

Individuals

Ashlee Andrews
Global Education
Everyday Leadership

Summer and Fall 2018 were full of change and transition for the Global Education team (GEO). Not only was the office reporting structure transitioning to the new Office of Experiential Learning, 2 of 4 positions on the team were open and Ashlee had just been promoted to Global Education Coordinator. Ashlee's impeccable work ethic and determination shone particularly bright as she kept GEO operations running smoothly while managing her own learning curve in her new role, which also included planning for and executing a series of major upcoming student events.

While others might have been overwhelmed and frazzled in a similar situation, Ashlee greeted every challenge with a marvelous sense of humor and calmed any storm that came her way. Her thoughtful nature, good judgement, willingness to take the initiative and her unyielding grace made a huge difference not only to her interim supervisor but also to the GEO students during this very demanding time period.

Ashlee was able to draw upon her detailed knowledge of processes and procedures to provide support to the incoming exchange students, knowing what ISO would need for their visa paperwork, and what housing requirements and other preparations were needed. She planned the orientation for this group of students as well as the GEO events and activities which are part of the first-year orientation. Ashlee led the coordination efforts for GEO's largest annual event, the Go Global Fair. All the while, continuing with her student advising and planning for the programming happening in the upcoming academic year. She proactively identified concerns and generated solutions to help move global tasks forward and ensured the team was approaching each student and situation with the patience and kindness.

She warmly welcomed Ellen Reid and Ariel Ackermann to the team and has been offering great advice, support and guidance to them whenever they need it. Ashlee has been adaptable, resourceful and a fantastic colleague to Ellen and Ariel all the while herself settling into her new position admirably. Ashlee has been generous with her time and knowledge serving as the institutional memory for the GEO team's day-to-day operations. Beyond helping her own team Ashlee willingly volunteers to lend a hand to her suitemates in CAPD contributing immeasurably to the well-being and team spirit. In short, Ashlee exemplifies "Everyday Leadership".

Congratulations Ashlee on your OVC Infinite Mile Award!

Jessica Ch'ng
Admissions
Diversity & Inclusion

As Senior Assistant Director for Multicultural Recruitment, Jessica is deeply passionate about improving diversity, inclusion and access in higher education. In her Admissions role, she has gone above and beyond to make enormous achievements in these areas on behalf of students and MIT alike.

Jessica has championed an effort to mobilize resources to support undocumented students. To fund this work, she applied for and received an Imagine Grant from the National Association for College Admission Counseling, our national professional organization. She leveraged this grant to organize and run a training for Boston Public School guidance counselors on supporting undocumented students. She has also presented this topic on panel discussions and serves as a liaison and advocate for undocumented students on our campus.

She puts in so much hard work into all the programs she runs because she's seen the impact they make on students, both current and prospective. Whether during early morning airport shifts or the late night check-ins and phone-a-thons, Jessica's positivity and passion shines through to everyone around her. She cares deeply not just for the students that come to visit, but for every ambassador she works with, taking the time to really get to know them, in all aspects of their life at MIT.

She coordinates two annual fly-in programs for underrepresented students of color (Ebony Affair and Sin LiMITe), and she liaises with our on-campus partner programs that focus on multicultural outreach (MITES, MOSTEC, SEED Academy, and MathROOTS), alumni groups (BAMIT and LAMIT), and community-based organizations across the country. She is a member of the OVC Council on Diversity and Inclusion, and serves in a leadership role in ABAFAOILSS, a professional organization for people of color who work in admissions and financial aid offices at Ivy Plus and Sister Schools. Not only is she able to prioritize and juggle many-many demands, but she is always going above and beyond expectations, executing her work at an extremely high level.

Jessica is an excellent colleague who cares deeply about a functional and supportive work environment. She is truly deserving of an OVC Infinite Mile Award for Diversity & Inclusion, Congratulations, Jessica!

Alex Hoyt
UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program)
Innovation & Creativity

Alex is being recognized for his exceptional contributions to UROP, notably his delivery of exciting new UROP programming along with his launching of UROP's social media presence with great content and engagement.

Alex is very invested in UROP visibility and outreach to the MIT Community, and beyond. He recently spearheaded efforts to launch and refine UROP's social media presence, using Instagram and Facebook platforms to connect our program with students and others in a more visual and engaging manner – highlighting events, announcing deadlines, as well as creating and presenting video profiles and photos of students. Thanks to Alex's tireless efforts, UROP has nearly 540 Instagram followers- and growing! He continues to create quality content for these platforms so we can reach even greater numbers of people. Alex's intensified marketing and outreach has already resulted in higher numbers of student applicants.

