



MAXWELL YUN—THE TECH

MIT community members attend a protest supporting Ukraine in front of the MA State House, Tuesday.

MITCPA moves to federal mediation for three-year contract negotiations

Patrol officers demand raises in response to inflation akin to those received by officers working at Boston University and at Harvard

By: Kristina Chen
PUBLISHER

The MIT Campus Police Association (MITCPA) is moving to federal mediation for its contract negotiations. The move comes after 14 meetings, starting this July, with university officials did not result in a satisfactory contract, according to a press release sent to *The Tech*.

The MITCPA announced its intention to move to federal mediation via a press release and by distributing flyers to MIT community members near campus entrances.

The flyer writes that the MITCPA is moving toward federal mediation due to “MIT and MIT Police Management being unfair and unreasonable in contractual negotiation” by refusing to “address reasonable quality of life

and economic issues presented by the Association.”

The MITCPA's demands for its three-year contract include an increase in wages consistent with the rise in cost of living due to inflation and medical insurance.

According to the press release, Alan McDonald, legal counsel for the MITCPA, said on behalf of the association, “in the past two years the cost of living has increased substantially, and their wages are

not keeping up with current economic conditions. We are simply asking for economic stability to take care of our families and not live paycheck by paycheck.”

McDonald also said that MIT “pretends that it has no responsibility to account for inflation or to compensate our officers in parity with comparable universities.”

The flyer claims that at the

Campus Police, Page 2

IN SHORT

All students are required to **receive flu vaccines before Nov. 18** in order to access buildings and register for Spring 2023 and IAP.

Drop Date is Nov. 23.

Thanksgiving Break is Nov. 24–25.

Community members may reserve seats on the airport shuttle leaving from the Kresge turnaround to the Boston Logan International Airport Nov. 21–23. The shuttle fee is \$14, and the shuttle leaves every hour from 7 a.m.–5 p.m.

Interested in **joining *The Tech***? Email join@tech.mit.edu.

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



FAITH ODUNSI—THE TECH

MIT student groups, such as the BSU (pictured), organize group trips to the theaters to watch *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* on opening weekend.

Stratton Student Center renewal set to commence early next year

The student center will be closed to the public after CPW and will be fully shutdown beginning in early May 2023

By: Kristina Chen
PUBLISHER

Stratton Student Center renewal plans “are on the verge” of receiving approval and construction will begin early next year, Senior Associate Dean for Diversity and Community Involvement Gustavo Burkett wrote in a Nov. 9 email to occupants of the student center.

According to Burkett's email, “infrastructure and preparatory work” for the renewal will begin January 2023. Construction will take place for the Coffeehouse Lounge on the

third floor, restrooms, and on mechanical/infrastructure systems in February and March.

After Campus Preview Weekend, April 13–16, the student center will be closed to the public. Student organization leaders and retail tenants will still be able to access the building in order to prepare spaces before the student center is fully shutdown in early May.

The student center will be fully shut down beginning in early May and throughout the summer for intensive construction. During this time, no public or tenant access will

be allowed in the building.

In mid-August, tenants will be able to ramp up their activities in preparation for reopening the student center fully to the public. The student center will reopen fully in late August once students have returned to campus.

The student center renewal project team is providing opportunities for community members to learn more about the renovations and to learn how the team will “mitigate disruptions caused by the building's

Stud Renovation, Page 2

SOONDUBU

Kaju's stew serves the perfect warm winter hug for both your stomach and your soul.
ARTS, p. 4



BALD CAPS AND BLUE MAKEUP

The Boston Blue Man Group entertains with lights, paints, and drums.
ARTS, p. 5



IMPROVING GRIEVANCE PROCESSES

Taking collective action and committing to solidarity to win the contract we deserve.
OPINION, p. 6-7

