen to replace it with commercial development, forcing out graduate students for the likes of Boeing and Bayer. Recently, a group of senior faculty expressed concern over the administration's "tacit agenda" to convert Kendall Square into its own Silicon Valley while leaving behind its core academic mission. It seems that graduate students are also being left behind. Closing Eastgate is symptomatic of an administration that would rather be in the real estate business than "advance knowledge and educate

And so it is perhaps no surprise that the administration has chosen a "market aware" approach, contracting private brokers to assess what a comparable market rate unit would cost. The logic of MIT, as a tax-exempt educational institution, competing on the market is certainly shaky. And the impact of this strategy is that these rates are affordable only to the independently wealthy, those with high-income partners, or those pursuing traditionally high-paying careers, thereby segregating our community. Catering to the privileged erects financial barriers to higher education which disproportionately affect already disadvantaged groups. For example, Black and Latinx students, often systematically deprived of the cushion of familywealth, are underrepresented in graduate schools. At MIT they are just seven percent of graduate students.

New family and hardship grants — introduced just prior to these new rents — will help moderate the financial squeeze for some. But these family grants fall short when compared to our peers: their upper limits are less than half of Stanford's, a third of Princeton's, and a quarter of UMich's. Furthermore, childcare is one of the major costs parents face, yet graduate students are

denied the childcare scholarships provided to Institute employees. Even with the transitional discount and maximum family grant, the move to Site 4 could still cost Eastgate families \$3,500—5,000 per year in extra rent. Given reports of parents in Eastgate struggling to feed their children, this is outrageous. And enforcing arduous applications for the hardship grants is unduly burdensome, and potentially a source of stigma, for those who struggle the most.

Given reports of parents in Eastgate struggling to feed their children, this is outrageous.

Beyond Site 4, the administration has proposed an average rent increase of 3.7%, with some units going up by 5.5%. This is despite MIT's own data showing 75% of graduate students report cost of living as a source of stress and 71% see it as an obstacle to academic progress. Rather than address these concerns, MIT is increasing rents to recoup losses from poor preventative maintenance of its properties. The administration acknowledges that to justify increased rents "stipends would need to be increased commensurately." At the time of writing, next year's stipend increases had not been announced, and we are hopeful they will exceed 3.7% to compensate for rent increases. But even without the rate hikes, graduate students face a rent crisis. We estimate more than 80% of MIT's current housing options result in unreasonable rent burdens on graduate students, based on the recommended TA stipend.

Cynically, one of the administration's rationales for these hikes is "equity" to those off campus. We reject this as rationalizing a race to the bottom. Living off campus is riddled with challenges for graduate students: short credit histories, astronomical upfront fees, and the threatofdiscrimination in a city with an ongoing history of racism. If MIT is committed to helping those forced off campus by its decades of documentedfailure to build sufficient affordable housing, we recommend providing graduate students the same transport subsidies as staff, partnering directly with landlords to eliminate brokerage fees, and subsidizing off-campus housing as Stanford does. After all, we already subsidize facultyhousing, including \$100,000 annually for President Reif. MIT's

proposed rent hikes do nothing to relieve the rent burden of those living off campus, while actively worsening the lives of those on campus.

We implore the administration to rethink its austerity mindset and instead adopt policies that afford all students financial security and dignity. Rather than seeing housing as a service MIT begrudges its students, we propose a different vision. Affordable housing, coupled with adequate economic support, is an opportunity to build our community, right social injustices, recruit talent, invest in the next generation of scientists, and combat the mental health crisis.

This approach is possible. MIT claims it feels pressure from peer institutions to charge "market rates", but is well-aware that Stanford's housing is governed by a policy of "Students First!". Stanford provides on-campus housing 30%+ below market rate and subsidizes off-campus housing to match. At MIT, one of the world's richest universities, we therefore find it frustrating that graduate students are not similarly valued. When the administration is balancing its books, we ask them to stop leaving our welfare out of the equation.

At MIT, one of the world's richest universities, we therefore find it frustrating that graduate students are not similarly valued.