Alex has increasingly played an integral role in developing programs for those interested in UROP. This includes leading roles in UROP information sessions, as well as workshops for graduate student research mentors. He has also built on solid working relationships with the Graduate Student Council to create and lead UROP-related events at the Sidney-Pacific dorm, and played a critical role in organizing and executing UROP's IAP and CPW Expos.

Alex's role in our operations extends well beyond serving as UROP's first point of contact, registration-related responsibilities, and application administration. For example, in the past year he took over coordination of the Peter J. Eloranta Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships. Alex's ability to engage faculty enabled him to double the number of professors on the Eloranta review committee.

These are but a few examples of many that illustrate not just Alex's innovation and creativity, but perhaps more importantly, his dedication to UROP, our students, and the Institute as a whole.

Congratulations Alex on your OVC Infinite Mile award for Innovation & Creativity!

Josh Nagle
Career Advising & Professional Development
Serving the Client

Josh has transformed the support our Career Advising and Professional Development (CAPD) has as our IT Projects Coordinator. In less than two years, Josh has led or supported the launch of six new technology solutions, which have improved service delivery, efficiency, communication, and overall support for staff, students, and employers recruiting at MIT. What makes Josh truly exceptional are his efforts to strengthen the CAPD community not just through technology, but also through fun activities, such as game nights and curling.

He proactively looks at our work processes and finds solutions that we did not know we could benefit from like Slack, Desk, and Salesforce. Since the implementation of Slack in March 2018, we have already sent over 45,000 messages, reducing our reliance on email, creating a means for faster communication, and actually fostering community through this chat room platform. Piloting Desk, which then transitioned to Salesforce, has revolutionized how we triage emails being received from students and employers helping us to track activity and response rates. To date we have had over 22,000 customer cases between the two systems, which is something we were not able to quantify when simply using Outlook to manage emails.

Josh has also found innovative and creative ways to strengthen the CAPD community through fun activities and technology. He launched “game night” – a monthly occurrence bringing together staff, family members, and colleagues from across MIT to have fun and get to know each other outside work. Additionally, he has found ways to enhance our community through implementing Slack. Through Slack, we use apps like “Donut,” which pairs random staff members to go for a donut (or coffee) together to build collaborative relationships. Josh also started a trend using, “lunchtrain,” that notifies staff when someone is going out to lunch, so that others can join. None of these initiatives were part of his “job”. And we are so grateful for how these informal connections have improved morale and made our community vibrant.

For all of the aforementioned reasons, Josh is well deserving of an OVC Infinite Mile Award for his excellent work to go above and beyond and I am pleased to be able to present him an award for Serving the Client!

Tavi Sookhoo
Career Advising & Professional Development
Diversity & Inclusion

Tavi exudes inclusiveness with her high degree of emotional intelligence & commitment to making everyone feel welcome & validated. She is not only one of the co-chairs of the Professional Development subcommittee of the OVC-Council on Diversity & Inclusion. She also was an active participant in the 21 Day Racial Equity Habit Challenge which was taken on by CAPD in February 2019. Tavi was also part of a cross functional team between Career Services and Prehealth Advising which designed and hosted an IAP session called Challenging the Cultural Norms that Influence Our Career Decisions.

In this IAP session, Tavi guided students through a critical reflection on how identity, dominant social norms, and career path trajectories intersect. She also attended several “Students Advocating for Increased Diversity (SAID) in STEM” events this year, to learn more about the experiences of underrepresented students in STEM and how she could better support them in her role.

On a local level, Tavi participates in events sponsored by the group “Boston Area Women of Color in the Academy” to connect with local women of color who work in higher education. She often invites others in the office to attend, allowing them to learn more about student experiences, thus being able to better support our students, and to increase our connections with diverse groups at MIT and in the greater Boston area.

Tavi engaged with the AAUW’s Start Smart salary negotiation program, which addresses the gender gap in pay, by attending a facilitator training in 2018 and sharing her knowledge with the team. According to CAPD’s Interim Executive Director, Deborah Liverman, “Tavi’s interest in the Smart Start Program was fortuitous as MIT received a grant in February 2019 to bring the AAUW Smart Start Program to MIT. Tavi took the lead in organizing the office efforts in the implementation of the program. She has been working with departments across campus to coordinate seminars to help MIT women be successful in the job negotiations both now and for future opportunities.”

