

MIT's Oldest and  
Largest Newspaper

thetech.com



## WEATHER, p. 2

**THU: 31°F | 27°F**  
Cloudy, then Snow.  
**FRI: 33°F | 22°F**  
Snow.  
**SAT: 33°F | 16°F**  
Mostly Cloudy.

Volume 141, Number 1

Thursday, February 18, 2021

# Massachusetts permits MIT to vaccinate its whole community

*Mass. unlikely to distribute doses to MIT Medical*

By Kristina Chen and Nicole Chan

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITORS

President L. Rafael Reif announced that “MIT will have permission to vaccinate the extended community” for COVID-19 in a Jan. 29 email to the MIT community. This applies to all faculty, staff, post-docs, students, and affiliates, as well as dependents of community members, with MIT potentially immunizing “as many as 50,000 individuals.”

Members of the MIT community should fill out the vaccine eligibility form “right away,” regardless of their interest in being vaccinated by

MIT, MIT Medical Director Cecilia Stuopis ’90 and Vice Chancellor and Chair of the MIT Vaccine Planning Team Ian Waitz wrote in an email Feb. 3.

The form asks individuals to indicate whether they are interested in receiving the vaccine from MIT and to provide basic demographic information, as well as that of family members or dependents who may also want to receive the vaccine from MIT.

Stuopis and Waitz also wrote that responses to the eligibility form “will be kept private” and are not binding. If respondents “receive the vaccine elsewhere” or “change their mind

about receiving the vaccine,” they can update their responses to the form at any time.

Stuopis and Waitz wrote that Massachusetts’ vaccination phase, as determined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and “how regularly and in what volume” MIT receives doses from the state influence whether individuals can receive vaccinations.

Waitz asked attendees at the Feb. 17 faculty meeting to “encourage” those around them to respond to the form. “We need to increase the response rate” to “be as prepared as

Vaccine, Page 2

# New intl. student reg. guidance reiterated

*MIT advises students to take at least 24 credits of in-person coursework*

By Kristina Chen

EDITOR IN CHIEF

First-year international students are advised to follow the Fall 2020 guidance on registering for in-person coursework determined by the International Students Office (ISO), according to a Feb. 8 email from Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz.

Per the ISO’s fall guidance, new international students should take at least 24 credits of hybrid or in-person coursework to enter the U.S.

A July 24 U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) guidance wrote that new international students with F-1 visas pursuing fully online coursework would not be permitted to enter the U.S.

The DHS guidance did not fully specify the conditions that would allow first-year international students following hybrid programs to enter the U.S., prompting the ISO to release its fall guidance. The DHS released an FAQ Aug. 7 which

Internationals, Page 2

## IN SHORT

**Q-Week** for on-campus students runs until Feb. 22.

**PE classes** begin Feb. 22.

The **UROP Extended Direct Funding** deadline (for students who have yet to meet the ELO guarantee) is Feb. 23.

MIT affiliates should complete the **COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Form**.

The deadline to submit nominations for the **MIT Awards** is March 26.

Interested in **joining The Tech**? Email [join@tech.mit.edu](mailto:join@tech.mit.edu).

Send news and tips to [news@tech.mit.edu](mailto:news@tech.mit.edu).



LINGYI QIU - THE TECH

**A snow friend welcomes** MIT first years, sophomores, and juniors back to campus Monday on Killian Court.

Year in Review, see insert on p. 4

# Grad students asked to return for appointments

*Open letter urging MIT to rescind policy receives over 600 community signatures*

By Kristina Chen

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz wrote in a Dec. 7 email that graduate students with Spring 2021 RA, TA, or fellowship appointments were “being asked to return/come to the U.S.” by Jan. 30 to maintain their appointments.

The International Students Office wrote that this is in accordance with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) 5-Month Temporary Absence Rule, which was

suspended for Spring and Summer 2020. It was not confirmed whether this rule would or would not apply in Fall and Spring 2021.

