

Research scientist Rutledge Ellis-Behnke, left, and Professor Gerald E. Schneider, both of brain and cognitive sciences, worked with others to create a technique that helps rodents recover from traumatic brain injuries. The monitor shows a microscopic view of the brain repair.

Researchers restore sight to brain-damaged rodents

Three awarded Gates Cambridge Scholarships

Two MIT seniors and an MIT alumna have been chosen from among more than 500 applicants to receive 2006 Gates Cambridge Scholarships.

Three awardees are...
To members of the MIT community:

Since I wrote you last September, MIT has continued to demonstrate why it holds a position of national and international leadership in both teaching and research. Now that the spring term is in full swing, I would like to comment on some recent developments.

Our faculty

In early December, Richard R. Schrock, the Frederick G. Keyes Professor of Chemistry at MIT, along with two colleagues, was awarded the 2006 Nobel Prize in chemistry by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Professor Schrock’s work demonstrates MIT’s impact along the entire spectrum of chemical knowledge — from curiosity-driven, basic research to industrial applications. His development of catalysts for the chemical reaction known as metathesis has led to a renewal of industrial processes that utilize pharmaceutically and plastic coatings.

Last month, MIT held its Nobel Prize ceremony, Stephen J. Lippard, the Arthur Amos Noyes Professor of Chemistry, and Institute Professor Phillip A. Sharp, a Nobel laureate who served as founding director of the McGovern Institute for Brain Research, were among the eight recipients of the National Medal of Science, whose new undergraduate major was approved a year ago, highlights the emergence of new fields of study at MIT. The educational Task Force on the Undergraduate Educational Commons, which I expect to have as profound an impact on MIT as those of the previous Task Force on Student Life and Learning.

Our students and access to an MIT education

The excellence of our students is a hallmark of MIT, and it is clear that the Class of 2010 will meet the high standards of recent classes have set.

High school students are well aware of our exceptional place within higher education, and applications increased 9 percent over last year, to an all-time high of 11,381. MIT has long believed that diversity and excellence are mutually reinforcing, and this year’s early-admitted students underscore this perspective. Of those admitted early, 46 percent are valedictorians; 76 percent have served as president, captain, or leader of high school activities; 27 percent are members of historically underrepresented minority groups; and 15 percent are first-generation college students.

On March 3, we reported to the Corporation that our tuition and fees for academic year 2006-07 will increase by 4 percent, to $33,600. Typical room rates will increase by 6.7 percent and board rates by 3.5 percent. In total, tuition, fees, room and board will rise 4.3 percent.

For more than four decades, MIT has held to a policy of admitting students without regard to financial need, awarding all MIT grant aid on the basis of need, and meeting the full need of all grant-aided students. This year, we expect that 57 percent of our undergraduates will receive need-based scholarships from MIT, averaging $25,500 per student. I believe strongly that this is a fiscal aid policy that will keep MIT open to all students who have the talent and desire to thrive here. They are an important reason why MIT remains where the American dream can come true.

Beginning this September, we will further strengthen our commitment to access by matching federal Pell Grants for all eligible students. Even while the cost of higher education has continued to increase, the maximum amount for individual Pell Grants, which are need-based scholarships, has been frozen for four years. The new MIT Pell Matching Grant will double the amount a Pell Grantee receives. This new investment, which represents an additional commitment of approximately $1.5 million per year, will significantly reduce the amount these students will have to borrow.

Adequate need-based student aid, especially in the form of scholarships, is essential if this country is to develop the talents of our young people to the fullest.

Academic integrity

Last Friday, the provost informed our faculty and the staff at MIT Lincoln Laboratory of progress on our efforts to resolve an allegation of research misconduct that was brought against two scientists at the Lincoln Laboratory.

As announced at the October faculty meeting, we have pursued two tracks, to understand the allegations and to reach a resolution. One track was an ad hoc panel, appointed to examine the process of the investigation where the determination of the factors that have complicated and delayed the satisfactory resolution of this particular allegation, will also make recommendations for how the Institute might avoid a recurrence of such complications in the future. This panel will soon complete its work, and a report will be available in the near future.