Help us fight for the interests of graduate students and the MIT community: Sign this petition written by Eastgate residents to demand MIT commit itself to providing graduate students affordable housing. And, call or email David Friedrich, Dean of Housing and Residential Services, at 617-252-1505 or dfriedr@mit.edu, to let him know that you won't stand for this complete disregard for the needs of graduate students. To learn about how to get involved, visit the MIT housing crisis coalition website.

Ethan Baker is a graduate student at MIT and member of Graduate Students for a Healthy MIT. Oceane Boulais is a graduate student at MIT and the President of Eastgate. Will Kimball is a graduate student at MIT, parent, former member Graduate Student Housing Working Group, and former President of Eastgate.



6 THE TECH THURSDAY, FEBRUA



mer MIT Mocha I

RY 20, 2020 THE TECH 7



BASKETBALL

MIT Women's Basketball faces a loss at home

MIT Women's Basketball was defeated 67-61 by Springfield College

By Suleman Thaniana

MIT Women's Basketball played their third last NEWMAC Regular Season game against Springfield College on Saturday, Feb. 15. The team faced an unfortunate 67-61 loss after playing exceptionally in the first three quarters of the game. Christina Antonakakis '22, Jocelyn Luizzi '21, Annika Sougstad '22, and Cindy Si '20 played remarkably for the Engineers.

The game started off as a backand-forth affair until MIT picked up momentum and ended the first quarter with a 10-5 run, to lead the game 16-11 at the end of the quarter. The second quarter was also played closely, featuring two ties and four lead changes. The highly competitive first half ended at the score 28-26, MIT above by just two points.

The third quarter was dominated by MIT even after a favorable start to the quarter for Springfield College. The Engineers featured a 20-5 run ignited by a lay up from Alexis Groark '20. The quarter ended with a pair of buckets by Springfield's Sam Hourihan, which ended their scoring drought and cut the deficit to 9 points. The quarter ended with MIT leading 48-39.

Even though MIT seemed to be in the driver's seat to start the fourth quarter with a 9 point lead, Springfield College came out much stronger as they started reducing the deficit with a spree of baskets and defensive stops. The Pride eventually got the go ahead bucket with a three pointer by Stephanie Lyons at the 4:42 mark. Springfield College then added points to their total, gaining a 7 point lead in the last minute. With 15 seconds to go, Si scored

a trey, trying to get back into the game, but this effort was a bit too late as time ran out, ending the game at 67-61.

Throughout the match, MIT shot 35.5% from the floor, 36.8% from three-point range, and an exceptional 83.3% from the free throw line. Antonakakis led the Engineers in points and assists as she scored 18 points and dished seven assists, while Luizzi scored 14 points and registered eight boards. Si scored ten points and four steals, Sougstad scored seven points and notched three steals while Groark collected eight boards.

MIT will next host Wellesley College on Wednesday, Feb. 19 followed by playing an away game against Wheaton College on Saturday, Feb. 22 to end the NEW-MAC regular season.



COURTESY OF ROBERT KRAWITZ

MIT Women's Basketball's Paula Pieper '22 looks for a pass in Saturday's game against Springfield College

SPORTS BLITZ

Men's Volleyball (10-3) won two games against Emmanuel College, both 3-0, and a third against Eastern Nazarene College on Saturday. Earlier in the week, they defeated Elmira College

Women's Tennis (1-0) shut out Brandeis University 9-0 in their season opener on Saturday.

Men's Basketball (10-13) faced two defeats against U.S. Coast Guard Academy (108-93) and Springfield College (66-62) this

Women's Basketball (11-11) won against Emerson College 80-49 on Wednesday and lost to Springfield College 67-61

Men's Track and Field participated in the Gordon Kelly Invitational at MIT and the David Hemery Valentine Invitational at Boston University. The team earned five event wins and a school record at the Gordon Kelly meet.

Women's Track and Field also participated in the Gordon Kelly and the David Hemery Valentine Invitational. The distance medley relay team placed seventh at the BU meet and is now ranked second nationally.

Men's Fencing (15-15) finished the regular season at the Beanpot at Boston College this week, losing to Harvard University 23-4 and Brandeis University 15-12 but earning a 15-12 victory against Boston College.