Graduate students would only be eligible to continue their appointments remotely if affected by visa delays, travel restrictions, border closures, or other COVID-related factors; if the student or member of the student’s household was instructed by a medical provider to not travel to the U.S.; or if

Appointments, Page 2

## 2021 Commencement ceremony to be held online

MIT’s Spring 2021 Commencement ceremony will be held online, President L. Rafael Reif wrote in an email to the MIT community Feb. 4. The necessary conditions for holding large public gatherings and celebrations “are still many months away,” Reif said.

Reif stated that after consulting with the “Commencement Committee, student leaders, the deans, and the senior leadership team,” it was determined that early June was too soon to plan a large campus gathering.

Reif addressed the Class of 2021 directly, writing that “we are intensely focused on making June’s online Commencement event meaningful, memorable and delightful,” and saying to both the Class of 2021 and the Class of 2020 that “we are equally committed to

creating a special celebration for you [...] in person, in the future, once it is safe to do so.”

The virtual ceremony will be executed under the guidance of the Commencement Transition Team, chaired by Professor Jim Poterba. According to the transition team’s website, some of the committee’s 2021-specific tasks include “confirming the elements of the One-MIT Commencement ceremony; guiding planning for the undergraduate diploma ceremony; making recommendations for elements that are appropriate for School advanced degree diploma ceremonies; serving as a resource to Schools as they plan their events; and recommending both composition and charge for the next generation of the Commencement Committee.”

The One-MIT Commencement ceremony, proposed in 2019, would include the Commencement speaker’s address and degree conferral and would be open to all graduates and their guests.

In his Feb. 4 email, Reif also announced that MIT Reunions for 2021 are to be conducted online. Reif said that “an unexpected benefit” of holding reunions virtually in 2020 was that they “attracted a record number of alumni attendees from around the world, including many who might not have traveled to campus otherwise.”

Activist and criminal justice lawyer Bryan Stevenson was announced as MIT’s 2021 Commencement speaker Feb. 4.

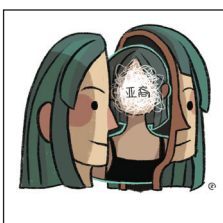
— Srinidhi Narayanan

## EGG DONOR ADS

College newspapers should reconsider running potentially dangerous ads. **OPINION, p. 4**

## SUSTAINABLE INVESTING

MITIMCo can lead with more transparent, ethical investment practices. **OPINION, p. 4**



## ME VS. ME

Sometimes I wish I could exist without being defined by my Asian-American identity. **CAMPUS LIFE, p. 3**