Our second track, the Defense Department of MIT has now agreed to conduct an investigation into the open questions enumerated in MIT’s inquiry into the allegations. The investigation is to be led by Mr. Augustine, who received the National Medal of Technology in 1998, and is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, former chairman and CEO of Lockheed Martin Corp., and a past member of the National Academy of Sciences, and Mr. Godfrey, director of the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. MIT has advocated, and the department has agreed, that a mutually acceptable individual, who is not an employee of the Department of Defense, act as an advisor and consultant to the investigator, to help assure an appropriately conducted, thorough investigation.

We are a home or buy a car. We prefer that by the end of the next fiscal year, we will have had to absorb additional utilities costs of $50 million over the course of two years. With these increases, growth in revenue will be required to offset growth in revenues.

We rely heavily on federal investments in research and education. We welcome the recent attention in Washington to issues of education, research and competitiveness, in the annual budget debate and in the proposals for increased funding in the proposed congressional legislation. But the domestic discretionary budget, including federal budgets for research and financial aid, will be under severe pressure by the foreseeable future.

This makes private support even more important to us. Philanthropic support has made possible innovative education and research programs throughout the Institute. A generous gift announced last October as a matching grant will provide the opportunity to establish the MIT Pell Matching Grants program. The Broad Institute — a collaboration of MIT, Harvard and its affiliated hospitals and the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research — has made rapid progress in its first year, and MIT is pleased to support the Broad with a matching gift, to ensure that they will make a second $100 million commitment to its work.

Philanthropic investments in fund raising, as well as designing programs that leverage our resources, will help us to continue to advance knowledge, fuel innovation and equip our students to become the global leaders the world needs now.

A look ahead

While the chill of winter still hangs in the air, the spring semester is unfolding rapidly, and graduation and reunions will arrive before we know it. Our distinguished alumni Dr. Enid Hendarto, D. Bernard and Dr. G. Raja Mohan, who recently assumed the chairmanship of the Board of Governors of the Federal Systems Division, will deliver the bicentennial address. His own contributions as scholar, educator and public servant epitomize the ways MIT and its people have addressed. His own contributions as scholar, educator and public servant epitomize the ways MIT and its people have

MIT’s Executive Committee. While the Institute’s financ/es remain strong — our endowment is the fifth largest among American universities, and it performed well last year — we will need to continue to raise and to identify operational improvements so that our sala-/fies and facilities can remain competitive.

Increasing fuel costs have become a significant budgetary concern for MIT, just as they have for anyone who heats a home or buys gas for a car. We prefer that by the end of the next fiscal year, we will have had to absorb additional utilities costs of $50 million over the course of two years. With these increases, growth in revenue will be required to offset growth in revenues.

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Historians recognize Jacobs' book with award

Sarah H. Wright
News Office

The Boston bargain-barter's landmark store, Filene's Basement, plays a starring role in a new book by Meg Jacobs, an associate professor of history at MIT.


"Pocketbook Politics" has just been awarded the 2006 Ellis Hawley Prize, signaling recognition by the Organization of American Historians as the year's "best book-length study of the political economy, politics or institutions of the U.S."

It opens with the doors of the Base- ment — then known as "Filene's Folly" — in 1909.

Ellen T. Harris

People

Harris gets grant for Handel work

Sarah H. Wright
News Office

Ellen T. Harris, the Class of 1949 Professor of Economics, has been awarded a $49,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to broaden her research on "Messiah" composer George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) and develop a new book, "Mr. Handel and His Friends: Music in the Context of 18th-Century London Life."

The book takes up the study of Handel's career when he lived in London (1711-1759), where he composed his famous "Messiah" as well as numerous well-known oratorios and operas.

"Handel's music has inspired Harris for more than 30 years, she said, thanks to its richness, humanity and emotional power. But his will contained surprises that led to a wealth of material about how his music fits into 18th-century English society."

