Introducing the Executive Council

By SPEC

As your new Sidney-Pacific Executive Council, we’re looking forward to an exciting year for the SP community. Our main focus this year is on expanding relationships. Primarily, we will provide more ways for residents to expand their relationships with each other. We plan to roll out a number of programs over the summer before Orientation starts so that we’ll be able to include all of the new members of our community. These programs include small interest groups, expanded sharing of web information, and a vast increase in the number of cultural groups. We hope that you will join and enjoy the new programs we plan to offer.

Let us outline some of the new initiatives and remind you of the duties of each of the offices in the House Council.

The Office of the President undertakes a variety of responsibilities. This year we will continue to maintain relations with outside groups like other student groups, faculty and administration, area businesses, and alumni. We are spearheading an increase in graduate dorm collaboration, including more joint events. The Environment Chair has been reconstituted in our office not only to help make Sidney-Pacific more environmentally conscious, but also to reduce our environmental footprint.

The Office of Residential Life aims to create and increase social interaction and cultural awareness in the SP community and throughout the campus by hosting many different events and programs such as brunches and coffee hours, BBQ’s and dance parties, and the International Mentorship and Diversity Dinners programs. The office of residential life is also in charge of the orientation period during which it aims to make the transition to the MIT life easy and smooth for the incoming students.

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Matthew Walker  
SP President

Hila Hashemi  
VP of Residential Life

Wen Liu  
VP of Information

Leslie Rogers  
Chair of the Halls

Daniel Weller  
VP of Resources

Photos By Alexander Hamilton Chan

Inside the SPeaker:

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SidPac Events and Activities:

Coffee Hour every other Wednesday from 9-10 pm in the Multipurpose Room. Bring your own cup, plate and utensil to enter a drawing for Tosci’s!
Summer Sports To Explore

By Wendy Gu

Summer in Boston is a perfect time to try new sports and explore the area. MIT clubs offer a wide array of activities. The MIT Outing Club (MITOC) is a good resource for hiking, climbing, kayaking, and more. With a membership fee of $10 (valid for one year), you can rent outdoor gear at very inexpensive prices (e.g., a tent is $3 per day). The mailing list (membership not required; add yourself at the website) is used to plan informal outings. MITOC also has a climbing wall on the third floor of Walker Memorial. Shoe rental is $1.

Sailing The MIT Sailing Pavilion offers free beginner sailing lessons over the summer. You can take a series of three classes on Wednesday evenings or an “all-in-one” full day class on Sundays. Members of the MIT community can bring one guest for free. Once you learn to sail (or if you already know how), sign up for a sailing card (free for MIT students) on the website to use the pavilion’s sailboats and windsurfing boards.

Diving Dive with the MIT SCUBA Club. You can earn SCUBA certification through MIT Physical Education, which is offering three series of classes over the summer ($350). While $350 is a lot of money, it’s cheaper than getting certified outside MIT.

Windsurfing Learn how to windsurf with the AMC Windsurfing Committee on July 26. The cost is $55 and includes a full day of instruction, equipment, and dinner. Be sure to sign up well in advance; instructions are on the website.

Hiking For T-accessible hikes, check out the Blue Hills and Middlesex Fells. The Emerald Necklace is a series of parks from Boston Common to Arnold Arboretum and offers a lovely bike ride through the city. Don’t have a bike? Rent a Sidney-Pacific Zip Bike for $1 a day.

Biking, Swimming and Skydiving The Minuteman Bikeway, built over an inactive railroad, is a beautiful path that runs from Cambridge to Bedford. One of my favorite day trips is to take the Minuteman Bikeway to Walden Pond and go for a swim. Walden Pond is also accessible by commuter rail. Singing Beach and Revere Beach are other T-accessible places to swim. If you get bored with the suggested activities or if you’re seeking the ultimate thrill ride, go skydiving with the MIT Skydiving Club.

For More Information

MIT Outing Club
http://web.mit.edu/mitoc/www/

MIT Climbing Wall
http://mitoc.mit.edu/wall/index.shtml

MIT Sailing Pavilion
http://sailing.mit.edu/LearntoSail/

MIT SCUBA Club
http://web.mit.edu/scuba-club/www/
http://web.mit.edu/athletics/www/phyased/summer08.html

AMC Windsurfing
http://www.amcoboston.org/windsurf/instructions.html

Hiking (T accessible)
Blue Hills http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/metroboston/blue.htm
Middlesex Fells http://www.fells.org/

Biking
Emerald Necklace http://www.emeraldnecklace.org/index.cgi
Minuteman Bikeway http://www.minutemanbikeway.org/Pages/intro.html

Swimming (T accessible)
Walden Pond http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/walden/
Singing Beach http://www.bostoncentral.com/activities/water/p308.php
Revere Beach http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/metroboston/revere.htm

MIT Skydiving Club
http://web.mit.edu/skydive/www/
Let’s Go To The Beach!