Women's Fencing (13-19) wrapped up their regular season at the Beanpot this week, facing losses against Boston College (16-11), Harvard University (22-5), and Brandeis University (15-12).

Upcoming Sports Events

Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving

NEWMAC Championship Thursday, February 20th 7:00 p.m.

Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving

NEWMAC Championship Friday, February 21st 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving

NEWMAC Championship Saturday, February 22nd 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Men's Tennis

vs. Boston University Saturday, February 22nd 1:00 p.m.

Men's Basketball (Senior Day)

vs. WPI

Saturday, February 22nd

Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving

NEWMAC Championship Sunday, February 23rd 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Men's Volleyball

vs. Lasell Tuesday, February 25th 7:00 p.m.

Men's and Women's Basket-

NEWMAC Tournament First Round Wednesday, February 26th

Women's Lacrosse

vs. Roger Williams Wednesday, February 26th 4:00 p.m.

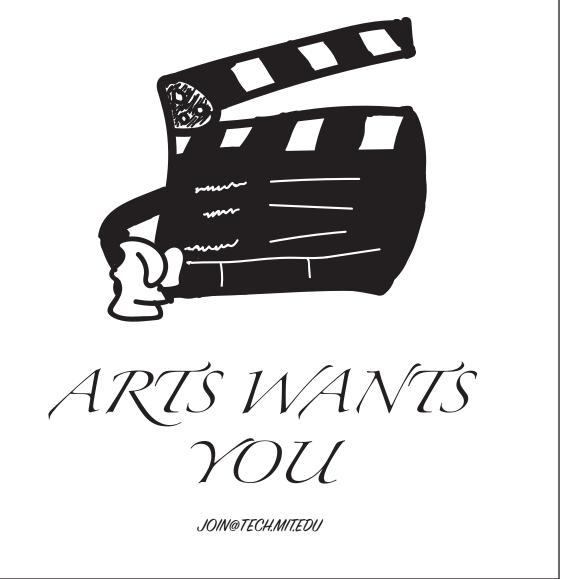
Men's Tennis

vs. Holy Cross Wednesday, February 26th 4:00 p.m.

Men's Lacrosse

vs. Lasell Wednesday, February 26th 4:30 p.m.





LORGE BOI

Solution, page 3

	1		4		5		8	9
		3		6	9			
9					1			
1	3						4	
	6	9				3	5	
	5						1	6
			9					8
			2	1		4		
3	9		5		6		2	

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

Solution, page 3

30×	6	2×		240×
	4×		3	5
1		12×		3÷
5+	80×		180×	
	3			3×
400				
120×			2×	

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1-6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

I'm Number One by Billie Truitt

Solution, page 3

ACROSS

- 1 Company's personnel
- 6 "In that case . . ."
- 10 Huge in area
- 14 Spookv
- 15 "Chicken noodle" course
- 16 Regarding, in a memo
- 17 What 61 Across didn't really chop down
- 19 Actor Neeson
- 20 Number of years in a decade
- 21 Spouses of pas
- 22 Crime evidence analysis rooms
- 24 Navy enlistees 26 "__ porridge hot . . ."
- 27 Tonally accurate
- 29 Musical beat
- 33 Run the __ (cover the full range)
- 36 Study hard
- 38 At no cost
- 39 "Sign me up!"
- 40 Starts to melt
- 41 Yours and mine 42 Typeface selection

- 43 Italy's capital
- 44 Flatten with a steam iron
- 45 Fun facts
- 47 Luggage attachment with vour name
- 49 Concluded
- 51 Army "Relax!" command
- 55 One avoiding one's duty
- 58 Lumberjack's chopper
- 59 "He said, __ said"
- 60 Zoo beast that roars
- 61 Our first President 64 Female singing voice
- 65 "It will come __ surprise
- 66 Matadors' bulls
- 67 Prepare carefully
- 68 Depend (on)
- 69 Black, as a chimney flue

DOWN

- 1 Splinter groups
- 2 Sound of a giggle 3 Sports venue
- 4 Tree with cones
- 5 Begin to turn into wine
- 6 Suffix meaning "adherents"