"Handel's money and all his scores to his manager for 40 years, John Christopher Smith. He left money to his librettists and to his extended family in Germany. He left all the performance materials for 'The Messiah' to the Foundling Hospital. You'd expect that."

"But he also bequeathed money to five 'mystery' people, unknowns whom he clearly had cared about. I tracked them all down. It was exhilarating to discover, for example, that Handel's music composer, known in all his works as 'SF' ('SF' is 'Silva Fidei'), was his friend James Hunter," Harris said.

GATES

Continued from Page 1

in the Chicago area that focus on themes of racial injustice.

Miller was selected as a Burchard Scholar by the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences in 2004. He plans to pursue a Ph.D. degree in astrophysics at Cambridge University's Institute of Astronomy.

Venkatachalam, who is from Berkeley Heights, N.J., is a senior major in physics and electrical engineering, with minors in economics and mathematics. He is interested in investigating fractional quantum Hall effect systems as potential vehicles for quantum computing.

As a Gates Scholar, he will pursue two successive programs at Cambridge University, beginning with Part III of the Mathematics Tripos and continuing with research in the Quantum Matter Group at the Cavendish Laboratory. He has been involved already in four different research projects, at Bell Labs and in three different laboratories at MIT, one of which involved spending a month at the Super-Kamiokande neutrino detector in western Japan. Venkatachalam was born and raised in both the Sierra-Westinghouse and Intel Talent Search science competitions and is a Barry Goldwater Scholarship recipient.

Flores, who is currently employed as a water-quality engineer in Livermore, Calif., received the B.S. degree in environmental engineering science cum laude from the University of California at Berkeley in 1996 and the M.Eng. degree in environmental and water-quality engineering from MIT in 1998. She has conducted an ecological sanitation for urban settings in the Centre of Sustainable Development at Cambridge.

The Gates Cambridge Scholarships were founded as a memorial to a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and have become one of the most internationally competitive of all the major scholarship programs awarded. Since the program's inception, over 1,000 students who have been awarded scholarships for one to four years of study at Cambridge University. This year, 502 applicants competed for the 40 scholarships awarded to U.S. students.
Thanks to a program started by MIT sophomore Alia Whitney-Johnson, 18 Sri Lankan child-mothers living in a home for victims of rape or incest are coming out of their shells and earning money for their futures through art.

Back at MIT for the fall semester, Whitney-Johnson realized that the jewelry might serve a function beyond art. "The project itself, donated toward services to the program itself, would be used to buy materials for the girls, to make bracelets that they can sell, and to develop them for their own businesses," she explained.

Sophomore's project aids Sri Lankan girls' home
Sasha Brown
News Office

Sophomore Alia Whitney-Johnson displays some of the beaded jewelry she is selling to help young rape and incest victims in Sri Lanka. She set this table up at the March 3 MacVicar Day celebration at the Staite Center. Whitney-Johnson, a civil and environmental engineering major, taught the girls to make the jewelry.

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For the human brain, birth is a great divide. Like marble ready for sculpting, the prenatal brain abounds in extraneous material and plasticity. But as soon as that sculpting, known as the behavioral free will of the child, begins, the brain cannot know which connections we will need, which we must eliminate, which we will strengthen. Researchers inject the animals' brains with plasticity and how new circuits develop in the prenatal brain abounds in extraneous material. Like marble ready for sculpting, the girls than just write a fund-raising letter. The girls were able to bridge the gap created when the neural circuits that were once continuous fell apart. Hard connections, when the receptor exclusive to the Little League, before the little league, before the reception of the brain acts like the pro coach, strengthening the right connections, the pro coach, strengthening the right connections. Few anticipated the very robust connections in neonate animals prior to eye opening, analogous to the uncorrelated activation, the eye opening. When brain tissue is injured, the tissue around the site of an acute injury but grows as a direct result of the injury and large gaps appear where there was once continuous connections. Scientists have known that later in life, this receptor acts like the coach, strengthening the right connections, the pro coach. As for the children, the brain acts like the pro coach, strengthening the right connections. Few anticipated the very robust connections in neonate animals prior to eye opening, analogous to the uncorrelated activation, the eye opening. When brain tissue is injured, the tissue around the site of an acute injury but grows as a direct result of the injury and large gaps appear where there was once continuous connections. Scientists have known that later in life, this receptor acts like the coach, strengthening the right connections, the pro coach. As for the children, the brain acts like the pro coach, strengthening the right connections. Few anticipated the very robust connections in neonate animals prior to eye opening, analogous to the uncorrelated activation, the eye opening. When brain tissue is injured, the tissue around the site of an acute injury but grows as a direct result of the injury and large gaps appear where there was once continuous connections. Scientists have known that later in life, this receptor acts like the coach, strengthening the right connections, the pro coach.
"Mad cow protein" found to help make brain cells