Tavi lives out her commitment to diversity & inclusion by participating in and organizing events at MIT and beyond. I am happy to present Tavi with an OVC Infinite Mile Award for Diversity & Inclusion!

Jack Whipple
D-Lab
Community

The MIT D-Lab Workshop is a place where students, instructors, staff and international guests come to test ideas, build prototypes, and refine technologies intended to improve the lives of some of the poorest people in the world. Jack is the not-so-secret ingredient that ensures that all of this can happen in a pretty ideal environment. Jack combines an absolute insistence on safety and a relentless pursuit of order with a love of making things and building community; he is dedicated to inclusiveness and is a walking encyclopedia of tools and machines; Jack is kind and fair, and has a wonderful and disarming sense of humor. Together, these qualities help make the D-Lab workshop the well-used, well-loved workshop that it is – one that is admired and emulated at MIT and beyond.

Jack is responsible for training more than one-hundred D-Lab students to use the D-Lab Workshop each year and serving as a first-line resource for questions about design, materials, mechanics, and more. For many MIT students, Jack's impact extends beyond graduation. A recent D-Lab student comments: "MIT's big into the Mind Hand Heart thing, and I really have to say that Jack is the Mind, Hands, and Heart that make D-Lab run and helps students learn so much."

Jack is famous for saying, "Good organization lowers the barriers to awesomeness." The breadth and volume of activity in the D-Lab workshop sees could easily prompt creative chaos. But with Jack at the helm for almost six years, creativity, curiosity, competence, and community all thrive- without the chaos. Thanks to him, all of the workspaces, the welding shop, and the storeroom are meticulously organized so D-Labbers can focus on making,

The D-Lab workshop has provided inspiration and ideas to visitors from Botswana, Nigeria, Brazil, Guatemala, India, Zambia and many other countries. Jack has also traveled abroad to work with MIT students doing fieldwork, to assist fellows on their social ventures and technologies, and to advise on the set-up of local maker spaces in developing world communities where D-Lab works.

In short, the D-Lab shop is the "shop" heard 'round the world! Jack exemplifies the spirit of Community and I am very pleased to present Jack with an OVC Infinite Mile award.

Teams

D-Lab IDIN Team

Innovation & Creativity

Laura Budzyna, Elizabeth Hoffecker, Asif Obaidee, Jona Repishti, Molly Rubeinstein, Sher Vogel, Laura McKown, Nai Kalema

D-Lab's International Development Innovation Network (IDIN) started as an ambitious endeavor that sought to convert an annual, month-long summer design event into an active global network focused on solving intractable problems in impoverished communities. Although D-Lab had a successful track record of working internationally and MIT has a long history of working with the U.S. government, the 5-year, \$15 million IDIN award was the first time D-Lab or MIT partnered with USAID. The learning curve was steep, the mission was vast, and so it is all the more impressive when, after five years, the results are in. IDIN has:

- connected over 1000 grassroots innovators in 72 countries
- organized 17 design summits and over 100 community-level workshops that combined reached 10,180 participants
- supported 20 community-based innovation centers
- enabled 81 university-level classes and 386 student field experiences
- incubated over 160 innovations through microgrants and mentorship which have since reached over 750,000 people
- published over 200 reports and 3 peer-reviewed papers in the emergent study of local innovation ecosystems.

The natural question is how did all of that happen, and the answer is the phenomenal IDIN Central Team at D-Lab-- an extremely hard-working group of eight people who brought to work a diverse sets of skills, wonderfully positive attitudes, creativity, and a passion to contribute to the improvement of people's lives to their work- every single day.

The creation of the IDIN network is a case of the proverbial "building the plane while it is flying" and each member of the team acted as both aeronautical engineer and pilot in their respective areas. No program designs or systems were inherited—the team had to take a big vision and transform it into specific activities that would eventually aggregate into meaningful results that fit within USAID's agenda, while ensuring compliance with U.S. government rules that sometimes made MIT's policies and procedures seem like Ikea instructions. The team was exceptionally creative in the program design space, navigating different time-zones, different languages and different cultures, while ensuring 100% compliance with all of USAID's and MIT's governing regulations. The program trained thousands of people, engaged hundreds of students in international experiences, and produced innovations that reached hundreds of thousands of people- and the project was successfully closed on time and 100% on budget.