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WEATHER

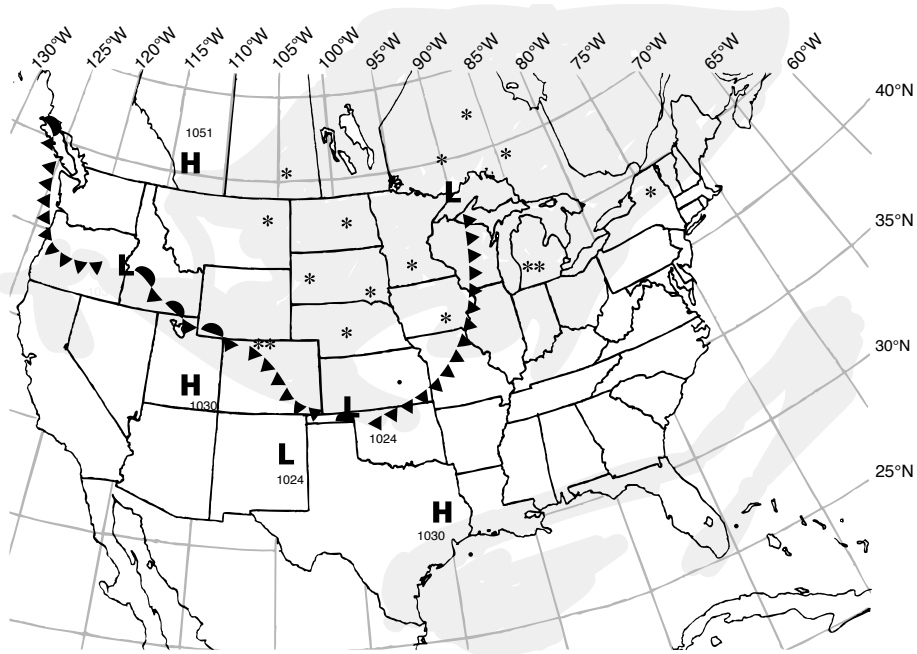
Winter is coming

By Shinjini Ghosh

After a flurry of snow in Cambridge’s first snowfall this season, the week ahead looks colder. Temperatures steadily dip over the next couple of days and the weekend while the skies remain sunny and clear. It is time to bring out the warm coats and mittens - the holiday movies, string lights, and the chocolate bombs with marshmallows. Get ready for a cozy weekend!

Extended Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy day with high around 46°F (8°C). West winds around 10-20 mph.
Tonight: Clear night with low around 33°F (1°C). WSW winds around 10-20 mph.
Friday: Mostly sunny day with afternoon clouds and high of 45°F (7°C) and low of 29°F (-2°C). WSW winds of 10-20 mph.
Saturday: Mostly sunny day and clear night with high of 43°F (6°C) and low of 27°F (-3°C). Southwest winds of 10-15 mph.
Sunday: Mostly sunny day with high of 39°F (4°C) and low of 26 F (-3°C). West winds of 15-20 mph



Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Thursday, November 17, 2022

Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipitation Symbols	Other Symbols
H High Pressure	Trough	Snow	Fog
L Low Pressure	Warm Front	Rain	Thunderstorm
Hurricane	Cold Front	Light	Haze
	Stationary Front	Moderate	
		Heavy	

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

MITCPA patrol officer members served on campus throughout pandemic years

Campus Police, from Page 1

MITCPA’s most recent negotiation meeting, members were told that it “cannot compare ... to the Boston University Police Department or Harvard University Police Department, who have both recently provided their officers with raises designed to dull the effects of high inflation,” suggesting that “policing is not as challenging at MIT as it is at those two universities.”

The flyer also notes that the patrol officers represented by the

MITCPA are not able to work remotely, whereas “15 upper management and civilian employees” of the MIT Police are “out of the station” once a week. In addition to “17 administrative days,” the flyer claims that these employees are not present on campus for over 60 days each year, unlike members of the MITCPA who, according to the flyer, “were on campus every day during the two year-long pandemic.”

The flyer adds that the MITCPA stands with and supports all unions at MIT.

The flyer encourages community members who hope to support the MITCPA to contact MIT leadership and MIT Police Management leadership such as President L. Rafael Reif, Manager of Labor Relations Ashan Ali, Chief of MIT Police John DiFava, Executive Vice President and Treasurer Glen Shor, and Vice President for Human Resources Ramona Allen.

The MITCPA is a union that has represented the MIT Police’s patrol officers since the 1970s and currently represents approximately 42 officers.

New Wellbeing Lab will be included in student center

Stud Renovation, from Page 1

temporary closure,” Burkett wrote. The team will also reach out to organizations who have reserved space during the construction period to discuss alternatives.

The goal of the student center renewal is to create a center for wellbeing on campus. The renovations are expected to improve design coherence of the building, update the building’s infrastruc-

ture, include more flexible-use spaces, and provide a welcoming environment to all. A new Wellbeing Lab will also be added to the building, replacing the Coffee-house Lounge.