David Cameron
Whitehead Institute

Few conditions are more detrimental to human brains than mad cow disease, one popularly referred to as mad cow disease. But now there’s reason to suspect that the protein which causes mad cow disease, causes about spongiform encephalopathy in cows and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans, might also be necessary for healthy brain function.

Researchers from MIT, the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research and Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital, have shown that the normal form of this detrimental protein may actually help the brain create new neurons from stem cells, something that could make cognition possible.

It’s been difficult to understand why this prion protein, which when malformed subjects us to this horrible disease, is so abundant in our brains in the first place,” says Whitehead member Susan Lindquist, who is also a professor of biology at MIT.

“We’ve known for years what happens when this protein goes wrong. Now we’re starting to see what its normal form does right,”

Along with Jeffrey Macklis of Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital, Lindquist is co-scientific author on a paper published in February in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

For more than 10 years, researchers have known that a protein called PrP causes mad cow disease and its human equivalent, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, when it forms incorrectly. PrP is a protein, a class of proteins that has the unusual ability to recruit other proteins to change their shape. (PrP is shorthand for "prion protein").

This is significant because a protein’s form determines its function. When a protein changes shape, or “misfolds,” it creates a cascade of neighboring proteins all assuming that particular conformation.

In some organisms, such as yeast cells, this process can be harmless or even beneficial. But in mammals, it can lead to the fatal brain lesions that characterize diseases such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob.

Curiously, however, PrP can be found throughout healthy human bodies, particularly in the brain. In fact, it’s found in many mammalian species, and only on the rarest occasions does it misfold and cause disease. Clearly, scientists have reasoned, such a widely conserved protein must also play a beneficial role.

In 1993, scientists created a line of mice in which the gene that codes for PrP was knocked out, preventing the mice from expressing the prion in any tissues. Surprisingly, the mice showed no sign of any ill effect. The only difference between these mice and the control mice was that the animals in which the gene was knocked out were incapable of contracting prion-related neurodegenerative disease when infected. Researchers knew then that PrP was necessary for mad-cow type diseases; any other kind of normal function remained unknown.

Recently, researchers from the labs of Lindquist and Whitehead member and MIT biology Professor Harvey Lodish, discovered that PrP helps preserve stem cells in the blood. Because of this, Lindquist teamed up with Macklis to see if there might also be a similar connection expressing the protein.

Graduate student Christopher Lowell, who went to Africa as part of Sloan’s Global Entrepreneurship Laboratory, takes in the sunrise at Gilman’s Peak in Tanzania. He eventually made it to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro with G-Lab partner Zhijing Jiang.

Graduate student Christopher Lowell, who went to Africa as part of Sloan’s Global Entrepreneurship Laboratory, takes in the sunrise at Gilman’s Peak in Tanzania. He eventually made it to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro with G-Lab partner Zhijing Jiang.

For the first three weeks, Lowell and the rest of the team were in Rwanda, working to build the local mining industry for Lowell, the work was “a crucial but small part of the total experience in Africa.”

For the remaining four weeks, the group traveled to Africa. The traveling was the experience that most pulled us out of our comfort zone,” Lowell said.

Together, the four attempted to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa (only Lowell and one other reached the summit), rafted the Nile, went into the Congo and participated in cultural rituals that were both foreign and a bit daunting, Lowell said.