## COMPENSATION BIAS

Pay practices must also align with DEI values.. **OPINION, p. 5**

## SECTIONS

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WEATHER

Country covered in snow

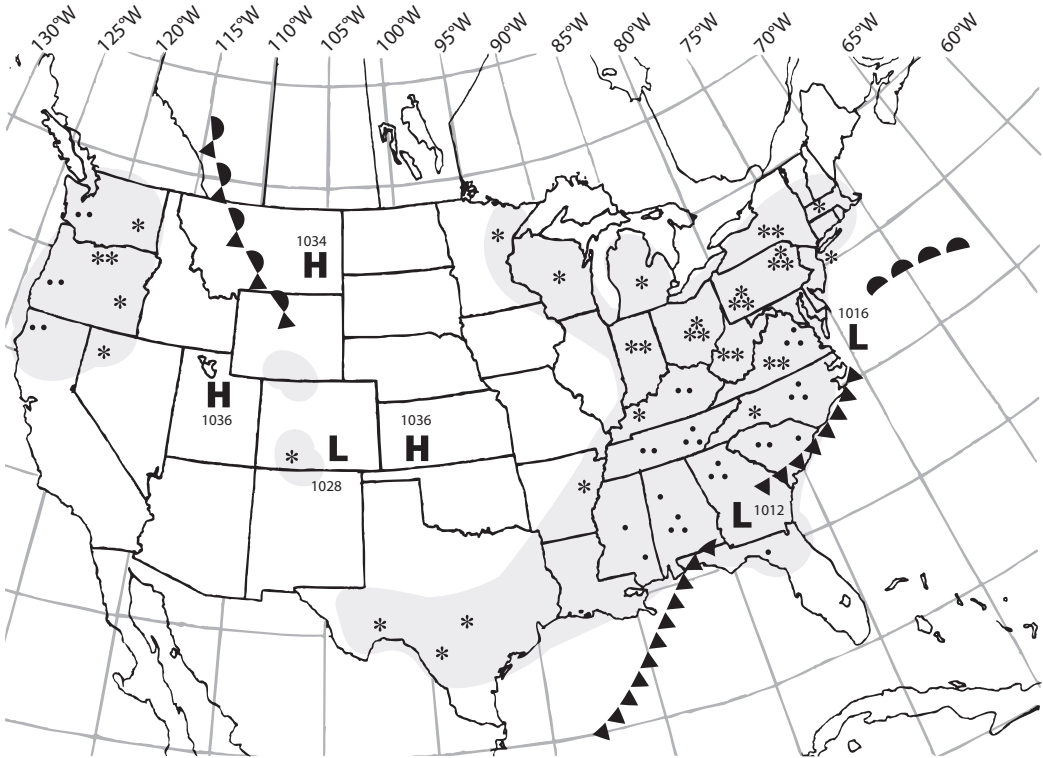
By Sarah Weidman  
CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

The first week of the semester in Cambridge has been a characteristic week for late winter in the city. Old snow left on the sidewalks slowly melts in the winter sun, but cold nights freeze all that snowmelt into black ice. Be careful when you're out walking at night — it gets slippery! Later this afternoon, a storm will slowly roll into Cambridge, bringing more snow. Although the snow is expected to be light, the storm will stick around into Saturday, so we may see several inches of accu-

mulation over the next two days. Another chilly February weekend! The storm that is about to come through Boston left its mark on much of the rest of the country over the past few days. Many states that rarely see snow or sub-freezing temperatures were hammered with unseasonable cold and several inches of snow. Nearly 75% of the country was covered in snow on Tuesday afternoon! The storm hit Texas particularly hard, with temperatures so low that power outages swept through the state. Another “unprecedented” storm for these unprecedented times. Keep warm out there, everyone!

Extended Forecast

**Today:** Snow likely starting late afternoon. High around 31°F (-1°C). Northeast wind around 5–10 mph.  
**Tonight:** Snow likely. Low around 27°F (-3°C). East wind around 8–14 mph.  
**Tomorrow:** Snow. High around 33°F (1°C) and low around 22°F (-6°C). Northeast wind around 12–16 mph.  
**Saturday:** Mostly cloudy, with slight chance of snow showers. High around 33°F (1°C) and low around 16°F (-9°C). Northwest wind around 10–13 mph.  
**Sunday:** Sunny. High around 32°F (0°C) and low around 18°F (-8°C).



Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Thursday, February 18, 2021

Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipitation Symbols	Other Symbols
<b>H</b> High Pressure	--- Trough	Snow: * Rain: ∇	Fog: ☁
<b>L</b> Low Pressure	— Warm Front	Showers: ∇	Thunderstorm: ⚡
<b>S</b> Hurricane	▲ Cold Front	Light: *	Haze: ☁
	▲ Stationary Front	Moderate: **	
		Heavy: ***	

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

Approximately 8,000–10,000 MIT individuals meet phase 2 vaccine criteria

Vaccine, from Page 1

possible when and if we have vaccines.” As of Feb. 16, the eligibility form has a response rate of 73% among academic and residential faculty and senior leaders, 66% among graduate students, and 59% among undergraduate students, according to Waitz and Stuopis’ presentation at the faculty meeting. The response rate is lower for support and service staff, though they “might fall into some of the more vulnerable categories for being at risk,” Stuopis said. Stuopis said at the faculty meeting that MIT had administered