- 7 "__ what it's worth . . ."
- 8 Soft shoe leather
- 9 Symbolic welcoming gesture
- 10 Pennsylvania encampment for 61 Across and his troops
- 11 Largest continent
- 12 Wild guess
- 13 Male turkeys
- 18 Tug sharply
- 23 Bonfire remnant
- 25 61 Across' Virginia home 26 Ancient Egyptian
- monument 28 Sound in a cavern
- 30 Factual
- 31 His-and-__ bracelets
- 32 Untidy place
- 33 Birthday present, for example
- 34 Love, in Spanish
- 35 Short skirt
- 37 Extremely amazed 40 Economic conflict
- 44 Inventors' protections
- 46 Ballpoint filler
- 14 16 17 18 20 22 24 33 34 35 36 38 42 43 45 52 | 53 | 54 60 61 65 66 69
 - 48 Car with a meter
- 50 Clear a blackboard
- 52 Houston ballplayer
- 53 Take a photo of
- 54 __-weensy (tiny) 55 Strike with an open palm
- 56 Sledding spot 57 Smidgen
- 58 Sailor's greeting
- 62 NBC weekend comedy series
- 63 Sticky substance

miscellany #14: netflix w friends





FUNFUNFUNFUNFUN**FU**NFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN UNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN

Thursday, February 20, 2020 10 THE TECH

CONCERT REVIEW

The time is ripe for good music

Boston-based band returns to hometown

By Victoria Dzieciol STAFF WRITER

Seven-man band Ripe held the musical equivalent of a homecoming game over the weekend. The group formed when a collection of Berklee students began making music together and has been gaining a following ever since, playing at several music festivals. To raise the hype for their upcoming EP, Little Less Polite, Ripe is embarking on a tour across the country. Back in Boston where they started, the group performed at two back-to-back sold out shows at the House of Blues.

The New Respects opened the night on a high note, and not in the musical sense. The vocalist and two guitarists could just as well have formed a three-girl dance group, performing choreographed moves that accentuated their music as they played. With the guitars, the band took on a somewhat rock sound, which was confirmed by their incredible cover of the Beatles' "Come Together." Yet, the lead singer's voice was smooth as butter, deep and full in the style of R&B. All of their music was rhythmic, made possible by the drummer, who I felt didn't receive enough of the spotlight as a full-fledged member of the band. Some songs were more fast-paced and fun, some more relaxed and sensual. At a few points, the singing slipped into a bit of rapping. Meanwhile, the guitarists refined the songs with pretty harmonies and back-up vocals. During the act, I felt like I was witnessing a modern revival of legendary R&B groups from the 90s and early 2000s like TLC.

The New Respects' performance was full of positive energy. Their sound radiated confidence, swagger, and empowerment. The crowd, whom the lead singer called her "best friends," was constantly dancing, and during their song "Hands Up," it seemed like every person in their venue was waving their arms in the air.

Ripe followed the New Respects' impressive act with their own musical talent. It's hard to narrow down Ripe's music to one genre. If I had to choose, I would say the band is along the lines of pop rock or alternative. Many of the songs featured a rather slow buildup and release to an energetic chorus or instrumental that I can best describe as "bouncy." The beats were perfect to move and clap along to. The vocalist's rich voice, which seemed to be the major focus of the songs, drew me in and made $\,$ me want to sing along too. During the faster parts of songs, he often sang staccato with short quick breaks between words, almost as if he was calling out rather than singing the lyrics.

Aside from the usual guitar, drums, and keyboard, some of the instruments used between the seven band members included the trumpet, trombone, saxophone, and tambourine. Though they were subtle for the most part, these instruments gave Ripe's music a slight jazzy quality that not a lot of rock bands have. In the occasional moment that they were allowed to shine, they completely transformed the music.