This when G-Lab projects took 160 students to more than 17 countries over the January session. The program is a Sloan course that gives students the chance to work with international start-up companies.

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During the first semester, he and his team built their contacts and gathered information, both about the market and about the company itself.

Upon arrival, Cerda was immediately struck by some cultural differences. For example, rather than running off to grab something and sit at a desk, Cerda’s Portuguese co-workers sat down and ate lunch together. “It took a little getting used to,” said Cerda. “I caught myself looking at my watch a few times.”

Those kinds of small observations were key to the overall experience, Cerda said. By seeing a culture with new eyes, Cerda and his group were able to evaluate both their own work styles as well as the company’s, he said. “It was very rewarding,” Cerda said.

Sloan student Kerry Bowie worked for Uberaba, an environmental and biotechnologies firm in Brazil. Bowie’s group made a tangible impact on Uberaba’s future when they pitched their work before a group of venture capitalists and raised roughly $1 million to fund the company’s expansion. “It was great,” said Bowie. “G-Lab is a really great program and is something that distinguishes the Sloan program.”

Lowell said the work was just part of a total cultural immersion. And, he said, one of the most rewarding aspects of his time in Africa was the friendship he forged with his three G-Lab teammates, Alicia Demrody, Zhijing Jiang and Anne Johnson.

Through the trip, the four worked, lived and traveled together. “We will know that for the rest of our lives, we will drink from each other’s glasses,” said Lowell. “G-Lab was the most valuable thing I did at Sloan.”

Children benefit from exposure to digital culture, Jenkins says

Sarah H. Wright
News Office

Children need to participate fully in digital culture to develop the "kid's knowledge, ethical frameworks and self-confidence needed to be full participants in the world around them," MIT Professor Henry Jenkins told members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) recently.

Jenkins, director of the Comparative Media Studies Program, presented a paper at the AAAS annual meeting, which had the overall title "Grand Challenges, Great Successes." He focused on 21st-century literacy, which is based on the ability to read and write and includes the digital skills to participate socially and collaboratively in the new media environment.

Jenkins proposed that there is a high 21st-century literacy rate among teens — measured by their skillful use of all things digital, including instant messaging, MySpace, sampling, zines, mashups, Wikipedia, gaming and spoofing — that has far more meaning than "screen time" implies.

"Social connectivity, creativity and learning take place through these various media-related experiences," Jenkins said, long a proponent of open-mindedness towards new media and of respect for its potential.

He tirelessly contrasts passive media consumption — the slug on the couch — with the activities of digital culture. The latter is essentially participatory, meaning it has "relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing what you create, and members feel their contributions matter," he noted.

Rather than focus on the negative effects of media consumption — the dread of "screen time" — parents and teachers should seek to eliminate the "participation gap" between affluent students' digital resources at home and those available to less-affluent students at school.

"This may be what is most radical about the new literacies — that they enable collaboration and knowledge-sharing with large-scale communities. Right now, our schools are still training autonomous problem-solvers. But as students enter the workplace, they are increasingly being asked to work in teams, drawing on different sets of expertise and collaborating to solve problems," he said.

Jenkins’ new book, "Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide," will be published this summer by New York University Press.
**MUSEUM**

Continued from Page 1

stages of construction.

Their collection now in dry-stor age, but the structures — which survived the initial flooding — were destroyed when a giant casino barge broke loose and flat tened them.

“We worked to downsize our staff from 19 to 10,” said Gowdy. Thanks to the MLN grant, she said, “We were able to get out of disas ter planning for a while and plan for the future.”

Gross said she hopes museums that lend collections to the Gulf Coast institutions will be generous when making the arrangements.

For a complete list of grant recipients, visit http://web.mit.edu/arts/
### NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Travel fellowships**

The Kelly-Douglas Fund is offering spring-term essay prizes and travel fellowships. Entries are due Wednesday, April 12.