1,093 first and 497 second doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to eligible community members in phase 1 and the beginning of phase 2. Stuopis added that MIT’s ability to vaccinate community members is limited by the vaccination phase and the number of vaccines being provided by the Commonwealth. Phase 1 of vaccination in Massachusetts took place between December 2020 and February 2021 and prioritized healthcare workers, first responders, and those in long-term care facilities, rest homes, assisted living facilities, and congregate care settings. Phase 2 is taking place with four groups: the first is individuals over

the age of 75, the second is individuals over the age of 65, individuals with more than two certain medical conditions, or residents and staff of low income and affordable senior housing. The first group in phase 2 became eligible to receive vaccines starting Feb. 1. The second group is eligible starting Feb. 18. According to Stuopis, the population in Massachusetts that meets the conditions of the second group of phase 2 is expected to exceed one million people. Stuopis said that in the MIT population, there are approximately 8,000–10,000 individuals who meet the criteria of the second group.

Stuopis also said that although MIT is “ready, willing, and able,” the Commonwealth has ceased making vaccine deliveries to medical groups like MIT Medical, making it “hard” to do “large-scale vaccination.” Stuopis added that she would be “highly surprised” if MIT receives “any vaccine for the remainder of phase two,” based on communication from the state. Waitz wrote that “for the next couple of weeks,” MIT community members may be “more likely to find” a vaccination “appointment at one of the large state facilities than they are at the MIT Medical facility.” Reif wrote that MIT Medical asks MIT community members to

“not call or email them seeking a vaccine appointment.” Also, they should not “wait to receive their shot from MIT” if they “have another option for getting vaccinated sooner.” The remaining two groups of Massachusetts’ phase 2 are workers (including early education and K-12, food service, public health, transit, vaccine development, court system, medical supply chain, etc. workers) and individuals with one certain medical condition. Phase 3 includes groups that are not listed in Phase 1 or 2. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts expects that this phase will launch in April.

Petition by International Support Network receives over 280 signatures

Internationals, from Page 1

wrote that international students would not be able to enter the U.S. “to pursue a full course of study that is 100 percent online.” A petition authored by the In-

ternational Support Network MIT with over 280 signatures urged MIT to decrease the number of units required for first-year international students to enter the U.S. “Peer institutions such as Columbia, Tufts, Berkeley and UMich-

igan [sic] only require new international students to take only one hybrid or in-person course,” the petition wrote. Waitz wrote that “international students can make a decision that best meets their individual needs

and circumstances” and that first-year international students intending to register for fewer than 24 units should consider the risks of possibly encountering future issues related to immigration status or applications.

He added that government guidance on the minimum amount of required in-person coursework for new international students “continues to be conflicting” and that the ISO believes that its guidance “is most in line with the federal requirements.”

Letter to MIT admin compared new policy to July 6 DHS and ICE directive

Appointments, from Page 1

the student is caring for a family member with an illness. Students under these circumstances were asked to submit an intake form through their graduate administrator, to be reviewed individually to determine options available to the students. A Dec. 11 open letter to the MIT administration responding to Waitz’s email received over 600 signatures from student organizations, graduate and undergraduate

students, alumni, and postdoctoral associates. The letter wrote that the policy “forces students living overseas to uproot their lives” to return to the U.S. where COVID-19 “is raging harder than ever.” The letter urged MIT to rescind its policy, “involve those impacted before making wide-reaching policy decisions,” and “protect international students from further precarity and mistreatment.” The letter compared MIT’s policy to the July 6 DHS and Immigration and Customs Enforcement

(ICE) directive that banned international students taking fully online coursework from remaining in the U.S. MIT and Harvard filed a lawsuit against DHS and ICE that eventually resulted in the directive being rescinded. The letter also wrote that as of Dec. 23, of 195 remote appointment requests, 145 were approved without change, 40 were approved with change of funding, and 5 remained under review. 800 remote appointments were approved during Fall 2020, according to the letter.