A community information session and furniture fair will be held Nov. 17 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Additionally, community members can reach the project team at w20updates@mit.edu or submit comments through an online form.



FAITH ODUNSI—THE TECH

Large “Wakanda Forever” banners are hung outside the Lobby 7 entrance on the opening day of Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.



KATE LU—THE TECH

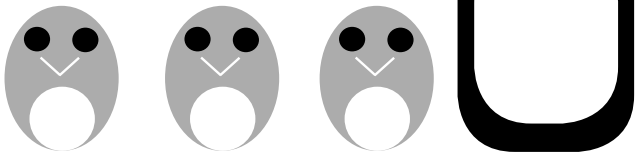
Students interact with mental health researchers and clinicians at Global Health Alliance’s Fall Gala, Thursday



ALEXA SIMAO—THE TECH

Students talk with researchers from a variety of fields at the MIT Biotech Group UROP Mixer in the Koch Institute, Thursday.

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do, join us for meetings in our
office on the fourth floor of the
Student Center (W20-483) on
Sundays at 6 pm, or email us at
join@tech.mit.edu

Solution to Georgia
from page 8

3	4	9	6	1	7	8	2	5
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Solution to Manuel
from page 8

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Solution to Illuminating

from page 8

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Kaju Tofu House

A taste of home

★★★★★

Kaju Tofu House

(Kaju Korean Cuisine)

56 Harvard Ave, Allston, MA 02134

Open daily 11 PM — 9 PM

By Kelly Kim

Growing up in New Jersey, the nearest Korean grocery store and restaurants were a whole hour away in a town called Edison, so devouring a boiling hot bowl of soondubu, a Korean tofu soup, was a special occasion that involved a long drive and burning one’s mouth on the hot soup. As a Korean American, eating soondubu with my family amidst diverse plates of banchan and appetizers such as haemul pajeon, a Korean seafood and scallion pancake, is a profound memory of my childhood.

I recently found a place called Kaju Tofu House located nearby in Allston, which serves authentic Korean soondubu that looked, according to photos on Yelp, just like the soondubu my young self in Jersey dreamed about on the long car rides over to Edison. As the soondubu restaurant in Jersey is actually called Tofu House, memories immediately flooded my mind of eating the

hot soup too quickly and my mom having to ask for a fork since I could not use chopsticks. (Admittedly, I am still working on my chopstick skills.)

After biking to Allston with my two roommates using the exactly three Blue-bikes left at the station in front of Maseeh, I hoped this streak of good luck continued with the food. Thankfully, it did.

First, there were only a couple of tables left when we arrived, and not long after we sat down (around 6pm on a Saturday night), a line quickly started to form outside. Flipping through the menu, I saw not only many varieties of soondubu which are offered with different mix-ins and spice levels but also countless appetizers and even soondubu and Korean meat combos if a customer cannot pick just one dish.

I ordered their pork soondubu with no spice, the same order I get almost every single time I am at a soondubu restaurant. When I was young, I could not even tolerate one level above no spice, and even though I can proudly say I can handle much more spice now than back then, I have stuck with my original go-to order even after all these years of improving and maturing my spice tolerance.

As the boiling soups served in the traditional Korean black stone soondubu bowls were brought over to our table, I excitedly grabbed my spoon and had to restrain myself from diving in too quickly. While the soup cools, one must spoon soup over the cracked egg to cook it with the residual heat. Ever since I was young, I have always saved the runny egg for last and am careful



KELLY KIM—THE TECH

Soon-dubu from Kaju Tofu House comes to you boiling hot with a cracked egg and a side of rice, making it the perfect winter meal or for whenever you need something comforting.

not to accidentally burst it open by delicately eating the tofu, soup, and meat around it. The raw egg transforms into a perfect soft boiled egg that is delicious over rice and the last of the tofu and pork pieces.

After tasting the still slightly-too-hot soup, I almost could not believe how similar it tasted to the one I grew up eating back home in Jersey. The broth was rich, and the soondubu came in large, soft chunks, surrounded by a generous amount of pork. While some soondubu restaurants have you crack your own egg into the hot soup, Kaju does it for you, so no worries about accidentally getting egg shells in your soup!

