

# Student Advisory Board to MIT's 16<sup>th</sup> President, Dr. Susan Hockfield

## *Profile Face Book of the Members*

Barun Singh, G (Co-Chair)  
Harel Williams, '05 (Co-Chair)  
Rose Grabowski, '05 (Co-Vice-Chair)  
Hector H. Hernandez, G (Co-Vice-Chair)  
Joost Paul Bensen, G  
Andrew Brooks, G  
R. Erich Caufield, G  
Ben Crosby, G  
Patrick De Suza, '05  
Susannah (Suki) Dorfman, '05  
Michael R. Folkert, G

Farah Ghniem, '07  
Eric Jonas, G  
Neel Kantak, '05  
Elizabeth Kwack, G  
Janet Lieberman, '07  
Cecilie Lin, '06  
Sid Puram, '05  
Satwik Seshasai, G  
Shreyes Seshasai, '08  
Mike Shirk, G  
Emilie Slaby, G  
Mary Williamson, '06

## SAB Co-Chairs

### Barun Singh

Grad, PhD

EECS (6)

Lives at: off-campus in Boston

Home: Montgomery, AL

Barun was born in Pittsburgh, PA, and also spent four years of his early childhood in India before moving to Montgomery, AL. He enrolled at Auburn University at a young age, where he obtained degrees in Electrical Engineering and Economics. Barun decided to continue on the engineering route and got his Masters at the University of Michigan before coming to MIT in 2001, where he currently works in the field of Computer Vision.

While at MIT, he immersed himself in student life where he lived (Ashdown and Sidney-Pacific), where he worked (EECS), and in the community as a whole (through the Graduate Student Council in several capacities, including currently serving as President). These involvements provided him with valuable and unique experiences for personal and leadership development, and allowed him to meet his wife, who is now an MIT alumna.



### Harel Williams

Undergrad, 2005

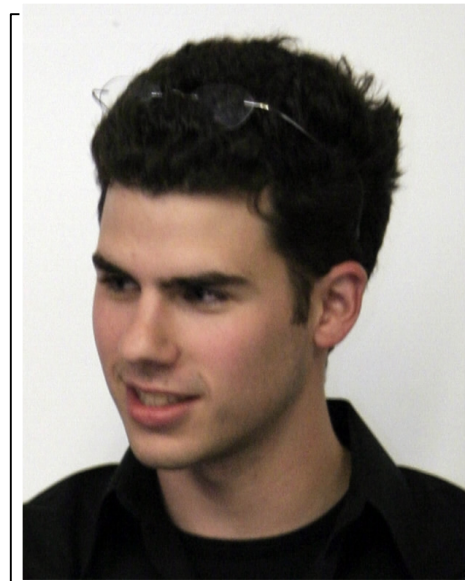
Computer Science (6-3)

Lives at: Burton Conner

Home : New York

Hailing from Great Neck, a suburb of Long Island, Harel has constantly been surrounded by a loving family devoted to education and public service. Initially painfully shy at a young age, Harel was primarily interested in figuring out how everything worked and creating things from artwork to model rockets. He overcame his shyness with the desire to serve as an advocate for his peers, while utilizing his technical skills in the process. Having been involved in student government since middle school, Harel now serves

as the Undergraduate Association President, and hopes to apply his background in computer science and engineering to building systems that help facilitate and enhance the relationship and communication between government and the people. As far as post-graduation plans are concerned, all he really knows is that he wants to come up with creative ideas that will help people in some way.



## SAB Co- Vice-Chairs

### **Rose Grabowski**

Undergrad, 2005

Management (15) and Comparative Media Studies (21CMS)

Lives at: MacGregor House

Home : Massachusetts

Rose comes from a large family in New England and grew up immersed in music and art. She surprised her parents by going to MIT instead of art school, but still spends much of her time enjoying creative outlets, especially cooking and baking. She is studying management of information technology, film, and literature, and has recently become active on gender issues. She is currently conducting research on the experience of female students at the Institute.

Student government has also become a very important part of her life, having been a member of the Undergraduate Senate for 3 years and currently being the Speaker of the Senate. After graduation, Rose will be working in Marketing Consulting and eventually will probably return to school for gender studies and/or public policy and government.



### **Hector Hernandez**

Grad, 5th year PhD

Chemistry (5) with emphasis in structural biology

Lives at: Spanish House, New House

Home: Moved from Orlando, Fl in 2000, make Cambridge my home for now

I am an older student who worked in the real world for almost 10 years before deciding that I needed to finish my education.

I started at a community college because of my economic situation. I knew that I needed a degree and this was the first step available to me at the time. I figured that if I kept my eyes and ears open and just tried to learn as much as possible, something would come through. Here it is 8 years later and I am a graduate student at MIT.