The letter added that Harvard and Yale will continue to pay remote stipends in the Spring. A forum on the policy was held for graduate students Dec. 14. A follow-up Dec. 16 guidance acknowledged student concerns regarding the policy and summarized Waitz’s message from the forum, writing that MIT would provide “more timely and ongoing updates” and “increased flexibility when reviewing exception requests,” as well as clarify “that the eligibility criteria include all medical conditions.”

MIT’s fall guidance on remote student appointments announced that the “vast majority” of graduate students abroad would be able to continue their fellowships, TA, or RA appointments, with some TA or RAships possibly converted to non-service fellowships depending on the country the student is living in, the student’s research area, or “export control requirements.” As in the fall, undergraduate students abroad are not able to participate in paid UROPs or other hourly wage opportunities.

**Solution to First Day**  
from page 7

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

**Solution to Q-Week**  
from page 7

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

**Solution to In Uniform**  
from page 7

CHOP	ACTS	POSSE
HAHA	TREE	ANNOY
EBAY	RACE	TEASE
FIRE	FIGHTER	POD
STEERS	SOLOS	
	EKG	INASEC
PAPAS	LAST	NOTI
FLIGHT	ATTENDANT	
CONE	IDEA	ESSAY
STANZA	REV	
	TORTE	REGARD
ETC	MAILCARRIER	
REHAB	DAIS	ISEE
ALIBI	ETTE	ELKS
SENSE	DEER	FESS

**Course 6?**

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## ME VS. ME

# Trying to untangle my identities, but it's impossible

Somehow it goes deeper than the Chinese characters tattooed on my skin

**By Joanna Lin**  
*PUBLISHER*

“Your personal statement was very interesting and enjoyable to read, but it doesn’t present a clear argument why *Joanna Lin would make a good doctor*.” Somehow, this sentence hit me like a ton of bricks, especially because it was spot-on. I had recently received advice to keep my entire essay moving towards a defined thesis, so I did my best to not write in my usual scatterbrained format. Unfortunately, my draft was a clear, convincing argument for why doctors should exist, but barely touched on why I should be given the chance to become one.

The more we talked about my passions and motivations for pursuing medicine, the more we delved into my identity as an Asian American. While it's a topic I have discussed at length with a lot of people, I had really hoped not to talk about it at this particular meeting.

The conversation brought me back to another I shared with a long-time high school friend. Amid reminiscing of our freshman selves acquiring guava juice for

a summer reading presentation and the shocking realization that we had been friends for nearly seven years, we got to the point of her research project: to examine college personal statements.

I shared my memory of suddenly being struck by inspiration in the shower, only to now look back on my personal statement with discomfort at the privilege it exuded. I also acknowledged that the failure of that essay to get me into any “good” Common App schools played a large factor in my feelings — I don’t think I would have been admitted to MIT if they had read that essay.

But that's beside the point. The point is, I wrote about my great-great-grandmother, sending off her only grandson to school through a landmine set by the Japanese; I wrote about my great-grandmother running a grocery store with nothing more than a kindergarten education; I wrote about my parents making their way in America on pennies. Being Asian American, being the child of immigrants — that was integral to making me who I was. It wasn't even a question that I would include those stories. And every single Asian American woman my friend interviewed did the same.

Was there something about our Asian American identity that demanded to be the most compelling part of our much more complex personalities? And is that a bad thing, anyway?

In exasperation at myself and at how much stronger my rewritten personal statement was, I messaged my friend again that I had, sadly, come crawling back to the cliché. She just responded, “well now is an especially good time to capitalize on the asian identity tbh.”

She was referring to what you could say is the AAPI community's "moment" right now, with the unbelievable surge in hate crimes and an unfortunately believable absence of mainstream media attention. I'm seeing East Asian support of darker-skinned Southeast Asians, and the discussion with the Black community about standing together has never been more loud.