Kaju Tofu House offers not only a taste of my Korean heritage, but a taste of home that fills me up with both authentic, delicious food and fond childhood memories. I am grateful for the abundance of Korean restaurants located in Allston and beyond, for they provide me the opportunity to continue to embrace my Korean culture through food without requiring a long car ride. Whether one is Korean and craving a taste of home, simply a fan of Korean food, or even trying Korean food for the first time, Kaju Tofu House’s authentic soondubu is well worth the wait. The cost? Just a slightly burned mouth.

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101 THINGS TO DO
BEFORE YOU GRADUATE

32. Take a stroll through Little Italy in the North End

Join the Arts department at *The Tech* and write restaurant reviews.
(And get reimbursed for your meal!)

The Mind and Hand Book is the official guide to MIT’s expectations of all undergraduate and graduate students, including the policies on academic integrity, alcohol, drugs, hazing, and sexual misconduct.

2022-2023
MIND & HAND BOOK

handbook.mit.edu

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Blue Man Group splashes into rhythm

A dazzling theatrical performance by three actors in bald caps and blue makeup.

Blue Man Group

Charles Playhouse, Boston Theater District

Playing Year-Round

By Ellie Montemayor

STAFF WRITER

A faint but heavy pounding noise can be heard on the southern edge of Boston's Theater District, an unmistakable sound that has shaken the walls of the century-old Charles Playhouse theater year-round for almost 30 years. A rave? Perhaps. Maybe just a loud bar? It's no surprise that a rowdy atmosphere is ever-present in one of the many cabaret-style nightlife attractions that the district presents. But distinct from the other venues in the area is the form of merriment that the theater presents — a startling but enticing mix of lighthearted music, laughter and surprises.

Ladies and gentlemen, we would like to take a moment for you to note the emergency exit signs. In the event of an emergency, please leave your chairs and make your way to the emergency exits. Again, please leave your chairs in the theater — they are bolted to the floor. Just consider the energy it would take to remove them, and they probably won't match your personal decor in any way.

As the theater sits in darkness at the beginning of the show for a nearly 10-minute opening routine, the pounding noise morphs into a rhythmic drumming beat. Then two. Then three. The opening performance continues adding elements, introducing the main features of the show — lights, paints, drums, and the audience itself — and its core theme: the determined inanity of three speechless so-called “Blue Men” as they navigate their way through the 90-minute runtime of the concert-play amalgamation that is the Blue Man Group.

The show merges together extended sequences of live instrumental techno and

psychedelic rock with performance art involving paints and marshmallow sculptures, all cobbled together in a story-like structure as the three wide-eyed but resolute Blue Men take their childlike determination through a series of routines that showcase and deconstruct the world through their eyes.

The set itself is visually and practically stunning, a tailored stage equipped with the many props that the characters interact with, from spinning paint canvases and three Blue Man-sized smartphone displays to their signature Drumbone, a paint drum and thongophone instrument.

Actor Kean Haunt, who has been playing a Blue Man since 2018, noted that the strangeness and resulting uniqueness of the show comes from the Blue Men's onstage personas.

“The character doesn’t speak. You have to be very expressive with just your body, and you get to really play with all of the implicit body language stuff that is active in everyday life and interactions. It really comes to the forefront in a Blue Man Group show when you’re not able to use words and yet you have to carry along a story and make sure the audience is there with you, understanding what you’re trying to put across,” Haunt said.

Each production features three distinct actors in bald caps and blue makeup — the eponymous Blue Men — interacting with both each other and the audience in a multitude of ways. While the similarities in the ways their innocence manifests in the real world may suggest some inherent sameness in their personalities, each of the three personas is actually rooted in a different facet of the human experience.

“Throughout the show, as the pieces unfold and you watch how each individual handles the new information that’s coming out, you start to recognize the little differences [between the characters] ... We sometimes talk about if the Blue Men have each been handed different parts of the manual for being human. They’ve each been handed an incomplete copy,” Haunt said.

Accordingly, the way the Blue Men fulfill the expectations set in these manuals lead them to their own individual personalities.

“Generally, the left Blue Man has the most information but being kind of mischie-

vous inside, uses that to toy with the other ones a little bit ... The right Blue Man is a little bit more action-oriented, a little more courageous, more game to just try something ... The center Blue Man has the least information and is the guy in the middle trying to hold these two competing energies together," Haunt said.