I walk these halls late at night going home from a meeting or lab, or I stand in Killian Court as the sun rises and I feel for the first time in my life that I belong to someplace in the world. I belong to MIT. No matter where I go when I leave here, this place will always be the place I will call my home. I plan to finish my degree in Chemistry and after a post-doctoral position, I plan to apply for the position of professor at a top 50 research institution. I feel that there are few models for Hispanic students in the sciences and I would like to continue my work as mentor for students both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.



# SAB Members

## Joost Paul Bonsen

Grad, 2005

Sloan School of Management (15)

Lives at: 100 Memorial Apts

Home: Cambridge, MA USA

Joost Bonsen studies organizational effectiveness in innovation institutions, especially research labs and entrepreneurial startups. He is especially interested in how new and existing organizations form or transform, grow or revitalize, and ultimately create value or fail while trying.

Prior to MIT Sloan, Bonsen ran the MIT Founders Project which quantified the economic impact of MIT-related entrepreneurs, findings ultimately published by BankBoston as "MIT: the Impact of Innovation" -- <http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/founders>

He is the co-creator of Howtoons, cartoons which show creative kids "How To" build things -- <http://www.howtoons.net> -- and thus learn-by-doing, MIT-style! Bonsen did his undergraduate studies at MIT in bio-electrical engineering (6-1B).



## Andrew Brooks

Grad, PhD

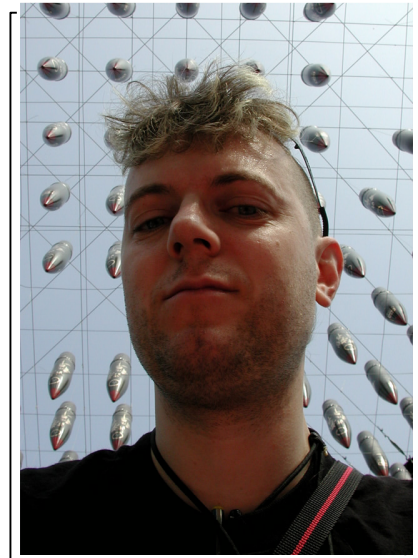
EECS/Media Lab

Lives at: Senior House (GRT)

Home: Adelaide, Australia

Before coming to MIT, Andrew received his undergraduate degrees in Organic Chemistry and Computer Science, and a graduate diploma in Education, from the University of Adelaide in Australia, and a Master's degree in Robotics from the Australian National University. Upon arrival at MIT, he realized he had truly found paradise, and continues to study Robotics at the Media Lab. He has been involved with many student groups on campus, including being the editor of the humor magazine Voo Doo for 3 years, and resurrecting the

defunct volunteer-produced handbook How To Get Around MIT in 2002, editing and publishing the 2002 and 2003 editions. Always interested in international issues, he has recently become active in the MIT Humanitarian Demining project. He is a Graduate Resident Tutor in Senior House, and a 2004 MIT Arts Scholar.



## **R. Erich Caulfield**

Grad, PhD (expected graduation 2005)  
Electrical Engineering & Computer Science  
Lives at: Tang Hall  
Home: Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Erich is currently doing research on ultrasound systems for therapeutic applications. The aim is to find more effective ways of treating benign and malignant tumors.

He has been active in a number of student groups on campus, among them: the Graduate Student Council, Black Graduate Students Association and Tang Hall Residents Association. He loves music, movies and studying foreign languages (currently Mandarin and Spanish). After graduation in 2005, he plans to work in management consulting with later possible forays into policy/politically related areas.



## **Ben Crosby**

Grad, PhD, 2005  
Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences (12)  
Lives: off campus in Mattapan  
Home: California and Alaska

Ben grew up out west. As a third generation earth scientist, Ben tried to ignore the calling of his genetics, but after a couple years as an architecture student he returned to his destined path. After UC Berkeley, he came to MIT to build quantitative skills and ended up building a family as well.

He is the father of a 5 and a 3 year old. He and his wife share parenting responsibilities as she presently is completing her undergraduate degree at Harvard. After all this is madness is complete, Ben and his family ponder whether it is best to remain in the academic world or to relocate to a remote cabin in Alaska.