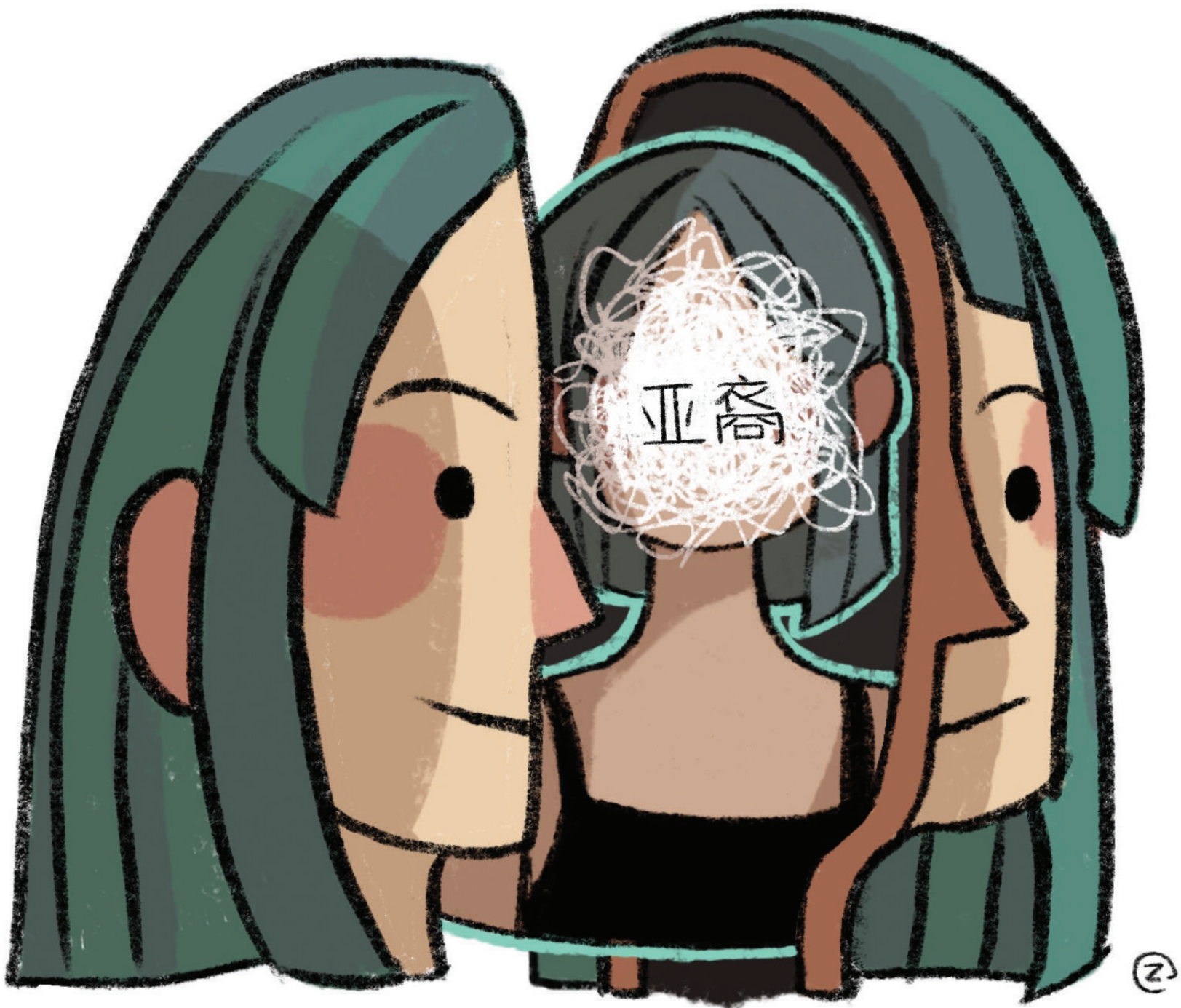
Our collective suffering is not something I want to capitalize on. Not now, not ever. I think I particularly didn't want to write about my Asian American experience because of our current visibility.