From a storytelling perspective, the dynamic between the three naturally gives rise to their different hijinks. But from a technical perspective, the necessity of keeping a solid flow throughout the show and allowing the characters to realistically respond to their situations poses an interesting challenge to the three actors as they have to keep on the same pace with one another and remain within that dynamic as they respond to different obstacles, interruptions and situations that emerge during the show.

A balancing act then has to come with every show between maintaining the script and simultaneously being ready to abandon it at the slightest change.

The three silent Blue Men that star in the production are like a 21st-century Moe. Larry, and Curly, drawing inspiration from those kinds of silent-era slapstick-style comedy routines but also building on the concept. Even within the show itself, innovation has to take place continuously — a necessity to keep up with changing audiences as the worldwide performance group pushes past over three decades of production.

"The script of the show is very heavily annotated by every Blue Man who has come in and learned the role and then passed that onto another person. So, that's a really interesting thing that even if you're to write out, beat for beat, what's supposed to happen, there's a lot more beneath that," Haunt said.

Much of this show-by-show variation and improvisation as well as the more overarching gradual alteration with the show's script comes from both the differing styles and dynamics that each Blue Man brings to the show and the unpredictability of the actors' interactions with their audiences. In the Boston group, there are six actors that rotate in and out of each production, with Haunt playing either the left or right Blue Man when performing.

A staple of the show's current production is the routine "The Match," which was developed in Boston — at around the time Haunt joined the Boston group — and later spread to the other productions.

“[In ‘The Match,’ we] go out into the audience. There’s this sort of weird couple of minutes where we’re just walking around, taking in the people to try and find two people who we think would be good to play with. Then we bring them up, and we do this piece that’s scripted but a lot can go wrong because the two audience members we get — they don’t know the script. Sometimes, they have their own ideas,” Haunt said.

This kind of joyous uncertainty and go-with-the-flow attitude drive the show at its very core and allow its nonsensical light-heartedness to take centerfold. The Blue Men, in all their innocence and curiosity, present another way of seeing the world through a kaleidoscopic lens.

"The Boston Blue Man Group has a reputation in the company as being a big family, and I think that has really proved true. People come in and are genuinely excited to do their jobs and put on a show and see what's gonna happen each night. I got into theater to hang out with my friends — that's kind of what's happening now, so it's been really great," Haunt said.

As per the production:

Blue Man Group Boston has brought back their popular student rush tickets for the thousands of college students that attend area colleges & universities.

For just \$30, students can see the one-of-a-kind pop culture sensation, Blue Man Group, which mixes art, music, comedy and dance into the most unique theater experience in the Boston area.

In addition to the fun-filled show experience, students 21+ can enjoy an adult beverage in the lounge before the show. Everyone can share their experience on social media using the hashtag #BlueManBOS!

Student rush tickets are available year-round. Students will need to show a photo ID to purchase tickets available in person at the Charles Playhouse Box Office on the day of the show. For more information on student rush tickets, check out www.blueman.com/boston/discounts/studentrush.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY BLUE MAN GROUP TAKEN BY CAROLINE TALBOT

A Blue Man bounds across the audience during a showing in the Charles Playhouse.



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GUEST COLUMN

IDHR alone won’t protect us: Creating an MIT that works for us all requires a fair contract

We deserve a strong grievance procedure at the Institute

By Austin Cole, Enjoli Hall, and Jonathan Tagoe

Where we are now: unionization and bargaining

Over the past few months, the Graduate Student Union (GSU) Bargaining Committee has participated in multiple sessions of contract negotiations with MIT’s administration. In this time, we have worked through our non-economic proposals and the administration’s counterproposals on many of the issues afflicting us as graduate student-workers at the Institute. We have made some important steps already through this process to improve our experience as grad workers here. At the same time, the members of the administration are dragging their feet on a number of key demands. Among these demands is a comprehensive non-discrimination clause and a grievance procedure that empowers us grad workers to address harassment and bullying effectively. We must not let them block these crucial demands.

MIT’s administration is proposing that our grievance procedure, the provision that gives the whole contract teeth, does not apply to any issue of discrimination, bullying, or harassment, including sexual harassment and assault. They also proposed to remove any commitment to promptness with respect to student disability accommodations, restricting the contract to codifying MIT’s existing accommodation policy. This is common throughout the MIT administration’s counterproposals, where we see our strong proposal language undermined and chiseled at, reduced to reiterating current standards and policies full of holes.