Having a good time was at the top of Ripe's agenda. The vocalist danced with eccentric movements ranging from jump kicks to head banging. With quite a bit of free time between their parts, the trumpet and trombone players took on new roles as hype men. And though it seemed to take them some time to warm up, by the end of the concert, the rest of the band members were also moving around the stage as if at a party. Ripe also brought the New Respects back onstage to help them for one song, and they playfully challenged the audience to recognize the song as soon as possible before launching into a cover of the Spice Girls' "Wannabe." They interspersed their own songs with a number of other

covers just for fun, including songs by Beyonce and Maroon 5 and even a spot-on reproduction of The Who's "Who Are You," dedicated to "all the people whose parents watch way too much CSI."

The crowd had just as much fun as the band members. Early in the show the lead singer asked for a cheer from the people who had attended both shows, and the resulting uproar was a testament to the band's passionate fans. Green bandanas, apparently an emblem of the band, eventually shifted from being worn on heads to being waved or thrown in the air in response to the music. Even after an encore, the audience spontaneously erupted in a chant of the White Stripes' famous riff from "Seven Nation Army," until the band returned to the stage for a second time.

At the time of the concert, I struggled to put my finger on the exact quality that I noticed pervaded every single one of Ripe's songs. Since then I've found the word I was looking for: victorious. The fast paced, congratulatory trumpets, and cheer-like vocals evoked a feeling of celebrating an accomplishment. Listening to their music made me feel like I'd been inserted at the end of a cheesy movie, where everything works out and the characters dance until the credits

Ripe **House of Blues Boston** Feb. 14-15

roll. The more serious songs sounded perfect for confidently strutting down the street to the pounding drums. Even the rainbow lights and brightly colored poster of Ripe's band name behind the set matched the cheerful atmosphere. The icing on the cake occurred near the end of the show, when bright white lights hit the disco ball on the ceiling of the House of Blues and covered the venue in slowly rotating flecks of light almost as if someone had released white confetti into the crowd.

Ripe's lead vocalist could not stop expressing his gratitude to the city of Boston. These shows were quite a warm "welcome home" for the growing band. Everything from the New Respects' opener to the enthusiasm of the crowd filled the night with an exuberant energy. With their triumphant and optimistic sound, Ripe amplified this energy exponentially.



VICTORIA DZIECIOL — THE TECH

Boston-based band Ripe performs for an excited crowd at the House of Blues Feb. 15.

Kenji López-Alt: The Nerd King of Internet Cooking

A look into the work of former MIT student and now professional chef

By Alana Chandler

STAFF WRITER

Dubbed the Nerd King of Internet Cooking, Kenji López-Alt '02 is a culinary captain with over 1000 recipes published online, a devout cult following and a hestselling bible-of-a-cookbook, The Food Lab (2015), under his belt. Ask him any question about home-cooking, and he'll have an answer derived from at-home experiments. From experimenting with the viscosity of butter in cookie dough to testing the structural changes of freezing a french fry, López-Alt has done it all to create his near-perfect recipes.

Yet 20 years ago, this gastronomic genius was not dissimilar to all of us here at MIT. Back when López-Alt was an incoming freshman at MIT in the '90s, his aspirations were akin to many of ours - to uncover groundbreaking discoveries through scientific research.

As a prospective undergraduate biology major, López-Alt spent his spare time working in wet labs. Yet, the seemingly endless pipetting drowned him in boredom. It would take months before López-Alt would know whether an experiment was successful. and his patience was coming to an end. In an effort to escape the slow-paced world of scientific research, López-Alt found refuge at a summer job at a local restaurant chain, Fire and Ice, after his sophomore year. The exhilaration of the kitchen — splattered aprons, spittling grittles, and smooth knives dancing along cutting boards — drew him in.

"Cooking has a much faster pace [than lab work], and you get more immediate feedback from customers; you immediately know if what you're doing is good or not," says López-Alt. It seemed as though a career spent experimenting with food would be more fun than with waiting on cell cultures.