## **Patrick De Suza**

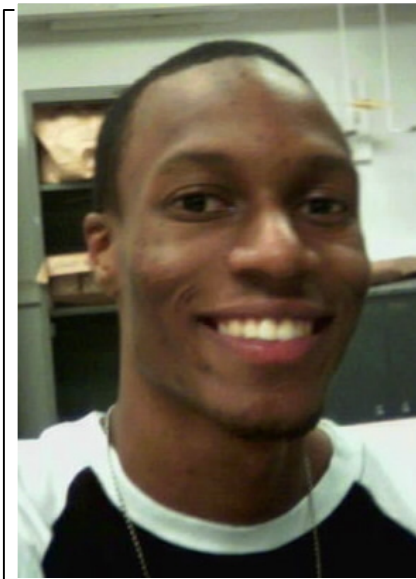
Undergrad, 2005

Computer Science and Electrical Engineering (6-2)

Lives in: Chocolate City (New House 1)

Home: Queens, NY

A first generation American born of West Indian heritage, Patrick comes from humble beginnings in New York City. He grew up with a strong sense of social consciousness and a desire to improve the community around him. As an active member of his church, he developed musically on several instruments and in several choirs. He loves sports (especially basketball and track) and enjoys driving. Currently he is studying Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and after graduation will be working for an investment bank in NYC doing software development. He plans to eventually go to business school in order to begin a career as an entrepreneur. Despite lofty career goals, Patrick resolves to never lose his passion for mentoring, inspiring, and motivating young kids toward excellence in all areas of life and will continue in this vain throughout and beyond his



## **Susannah (Suki) Dorfman**

Undergrad, 2005

EAPS (12) -- Geoscience

Lives at: Epsilon Theta

Home: NJ

At home in New Jersey, Suki's family keeps goats and chickens. She found another home her freshman year in Epsilon Theta, the coed fraternity where she is now President. She is the captain of the MIT fencing team and three times New England Champion. In the past three years she has stayed involved in her freshman program, the Experimental Study Group, by teaching calculus and physics, cooking lunches for crowds of 50+, and chairing the associate advising program. Her chosen major, Geoscience, was the most interdisciplinary program she could find here. She has worked on UROP projects in archaeological materials and geothermal rock mechanics. After she graduates she plans to spend a year as an intern



## **Michael R. Folkert**

Grad, PhD (7th year)

Harvard/MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology,

Radiological Sciences Joint Program

Lives at: Off-campus in Boston's North End

Home currently St. Paul, MN; originally Minot, ND



Mike originally comes from Minot, North Dakota, and first came to MIT in 1993. As an undergraduate, he studied Nuclear Engineering and Literature, and was an active member of his fraternity (Delta Kappa Epsilon), where he has served as its house manager and later as its graduate residential advisor and on its alumni board. As a graduate student, he has been involved with a wide range of issues at MIT, including emergency medical training and services, mental health concerns, social support networks, academic honesty, Information Services and Technology infrastructure and support issues, international student concerns, student departmental leadership, and Greek life. While he started off his research in nuclear power and supercritical reactions, he has since moved on to accelerator physics and molecular radiobiology, applied to radiation oncology. After graduation, Mike will either continue working towards his MD or find a position in hospital-based radiation therapy physics.

## **Farah Ghniem**

Undergrad, 2007

Civil and Environmental Engineering (1)

Lives at: No6/ Delta Psi

Home: Amman, Jordan



Farah is a sophomore in Civil and Environmental Engineering, and she is hoping to double major with creative writing. Farah comes from Amman, Jordan, where she has lived all of her life before coming to MIT. On campus, she lives in Delta Psi (better known as No6), which is a co-ed literary fraternity that has students from all over the world. Farah loves writing, singing and playing the piano, and enjoys a wide variety of activities such as community service, Model United Nations, spending quality time with friends as well as outdoor activities. Although very fond of science and engineering, Farah hopes to be a writer one day. She also hopes to use whatever knowledge she acquires at MIT for the development of her home country, Jordan.

## Eric Jonas

Grad, PhD

(previously MIT undergrad (2003, 9 and 6), MEng 6)

Brain and Cognitive Science (9) and EECS (6)

Lives at: Tang now, EC for 4 years before (Go EC!)

Home: Boise, Idaho

Eric's interest in MIT began when, as a toddler, he saw a PBS special on MIT's AI Lab. Originally from Boise, Idaho, he came to MIT in 1999 to study Electrical Engineering (6-1) and Brain and Cognitive Sciences (9). As an undergrad, he was actively involved in the UROP program, which led to his current Masters work in Course 6 and PhD work in Course 9 involving multiunit tetrode array electrophysiology. The freedom and exploration he enjoyed as an undergraduate living at East Campus was crucial in shaping the engineering skills he currently uses on a daily basis -- he worries that recent institute safety paranoia will make it harder for current undergraduates to have this sort of experience.