The team leaves behind IDIN.org, a platform that continues connect innovators, educators, innovation centers and local IDIN chapters. For their consistent positivity and passion, relentless pursuit of creativity and excellence, and unfailing innovative spirit in the pursuit of a more just and equitable world, I am proud to present the D-Lab IDIN Team with OVC Infinite Mile Awards for Innovation & Creativity!

Office of Minority Education

Diversity & Inclusion

Deolinda Branch, Naomi Brown-Jones, DiOnetta Jones Crayton, Somiya Kalloo, Devan Monroe, Cheryl Mottley, Fatima Smith, and Lilen Uchima

MIT strives to break down barriers and to increase access for students from all backgrounds. While the percentage of URM undergraduate students, attending MIT has certainly increased since 1975 (close to 25% now), that does not mean that our current students do not suffer from the effects of imposter syndrome, stereotype threat, micro-aggressions, and other 'isms' that are systemic in higher education and society. Thus, one of the OME's primary goals is to help students build connections that will enable them to successfully navigate, fully enjoy, and thrive at MIT. They want all students to feel like MIT is THEIR MIT, because they earned the right to be here. This small but mighty team accomplishes this goal through their creative and innovative programs, but they also do this by connecting students to Institute resources and to people, specifically peers, faculty, staff, alumni, and industry representatives.

With very little time and no budget, the OME staff rallied together to develop and implement a new event, called "Like Family", for our students. The event ran during MIT's Family Weekend with the goal of addressing the needs/request of our first generation and low income students. The event was designed to be fun-filled with games, music, and good conversations. The students were able to write letters or make their own cards to send to family members and friends who were unable to visit. The OME mailed (including international locales) all of the postcards and letters at no cost to the students. With only two days of planning and one day of promotion, 40 students attended and were thankful for the "Like Family" event and to the OME staff.

The OME staff also stepped up in amazing ways for the students when during the Thanksgiving Holiday (or the day before in this case) the OME hosted their first "OME Pre-Thanksgiving Meal" on Wednesday, Nov. 21, 2018. It was open to any student who were not going away for the holiday, and they could bring friends. More than 200 students showed up for the event. Because of the OME's responsiveness, students' needs were addressed in real time.

The OME is an office filled with a team of dedicated, hard-working, determined, knowledgeable, experienced, and passionate individuals committed to inclusion and actively providing support and advice to any student who walks through their doors.

I am pleased to present the OME team with an OVC Infinite Mile Award for Diversity & Inclusion!

Registrar's Web Team
Innovation & Creativity
Deborah Boldin and Alison Trachy

Alison and Deb guided the Registrar's Office through a complete overhaul of complex and wide-ranging content for our new website. Their management of an inclusive process leading to their writing of exquisite content coupled with an innovative approach exceeded expectations.

In August 2018, the Registrar's Office went live with a new innovative website that provides critical information to a community of users that includes faculty, students, staff, and alumni. Unto itself, deploying a new site may not be unique -- refreshing an office's web presence happens periodically across the Institute. In this project, however, 14 disparate websites were merged into one. Each of the previous 14 sites had its own voice, approach to communicating information, and graphical presence. A website project team partnered with a graphic design firm, a user experience designer, and content editor consultants to develop the framework for the vast and rich content that needed to be conveyed.

After the infrastructure was in place, Alison and Deb's work really rose to meet a daunting challenge. The project team's initial plan was to engage consultants to write content for the site – a common practice when the density of content is so voluminous. Instead, Alison and Deb approached the task of writing all content and delivered it with excellence that exceeded the project sponsors' expectations. They rolled up their sleeves and intently focused on delivering content in a way that best served the users and embodied the office-wide values, tone, and key messages.

Alison and Deb created and maintained detailed spreadsheets and matrix' that identified every prior website page and how it translated to page(s) on the new site. This was a massive undertaking from both administrative and content perspectives with much at stake given the MIT community reliance on the Registrar's Office for accurate academic information. The new style for the site included elements that were not present in previous sites, such as writing in first person, and "getting to the point" in short, pithy sentences that are clear, concise and straightforward. In one sense, they were shifting many cultures into one. The fact that they could accomplish this among a diverse set of users and types of comment was most impressive.

Deb and Alison distilled the essence of the Registrar's Office work into an easy to comprehend series of information that serves the community well. The approach and content creation demonstrated both innovation and creativity. I am proud to present Deborah and Alison with OVC Infinite Mile Awards for Innovation & Creativity!