This is not to say that I wish being Asian American were not part of my identity. I

would never give up my lived experiences or those of my ancestors, and I celebrated a heartbreaking Lunar New Year alone this year. It's still an integral, immutable part of me that brings me so much pride.

But I wonder if it's possible to write about, or even describe, myself without it just once. Evidently the first draft of my personal statement was an utter failure at achieving this goal: I had written *myself* completely out of the picture. Upon reflection, there is literally no other part of my identity, not even my gender, that has this profound of an impact on describing myself.

All I wanted to write in my new personal statement was how medicine is the most important gift you could give anybody, how I love connecting through language, how I simply wish to *soigner*. In the short 5,300 characters I was allowed, I wanted those ideas to be able to exist in a vacuum without functionally depending on my identity as an Asian American. But maybe I shouldn't even try to extricate myself from the tangled roots of my family, my history, and my culture. In the end, I guess it wouldn't be me anymore.



**The inner me is an Asian American,** and the outer me cannot exist without its inner counterpart.

ANGELA ZHANG — THE TECH

CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE CAMPUS LIFE











# Local 26 files charges against Bon Appetit over warning issued to shop steward

UNITE HERE Local 26 is filing charges against Bon Appetit over a final warning issued to Mark Sims, chief shop steward of MIT's dining hall workers' union and chef at McCormick Hall.

As shop steward, Sims represents MIT's dining hall workers and works with Bon Appetit managers to resolve issues in the workplace between employees and management. Bon Appetit and its workers follow a union contract, which is meant to be enforced with the help of shop stewards.

Sims said in an interview with *The Tech* that he had approached management to bring up concerns a union member had about a manager.

Sims then received a warning from Bon Appetit management, who described him as "aggressive, loud, and scary." Sims, who is a Black man, feels that the discipline against him is racially motivated and limits his ability to advocate for other workers as shop steward.

By filing charges, Local 26 expects Bon Appetit to remove the discipline from Sims' record.

Sims said that he appreciates "the support from students and the Student Worker Alliance."

The MIT Student Worker Alliance has organized a rally for dining workers that will take place on Feb. 22 over Zoom. A Facebook post announcing the rally writes, "Dining workers at MIT are often treated unfairly, are subject to racism and sexism, and in some cases are punished for standing up for dignity and respect on the job."

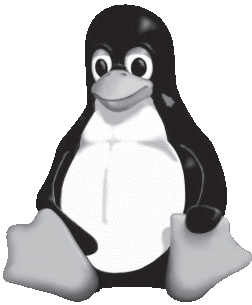
Dining workers and student advocates will be present at the rally, where participants will

discuss how they can "come together to fight for a just and equitable MIT."

UNITE HERE Local 26 President Carlos Aramayo wrote in an email to *The Tech*, "We take this situation very seriously and expect a just solution. UNITE HERE Local 26 stands with Mark and we applaud his leadership in defending the rights and well-being of his coworkers."

Local 26 represents food service and hospitality workers in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, including workers at MIT.

— Kristina Chen



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NEWS



PRODUCTION



PHOTO



SPORTS



CAMPUS LIFE



ARTS



OPINION



BUSINESS



COPY

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# First Day

Solution, page 2

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

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.

# Q-Week

Solution, page 2

20+		5+		3÷	
		48×		1	
24×			1−		3
	2−	1		360×	
2		30×	6		
1−			20×		

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.

## IN UNIFORM

by Billie Truitt

Solution, page 2

### ACROSS

- 1 Karate blow  
5 Segments of a play  
9 Old West pursuit group  
14 "Very funny!"  
15 Sycamore or maple  
16 Pester  
17 Auction website  
18 Dash or marathon  
19 Make fun of  
20 Blaze battler  
23 Green holder for peas  
24 Takes the wheel  
25 Sings alone  
27 Heart test: Abbr.  
29 "Be right with you!"  
33 Dads  
37 Go the distance  
40 "Me? Never!"  
41 Passenger plane staffer  
44 Edible ice cream holder  
45 Notion  
46 Opinion piece  
47 Section of an anthem  
49 Race, as an engine