## Neel Kantak

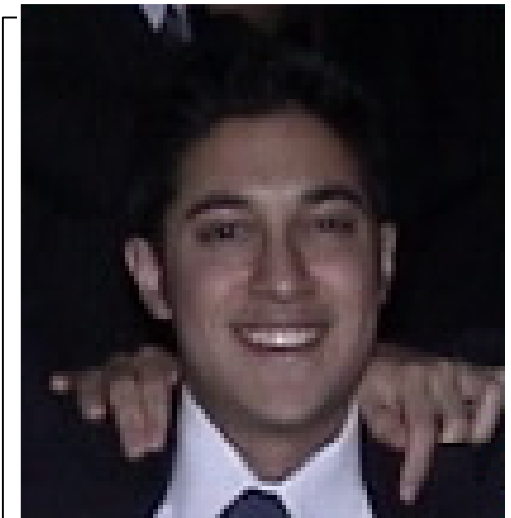
Undergrad, 2005

EECS (6)

Lives at: Sigma Chi

Home: Ohio

Neel is an MIT senior majoring in Course 6-2, with an economics concentration and a premedical focus. He's been involved in his fraternity, Sigma Chi, since his freshman year, serving as President during his junior year. He has also been involved in the UROP program, doing projects in economics as well as biomedicine. He loves teaching, and has been involved with VanTH Bioengineering Education, through which he's taught high school classes through the HSSP Program. In his free time, he likes running, playing tennis, lifting, playing piano, American literature, and patiently trying to teach himself the guitar.





## **Elizabeth Kwack**

M. Arch., June 2005 (Third year Grad)

Architecture (4)

Lives at: McCormick Hall (GRT)

Home: New Jersey

Elizabeth was born and raised in a suburb about ten miles outside of New York City. Her parents, who recently returned to Seoul, S. Korea, were first generation immigrants. In June 2002, she graduated from the MIT undergraduate program as an architecture major and is currently in her third year of graduate studies at the School of Architecture and Planning. She is a Graduate Resident Tutor at McCormick Hall and is involved in various groups on campus such as the MIT Dance Troupe, MIT Chamber Music Society, and the Architecture Student Council. In addition, she has a passion for learning foreign languages and loves to eat. She also loves Bernie Williams and the New York Yankees.



## **Janet Lieberman**

Undergrad, 2007

Mechanical Engineering (2)

Lives at: East Campus

Home: New Jersey

Janet was first introduced to the Institute when her older sister, Sarah, became part of the class of 2005. She loved the Institute enough to want to join her sister here, despite her independent nature. Though definitely possessing a technical mind, she enjoys having artistic and athletic outlets of varying natures, and getting a little bit into everything. Since arriving at MIT, she has picked up the sport of rugby, painted a mural, dj-ed a few radio spots, performed with dancetroupe, become employed at the desk of her dorm (East Campus), acted in the Vagina Monologues, and been a chorus member in a musical. She does not know what her future holds, except for possibly some sort of work in design and manufacturing.



## **Cecilie Lin**

Undergrad, 2006

Biology (7)

Lives at: McCormick Hall

## **Sid Puram**

Undergrad, 2005

Biology (7), Brain and Cognitive Science (9)

Lives at: Theta Xi

Home: Edina, MN

Sid grew up in a small suburb outside of Minneapolis. He has a younger brother who is also currently attending MIT as a freshman. In his time at the Institute, Sid has been actively involved in an eclectic variety of student groups. He is President of MIT Pro-Choice and Habitat for Humanity as well as Chief Editor of the MIT Undergraduate Research Journal. He has been integrally involved with his fraternity, Theta Xi, serving as Vice President, Rush Chairman, and Membership Educator over the past few years. In his spare time, he enjoys running along the Charles as well as participating in the South Asian Association of Students, which produces a yearly cultural show. Outside of extracurriculars and academics, he has devoted much of his time to research on DNA vaccine delivery vectors in the laboratory of Dr. Robert Langer.



## **Satwik Seshasai**

Grad, 2005 (also S.B. 2001, M.Eng. 2002)

Technology and Policy Program, Engineering Systems Division (ESD)

Lives in: Davis Square

Original Home: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Satwik has an Indian-American heritage and grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia. He came to MIT in 1997 as a freshman in Baker House, studying Computer Science and Engineering (6-3) while remaining involved with various student groups including The Tech, UA and GSC. After 5 years, an SB and MEng, he tore himself away from MIT for a year to work at IBM building collaboration software (the subject of his MEng thesis) but then returned in 2004 to broaden his education in the TPP program (studying global team collaboration) while continuing to work at IBM. Satwik owes more to MIT than his education - he met his fiancé as an undergrad in Baker, and after their June wedding will have formed a true "MIT family" that can boast 3 MIT weddings, 15 MIT degrees, and counting...