All undergraduates are eligible for the 1. Aupito Kelly III essay prize competition, which awards two $800 prizes. All sophomores and juniors are eligible for the Kelly-Douglas Traveling Fellowship competition, which provides partial support (ranging from $500 to $1,000) for travel expenses during summer 2006. For more information, contact Professor Lowell Lindgren, director of the Kelly-Douglas Fund, at lindgren@mit.edu, or visit web.mit.edu/mta/www/music/resources/kellyprize.html and web.mit.edu/mta/www/music/resources/kellytraveling.html.

**Scholarships**

The Greater Boston Postal Customer Council (PCC) has a scholarship program that is available to children of MIT employees. The PCC will award merit-based, $1,500 scholarships to high school seniors who are about to enter their first year of college. The deadline to apply is March 24.

For a copy of the application, contact Mary O’Brian at x3-6282 or mobrien@mit.edu.

**Environmental grants**

The MIT Center for Environmental Health Sciences (CEHS) is requesting applications for pilot project funding. The goals of the CEHS Pilot Project Program are to: provide initial support for new investigators to establish research in the area of environmental health; allow for exploration of innovative new directions representing a significant departure from ongoing funded research for established investigators in the environmental health sciences; stimulate investigation in other areas of endeavor to apply their expertise to environmental health research; and to provide an opportunity for investigators to take a multidisciplinary approach to environmental health research through collaboration with others.

Application deadline is Saturday, April 15; funding start date is Thursday, June 1.

For more information on this program and application guidelines please contact Jacqueline Bren at jbreen@mit.edu or x3-0032.

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**NEWS**

### Cabaret star brings a little ‘Broadway’ to Kresge

Ohio-Award winning Broadway and cabaret star Darius de Haas will share reflections on his multifaceted career in a free talk, “Broadway and Beyond,” on Monday, March 20, at 5 p.m. in Kresge Little Theater.

De Haas’s visit was arranged by Associate Professor Thomas DeFrantz; the two are collaborating on a new one-man musical, “The Downright Sexy Adventures of Drew Durango.”

De Haas, known for his rich, supple voice, theatrical sophistication and imaginative jazz interpretations, has appeared in such Broadway productions as “Kiss of the Spider Woman” and “Rent.” He also did voice work for the animated feature “Anastasia” and has presented solo concerts around the world.

De Haas will present a staged reading of “The Downright Sexy Adventures of Drew Durango,” written by DeFrantz (sax) and Berklee College of Music Associate Professor Michael Wurtzsky (music and lyrics) in Kresge Little Theater. The shows are scheduled for March 24-25 at 8 p.m. and March 26 at 2 p.m.

De Haas will also have a master class to students in DeFrantz’s musical theater workshop. For more information, call x3-6657 or e-mail defrante@mit.edu.

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**Dance goes digital in ‘House Music Project’**

Thomas DeFrantz, associate professor of music, will perform his piece, “House Music Project,” this weekend in Kresge Little Theater.

For a copy of the application, contact Mary O’Brian at x3-6282 or mobrien@mit.edu.

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**Conductor(s) becoming to MIT**

This Friday, March 17, Associate Professor Dante Anzolini will lead the MIT Symphony Orchestra (MITSO) in a March-themed concert.

The evening will feature works by Mozart and Shostakovich (both born in March) and two works originally premiered in the month of March.

In addition to Mozart’s overture to “The Magic Flute,” K. 620 and Shostakovich’s Prelude and Scherzo, Op. 11, MITSO will perform “Darkbloom: Overturn to an Imagined Opera” by MIT Institute of the Arts composer John Harbison (premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 2005) and Copland’s Symphony No. 3 (premiered by the BSO in 1946).

On Saturday, March 18, Frederick Harris Jr. will conduct the MIT Wind Ensemble in a program of masterworks for wind ensemble, including Johann Strauss’ ‘Serenade in E flat, Gustav Holst’s ‘S suitability in E flat, William Gruhler’s ‘George Washington Bridge’ and Karel Husa’s ‘Music for Prague 1968.’

Prior to the ensemble’s performance of ‘Music for Prague 1968,’ Harris will give a special lecture/demonstration on the work.

Both concerts will be in Kresge Auditorium at 8 p.m. Admission is $10 at the door.