López-Alt was able to dabble in cooking throughout his undergraduate years during weekends, IAPs, and summers, but it was during his senior year when he was able to fully invest himself in the craft. As a part of the international Number Six fraternity on campus, López-Alt had all his meals cooked by the house chef until the cook was fired for theft. López-Alt then started cooking all the dinners for his fraternity, replacing the professional chef. While this was a huge commitment, cooking for the whole house was a release for López-Alt — a buoy in the midst of MIT's tsunami of academic work. After graduating, he continued to cook there for a good three and a half years, working at a restaurant during the day and coming back to make dinners at Number Six in the evening. With students from all over the world living there, López-Alt made the effort to talk to a different person in the fraternity each weekend to learn what their favorite foods were and what they missed from home. These dishes became the menu for that Sunday's brunch. López-Alt had a rule never to repeat a dish, eager to explore realms of cooking he had never before tasted, felt, or smelled.

Unlike many other chefs, López-Alt's culinary inception did not begin with a childhood full of cooking with tradition-laden family dishes. Despite living in a multicultural household, López-Alt grew up with little exposure to anything beyond the classic American diet. When López-Alt's mother came to America from Japan at age 16, she tried very hard to assimilate, which meant that most of the food on López-Alt's dinner plate consisted of Betty Crocker dishes things that were definitely not Japanese.

"I didn't know a very strong, personal, or cultural identity with any particular cuisine or food," he said.

Instead, López-Alt's connection to food was founded in technique and science. Rather than instilling a love of food, López-Alt's parents nurtured an experimentallyminded curiosity in him to question why things work instead of simply accepting that they work, an approach he has carried into his professional life.

Although thermodynamics and organic chemistry topped the list of López-Alt's least favorite classes at MIT, much of his culinary writing uses these concepts, ironically enough. His food science cookbook The Food Lab is the epitome of turning conventional wisdom on its head in a field hyper-focused on tradition. For many, the phrase "food science" brings to mind pretentious restaurants that serve foams on meat-infused jellies. There also exists a group of people who recoil at the thought of food science as something that threatens

to replace the history and emotion of food with regimented measurements and dissection. For many people, identity is rooted deeply in food, and López-Alt by no means intends to annihilate tradition. He acknowledges technical perfection is not always everything; he, for one, does not toast his bagels and insists on sandwiches cut in triangles. Instead, in The Food Lab, López-Alt takes foods that everyone is familiar with, from meatloaf to boiled eggs, and asks questions about the way they are made as a springboard to explain the basics of food science. "Cooking has always been considered a craft, not a science," says Lopéz-Alt, but perhaps the goldilocks of cooking is to realize that it is both.

For López-Alt, cooking is about the never-ending quest for knowledge (and also avoiding his least favorite food, bananas). If we can learn one thing about his journey from MIT student to celebrity chef, it's what he says so eloquently in his introduction to The Food Lab: "Challenge everything all the time, taste everything at least once, and relax, it's only pizza."

Find more of López-Alt's work on his hit blog on Serious Eats, and taste his food at his restaurant Wursthall in San Mateo, CA.

Restaurant recommendations in Boston

- by López-Alt: • Craigie on Main (\$\$\$\$)
- Little Donkey (\$\$\$)
- Dumpling Cafe (\$)
- Rosticeria Cancun (\$) • Elephant Walk (\$\$)

THEATER REVIEW

The Cake: slow to bake, but layered with sweetness

This show leaves you feeling fresh out of the oven

By Sharon Lin

A spotlight falls on a darkened set. A baker emerges with a whisk and a smile.

"See, what you have to do is really, truly follow the directions."

And so the stage is set for Bekah Brunstetter's *The Cake*, currently playing at The Lyric Stage Company. Fans of the NBC series *This* is Us will recognize Brunstetter's dramatic cadence reminiscent of the family dynamics of the show. The story follows Della, owner of Della's Sweets, as she welcomes back Jen, the daughter of her late friend who has returned to her hometown in North Carolina for her wedding. Della's excitement is soon soured when she discovers that Jen will be marrying a woman.

It's been nearly a decade since the events that inspired the play and yet the atmosphere feels as ripe for debate as ever. In 2012, a cakeshop in Colorado denied a same-sex couple a wedding cake over Christian marriage beliefs, leading to a complaint that eventually made its way up to the Supreme Court. While the court ultimately ruled in favor of the cake store owner, there is still ambiguity as to whether businesses can deny service to gay couples.