The current process for recourse secures all power in the hands of the administration.

In cases of discrimination, harassment, and bullying, we are directed to report to the Institute Discrimination and Harrassment Response (IDHR) Office instead of using our proposed union grievance procedure. However, in practice, this process has been confusing and difficult for workers to navigate, requiring extensive documentation of the incident and placing the burden on the student-worker to pursue recourse through a frustrating process. It can be an isolating experience, making it easy for workers to become discouraged from speaking out and susceptible to having their issue dismissed. Furthermore, the final judgment for incidents taken through the IDHR process is left up to MIT, with appeals going to the Provost, further reducing the chances of a fair, unbiased judgment.

The current process for recourse secures all power in the hands of the administration. We, as student-workers and victims in these situations, deserve a

clearly laid out procedure where we are empowered to speak out about our grievances and supported throughout the process to reach a fair resolution. Our current grievance procedure proposal would work as this alternative, allowing us to address any violation of the contract *including* discrimination, harrassment, and bullying. Legally protected union stewards would be there to help inform and support student workers throughout the process. And the ability to escalate to neutral arbitration ensures that a fair resolution is met and adequate protections from retaliation.

A grievance procedure provides another mechanism for identifying allegations of misconduct against faculty and staff, including police.

Many who have not navigated this process or spoken to others who have may not see the importance of having this contract language on a personal level. With the challenging process offered by MIT currently through IDHR, many will not feel they can use this process to address issues until they fester and become far more serious and unbearable. With a union grievance procedure, we could address issues long before they become more serious. Addressing the misbehavior and mistreatment our co-workers face will also help to raise the standards for how we can all expect to be treated with respect, dignity, and fairness on the job.

Contract proposals advance demands for justice on campus

In contracts with graduate student unions, universities have agreed to grievance and arbitration procedures for a number of issues, including changes to wages, work expectations, and workplace safety. For example, if a lack of safety provisions puts student workers at risk of physical harm and a department or administrators refuse to provide a solution that keeps student-workers safe, the union can take the case to a neutral third-party arbiter to enforce the contract. Yet, many universities such as Harvard have refused contract provisions that would subject protections against harassment and discrimination to this same enforcement mechanism, despite the fact that such issues are central to workplace safety, particularly for systemically and historically marginalized groups on campus.

With a union grievance procedure, we could address issues long before they become more serious.

Over the last several years, student advocacy campaigns on campus have drawn

attention to the pervasiveness of racial, sexual, and gender harassment and discrimination at MIT, the dramatic negative impacts that this has on the climate of research and teaching at the Institute, and, especially, the personal health and professional impacts on students. In 2020, the Reject Injustice through Student Empowerment (RISE) Campaign — a united effort of MIT graduate students led by Graduate Students for a Healthy MIT, Black Graduate Student Association, and Graduate Student Council Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee — called attention to how the organizational climate and culture at MIT facilitates bias, discrimination, and harassment, linking multiple types of harm together and pressuring MIT administration to reconsider existing workplace practices and norms, including its policies and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct against faculty and staff through the IDHR Office.

The RISE Campaign sought to build on the Black Student Union and Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA)’s Support Black Lives at MIT petition, which was released in the summer of 2020 and received over 5,000 signatures from members of the campus community. The petition called attention to MIT’s unwillingness to address systemic patterns of racial bias on campus, including fears of discrimination and harassment by MIT Police that are widely shared by members of the Black community on campus. The petition demanded MIT implement accountability and oversight mechanisms for police activity on campus and ultimately alternatives for dispute resolution and public safety. Yet two years later, these demands have largely gone unaddressed. In an op-ed published in *The Tech* earlier this year, BGSA leadership called for the continuation of this advocacy work and the prioritization of the needs of Black and other historically marginalized students at MIT through the GSU: “Many Black people in this community have been deprived of basic decency and respect at MIT, and we feel the GSU is our best chance of ending a seemingly endless uphill battle against an institution that was not built with us in mind.” A grievance procedure provides another mechanism for identifying allegations of misconduct against faculty and staff, including police.

Winning our contract with provisions that can build a truly inclusive and just MIT for all students and workers will require demonstrating our strength and solidarity as a collective.