By Wendy Iskanderian

¿Vamos a la Playa?

This is an article for those of you who love the coast. Anyone from California, or anyone who loves the beach as much as us Californians do. Because summer is just around the corner, and while most of us will be here working, we need a break too! Being a bit of a beach snob (I grew up in southern California, and my grandparents lived in Kauai where I used to visit them regularly), I wasn’t sure what to do my first summer here. And so I decided to just venture to some random beaches.

Massachusetts has its fair share of beaches. But to save you the hassle, I’ll tell you right now – if you want the best of the best, the most “west coast beach” on the east, go to Singing Beach in Manchester-by-the-Sea. Trust me.

Singing Beach is so named because its sand literally whistles or sings as you walk on it. You may have to listen carefully, but if you do you’ll hear it. The scenery is gorgeous, and for a small fee to enter the beach ($5, completely worth it!), you’ll spend the day in a clean, serene little paradise. There are public restrooms and a concessions stand, and although many flock there, the fee helps the crowd to a comfortable level.

Most importantly – how do you get there? What I love about this great beach is that it’s easily accessible by public transportation. In fact, I’ve heard that driving and parking is quite the hassle. Take the MBTA Commuter Rail from North Station to the Manchester stop (http://www.mbta.com/schedules_and_maps/rail/), and walk half a mile (just follow everyone else!) to paradise.

Do make sure to check the schedule for your trip back, because later in the day the trains can be few and far between. Last time my friends and I almost missed our train, because we wanted to stop at Captain Dusty’s Ice Cream (at 60 Beach Street) to top off the day (which, by the way, I highly recommend). If we had taken much longer, we would have had to wait an extra hour or two for the next train...although, honestly, a bit of extra time at the beach wouldn’t have been that bad.

So the next time you’re sitting in lab, looking at the sun and wishing you were outside, or wishing you even had a window, call your friends and plan to go to Singing Beach in Manchester-by-the-Sea. As some of us have said regularly for many years, ¡sí, por supuesto vamos a la playa! We’re definitely going to the beach!

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**Beach Budget**

- One-way ticket from North Station to Manchester-On-The-Sea $6.75
- Entrance fee for Singing Beach: $5
- Captain Dusty’s small ice cream cone: $3
- Beach Novel: $15

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Map by Rebecca Perry
The Executive Council, cont.

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The new initiatives for this coming year are to promote small social events and groups that bring people of common interest such as sports, movies, cultures, music, visual arts, literature, and politics together through many different discussion groups, dinner gatherings, and online forums. This of course includes expansion of the International Mentorship and Diversity Dinners programs.

The Office of Information is dedicated to informing residents of the diverse range of social and cultural activities that are organized by SP. The government’s broader goal of strengthening community this year is addressed in our office by the following initiatives: (1) Launching of new web technologies to help residents with common interests find each other through SP-Forums and new special interest mailing lists; (2) Deploying a newly designed publicity interface for advertising SP events; (3) Providing more useful and relevant information to residents on the SP homepage (Shuttle track, weather, laundry status); (4) Hosting contests enabling residents to contribute photos and videos, which will be showcased in the front lobby and on SPTV; and finally (5) designing a new feedback/rating system for SP events, providing a more interactive medium for event organizers and residents to communicate with each other in order to help improve our events.

The Hall Council focuses on building a sense of community within SP at the hall level. In addition to monthly hall events ranging from candlepin bowling excursions to “make your own strawberry shortcake” socials, the Hall Council is thrilled to announce several exciting collaborative initiatives for the coming year. These include a summer Halls BBQ, and an “Open Doors Night” during orientation. In September we will kick-off the first ever SP House Cup Inter-hall Competition in which halls will vie to accumulate points during a series of challenges over the course of the term. Finally, the Hall Council will continue to promote and expand the SP Eating Club program through which residents can enjoy delicious home-cooked meals in a family-like setting.

The Office of Resources will continue to maintain and improve the resources we enjoy. We are making the front desk inventory more user friendly, overhauling the ZipBikes program, replacing dozens of missing DVDs (and getting quite a few new ones, too), buying new sports equipment, constructing a new aquarium, continuing our A/V upgrades throughout the building, and much, much more. We have a lot of exciting events planned for the coming year, including another S-P residential concert and a S-P photography contest.

We hope that you’re as excited about the coming year as we are. Please don’t hesitate to contact us at spec@mit.edu if you have any ideas, questions, complaints, or if you want to get involved in the house government.