Likewise, the characters dance in circles as Della (Karen MacDonald), attempts to accept Jen's choices, and as Jen struggles to reconcile her Southern childhood with her new life. Her fiancée Macy (Kris Sidberry), an ultra-liberal East Coast journalist, tries to convince Jen to leave her past behind, drawing attention to the trauma resurfaced by her conversations with Della. The tension between her two very different worlds builds as Jen attempts to stop making excuses for herself.

While the play covers heavy topics, there are several moments that bring a lightness to the stage. Della's husband Tim (Fred Sullivan Jr.) embodies the comic relief for many scenes, from his single-track appetite to his gruff attempts to please his wife. Likewise, Della's explorations of her sexuality during her fantasy appearances on The Big American Bake-Off are played for laughs as much as for revealing her inner turmoil. As she tries to understand Jen's needs, she comes to face with her own marriage and the question of what love can even mean.

Even audience members who may wholeheartedly disagree with Della's perspectives will be drawn to her confusion and

The Cake

Written by Bekah Brunstetter

Directed by Courtney O'Connor

The Lyric Stage Company

Jan. 10-Feb. 9

disappointment. The play doesn't give her any excuses for her discriminatory behavior, but it does give her a fair characterization. She's no one-dimensional Paula Deen - she tries her best to understand Jen, but even her love has its boundaries.

While the dialogue was stiff at some points, the execution was pulled off with terrific energy by the cast. MacDonald, a seasoned actor with the Huntington Theater Company and the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, pulls off an emotionally complex performance that leaves even the most progressive audience members empathetic to Della's world. Likewise, while Sidberry's character doesn't have as many opportunities to demonstrate the many layers to her personality, she manages to portray the growth of her character over the course of the show. The play opens with Macy interrogating Della on the integrity of her baking techniques. Macy, a quick-witted writer who believes that "sugar is more addictive than cocaine" and that food television "fetishizes an industry that's killing hundreds of thousands of people a year" spends the entirety of her first scene criticizing Della. Macy doesn't develop too much after that scene — she continues to be the voice of liberal America, trying to convince her fiancée to renounce her Southern upbringing and publicly criticizing Della's Sweets after Della refuses to bake the couple's wedding cake. Nevertheless, Sidberry is able to bring forth a range of intensity, from tenderness to disappointment, that shows how her character does eventually come to terms with Della's perspectives and the fact that sometimes change takes time.

Inspired by her father's opposition to same-sex marriage and her own Southern upbringing, Brunstetter presents dialogue that speaks to the trauma of growing up queer in a Christian community. In one scene, Jen continues to suffer from nightmares that she's going to hell and, as Macy points out, still doubts herself even when she kisses her fiancée. She's torn in half as she declares that her love — the greatest love that she has ever experienced — was never anything she could have expected. She is unable to reconcile her newfound life with the values that she has grown up with embedded into her psyche, and the dissonance that this causes wracks her more emotionally than she knows how to handle.

The dialogue does draw close to preachy at points, especially with Macy's constant insistence on the unfairness of Della's views. Comparing the multi-layered portrayal of Della — witty, light-hearted, devout, faithful - with the image of bigotry that Macy describes, we can see that there is a clear prejudice at play. Even so, Macy's own struggles as a queer black woman can be seen as she takes the defensive in her arguments with Della, eventually exploding in a thunderous delivery with Macy accusing Della of harboring an unfounded hatred against her.

Though the play moves slowly at certain parts, with much of the dialogue consisting of repetitive sequences of Jen excitedly pre-



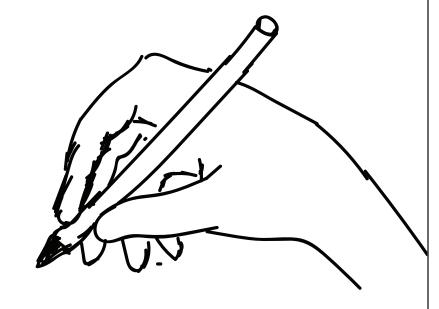
Karen MacDonald plays Della in a recent production of The Cake at The Lyric Stage Company.

paring for her wedding and focusing on the disconnect between her different identities, it wraps up nicely with parallel character arcs for each of the women. By the time of the wedding, Della has been through a great ordeal of soul-searching, trying to connect with a Jen she no longer recognizes. Jen finally sets down her boundaries, and Macy is able to see beyond the anger she has for Della's Southern views.