## **Shreyes Seshasai**

Undergrad, 2008

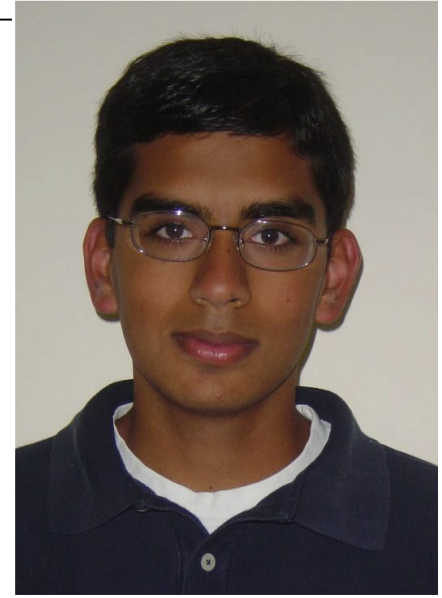
Undecided

Lives at: Next House

Home: Michigan

Shreyes grew up in Pennsylvania before moving to Connecticut where he completed his secondary schooling.

He always demonstrated interest in computers and technology, participating in various activities where he could apply his general interest in engineering. He came to MIT this fall as a freshman, having been drawn to the school by its unique culture and academic opportunities, specifically in the ability to assist in research as an undergraduate and gain hands on experience in work outside of the classroom. His interests include playing tennis and backpacking, and he intends to study Electrical Engineering and Computer Science as he looks to expand his knowledge and interest base over the coming years at the Institute.



## **Mike Shirk**

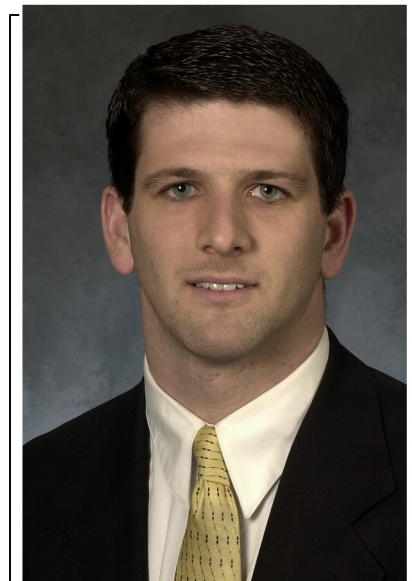
MBA, 2005

Sloan School of Management (Course 15)

Lives: off-campus

Home: Lancaster, PA

Mike joined the MIT Sloan MBA program after 6 years working in business development, program management and engineering at Lockheed Martin. During this time, he had prime responsibility for growing the advanced radar line of business, working closely with the US Navy, Department of Defense, State Department and governments in over 10 countries to develop advanced solutions for Homeland Security and Ballistic Missile Defense. At Sloan, Mike is concentrating in finance and strategic management in preparation for a new consulting career with Bain and Company in Boston. He is also completing a Masters degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania (graduating in 2005). In his free time, Mike enjoys traveling, reading, jet skiing and metalworking. He plans on one day returning to Lancaster, PA where he grew up on a working Amish farm that's been in his family for 256 years.



## **Emilie Slaby**

Grad, PhD

Department/Major: Woods Hole Joint Program, Chemical Oceanography and Environmental Engineering (1)

Lives at: Woods Hole, MA

Home: New York

Emilie grew up in Upstate New York thinking she would become a literary journalist one day. However, while in college at Carnegie Mellon University, she took her father's advice to "find a day job" and graduated with a B.S. in Chemistry as well as a B.A. in Creative Writing. She spent half of her senior year of college studying marine biology in Copenhagen, Denmark. While on a research trip to Tvarminne, Finland, she grew to love chemical studies of the ocean and the following year enrolled in the Woods Hole Joint Program in Oceanography. Currently she researches how tides augment the delivery of septic tank pollution to the coastal ocean. Her current outlet for her writing is her position as editor-in-chief of the Graduate Student News. After she graduates, she hopes to work in science media and communication.

## **Mary Williamson**

Undergrad, 2006

EECS (6) & Finance (15)

Lives at: Next House

Home: Albuquerque NM

Mary is from the southwest and loves spicy Mexican food and hiking in the mountains. She is studying Electrical Engineering/Computer Science and Finance as an undergraduate at Sloan. She is also involved in several activities here on campus from student a cappella in the Chorallaries of MIT, the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid, (previously) the Varsity Swim Team, and the Science and Engineering Business Club. She plans to work in finance or in a computer science related field after graduation.