Organizing around and winning a *comprehensive* grievance and arbitration

OPINION POLICY

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procedure through the GSU contract fight is one way to help advance the popularly endorsed demands and important advocacy work of BGSA and the RISE Campaign, as well as a multitude of other committees, working groups, public forums, and petitions through which graduate workers have worked tirelessly for years to address discrimination in academia. Grievance and arbitration would create additional mechanisms by which students could bring forth and bring together claims of identity-based harassment, inform and educate the campus community and the general public about the actual rates of such harms, and seek remedy or restitution outside of upper-level administration.

Only through coming together as a collective can we see the improvements necessary for a better life at the institute for all.

How we win: strength and solidarity
Winning our contract with provisions that can build a truly inclusive and just MIT for all students and workers will require demonstrating our strength and solidarity as a collective. In a piece in *The Tech* from this past spring, Kelvin Green detailed historic and current labor movements that offer inspiration on how unions have built solidarity to make real the values that “diversity, equity, and inclusion” espouse not just for their members but for society in general — like the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters or New York University’s graduate workers union. What

unites such successful labor-organizing efforts is that they pushed forward strong demands that would improve conditions for everyone in their communities and backed those demands up with inclusive organizing that built solidarity in their movement and with interconnected struggles.

Yet, we need not look deep into the past, or even to the recent organizing victories of the Amazon Labor Union, Starbucks Workers United, and others for this inspiration. There is abundant inclusive labor organizing here on MIT’s campus that exemplifies how union organizing builds our collective voices and allows us a path towards better conditions for workers and students on campus and beyond. This includes the MIT Student Worker Alliance, a coalition of MIT undergraduate students, graduate workers, employees, and contract workers across campus, which has come together to push for robust safety protections from COVID-19, inflation relief for employees, organize advocacy for reproductive justice, and more. This alliance is a result of the solidarity across different groups of workers that principled union organizing creates — as MIT graduate student-workers are fighting for our first contract now, facility workers at MIT were engaged in an ongoing struggle against pay cuts and for a fair contract.

Similarly, at Northeastern in Boston, dozens of student groups and individuals formed the Huskies Organizing With Labor, a coalition of students, faculty, and student organizations that has stood in solidarity and supported dining hall workers at Northeastern in Local 26, who earlier this year won their most lucrative contract in local union history. This is the power of labor organizing that considers the many challenges faced by workers of all occupations, races, genders, sexualities, and more

identities and positionalities — which are precisely the considerations that led to the development of a proposal for a comprehensive grievance process. Like throughout the rest of the country, in order to win better conditions and dignity at MIT, we must understand that these fights are not only intertwined, but they are one and the same — this is as true historically as it is today.

We need to come together and show the administration that we are united and ready to do what it takes to get the contract we deserve.

Demanding the contract that we need and building the community we want

So what are we workers, and all students, at MIT called to do? To start, we must understand that solidarity is a verb; it is an active and principled process that involves committing ourselves to each other toward the betterment of all. For issues like the lack of sufficient grievance processes and others named above, it is not enough to stand by and wait for MIT’s administration to treat our coworkers and classmates better and to take responsibility for the work environments they enable. We have seen how insufficient current policy and enforcement can be, and only through coming together as a collective can we see the improvements necessary for a better life at the institute for *all*.

We have to move past words and broad statements about “belonging” and take action to see a truly inclusive community formed here at MIT and codified through a contract. Events like town halls and subse-

quent actions happening this week are examples of what it will take to apply pressure on the administration. These are opportunities to participate, learn more about the struggles faced by fellow coworkers, and stand together in solidarity so the MIT administration understands that this is not trivial. Ultimately, we are only going to be able to win a fair contract for grad workers at MIT with a just and empowering grievance procedure in the same way that we won our union in the first place. We need to come together and show the administration that we are united and ready to do what it takes to get the contract we deserve.

We highly encourage folks to join the Contract Action Team to also help with outreach, communications and actions to help us all achieve the fair contract we deserve. And beyond this, we can all have conversations with our coworkers about the contract proposals — how they might concretely and positively impact each of us and our communities on campus. We all have a role in normalizing these conversations, building stronger relationships in our workplaces, and building an MIT that works for all.

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Have something to say?

Write opinion for *The Tech*!

opinion@tech.mit.edu

Manuel

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