Given that the play is performed in Boston, the perspective that's ultimately taken on the matter of same-sex marriage is predictable. Though there are few moments that lean towards supporting one side more so than another — Della is eventually kicked off her dream baking show and is ravaged by Macy's readers — the play ultimately gives a fair representation to the sentiments on both sides of the table. Each of the characters makes mistakes, but we are treated with what is ultimately a tender story about listening to one another. We may already know what to expect from the play, but it's still as sweet as buttercream frosting.

Are you handy with a

join @ tech.mit.edu



MIT offers 15% discount for Eastgate residents moving into Site 4 graduate housing

Eastgate, from Page 1

feedback received at an information session Feb. 7, the discount will be extended to students "as long as they remain a regular MIT graduate student and reside in Site 4."

Additionally, the Eastgate Resident Transition Subsidy was announced to mitigate concerns regarding the affordability of Site 4 for current Eastgate residents.

The subsidy will be evaluated by staff at Students Financial Services on an individual basis. It will consider financial circumstances such as stipend levels and assets, spouses' employment, number of dependents, and healthcare costs.

Friedrich and Vice President and Dean for Student Life Suzy Nelson wrote in an email to Eastgate residents that they recognized that "some students may have initially selected Eastgate as a living community due to the published rates for housing." They wrote that although Site 4 rates are "not affordable for all members of the current Eastgate community," they "reflect the new building's condition and location" and are below market prices.

Sales began Feb. 15 but rings can still be purchased Feb. 20 and Feb. 21, sizing available

Brass Rat, from Page 1

ed" Infinite Corridor in recognition of MITHenge.

The Hacker's Map lies on the inverse of the bezel. In addition to the MIT tunnel system map in past years' rings, the class of 2022 map contains a new Nano Extension and a π beneath the dome. The symbol represents the March 14 anniversary of admissions decisions and the official class reunion date in Las Vegas exactly 3.14 years after graduation.

At Ring Premiere, before revealing the official bezel, the committee presented a joke bezel featuring angel Iron Man, a WashLava sun, MIT Confessions clouds, and a beaver with long eyelashes emerging from an Anna's Taqueria burrito wrapper and swimming into a river of tapioca pearls.

Ring sales began 10 a.m. Feb. 15. Students can purchase the ring 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 20 at the Stud Chimneys or 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 21 in Lobby 13. Ring sizing will be available



16,267 SF office space in Cambridge with parking

810 Memorial Dr Cambridge Fl 2 | Available for lease on 10/1/2020

At the crossroads of MIT, Harvard and Boston University

24/7/365 access FOB key; Elevator Handicap access Kitchen Fitness center

Community room

Near Whole Foods, Dunkin Donuts, Trader Joe's, Alive & Kicking Lobsters,

Riverside café, and

Micro Center

Close to the Charles River bank, 5 parks

Old Cambridge ()

Never Cambridge ()

ARA ()

At the corner of River St and Memorial Dr. near the Cambridge exit ramp off Mass Pike 90

Garage parking 2/1,000 bike rack, Zipcar nearby

0.7 mile to Central Square T stop on the MBTA red line

Bus lines nearby:

64 (Oak Square — University Park or

Kendall MIT)

70 (Cedarwood —

Central Square)
70A (North Waltham —
Central Square)

Contact: Patrick Verbeke | www.ValtiCommercial.com Tel: +1-617-230-3638 | Email: Patrick@ValtiRealEstate.com





MIT 2020 Quality of Life Survey



MIT wants to hear from you!

Make your voice, experiences, and concerns heard.

Participate in the MIT 2020 Quality of Life Survey and help make our community stronger.

800 \$25 prizes for randomly drawn participants!

To access your survey or learn more, visit ir.mit.edu/qol.