### DOWN

- 51 Rich layer cake  
54 "High" esteem  
59 List ending abbr.  
62 Letter deliverer  
64 Back-to-health program, for short  
66 Banquet platform  
67 "Yes, that's clear"  
68 Accused's excuse  
69 Suffix for luncheon  
70 Relatives of 72 Across  
71 Have a feeling  
72 Stags and does  
73 Admit the truth, with "up"

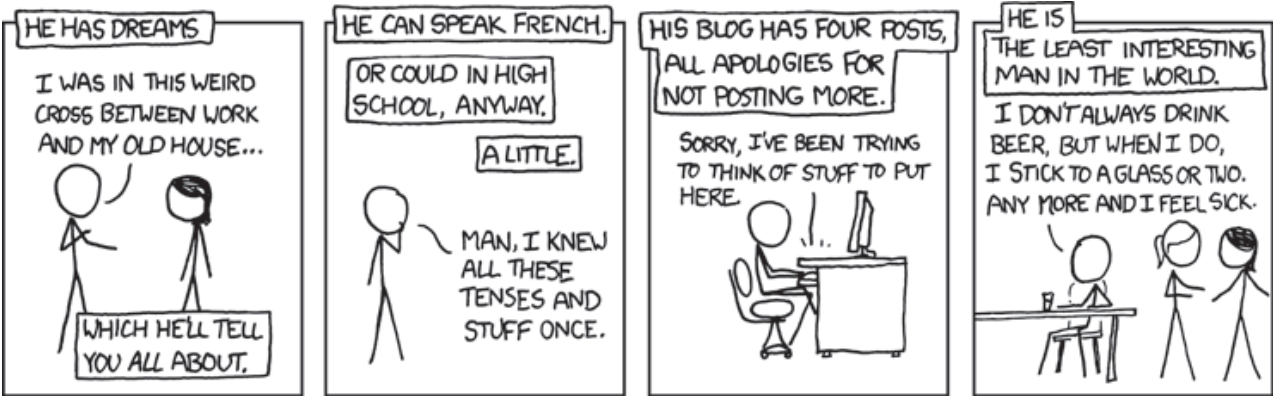
### ACROSS

- 9 Store's customer  
10 \_\_\_ in a million (rare)  
11 Break sharply  
12 Nothing special  
13 Closely observed  
21 Just out of the oven  
22 Privileged group  
26 Contents of hourglasses  
28 Feeling pleased  
30 In order (to)  
31 Sicilian volcano  
32 Minneapolis or Miami  
33 Cpl.'s subordinates  
34 Very much  
35 \_\_\_ colada (rum cocktail)  
36 Insurance seller  
38 Devoured  
39 Bit of a constellation  
42 Small jeweled crown  
43 "Not in a million years!"  
48 Horror movie menace  
50 Pencil end  
52 \_\_\_ over (helped through difficulty)  
53 Fill with delight

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	
14					15					16					
17					18					19					
20				21					22			23			
24							25				26				
				27		28		29				30	31	32	
33	34	35	36			37	38	39			40				
41					42					43					
44					45					46					
47				48				49	50						
				51			52	53		54		55	56	57	58
59	60	61		62				63							
64				65			66				67				
68							69				70				
71							72				73				

- 55 "Good \_\_\_!" (Charlie Brown lament)  
56 Supermarket path  
57 Offends the nose  
58 Gown, for example  
59 Historical periods  
60 Prefix for phone or vision  
61 Where a goatee grows  
63 Quote as a reference  
65 Belly muscles

## [621] Superlative







**Beavers are back!**

Once again, another semester begins at MIT. Students from all around travel to campus — for some, this is a return back to a place many call “home,” and for others, this is the start of a completely new chapter. Quarantine week has made it clearer than ever that our particular situations may differ, but at the end of the day, we’re all in this together when it comes to keeping each other safe and supported.

