



AILG Board Meeting

Thursday, October 8, 2020 | Zoom | Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm by Akil Middleton

In Attendance

Board: Eric Cigan (LCA), Tyler Kemp-Benedict (pika), Akil Middleton (ZP), Mary Linton Peters (KAT), Cecilia Stuopsis (AXO)

Administration, Staff, Vendors: Brad Badgley (FSILG Office), Liz Jason (FSILG Office), Jessica Morris (FSILG Office), Madi Clark (FSILG Office), Pam Gannon (DSL), Scott Klemm (FCI), Joshua Schuler (FCI/BSF)

Other Alumni/ae: Stan Wulf (PDT, AILG Ombuds), Patrick McCabe (TT), Bob Ferrara (TC), Tom Stohlman (KS), Mark Thompson (ADP), Tom Holtey (CP)

Review of Minutes

Minutes of the May, June, and July meetings were approved, pending minor corrections.

Treasurer's report

Eric Cigan presented the Treasurer's report. From the balance sheet, not a lot has changed except monthly payments for BSF, SLI and Quickbooks online charges. On the accounts receivable, the IRDF support is still outstanding. FCI will deposit dues collected from the houses tomorrow.

FSILG Office / DSL, and Council updates

Brad Badgley reported on the formal Panhel Recruitment, held the first three weekends of September with Bid night on the 23rd. Initially there were 260 potential new members, which is slightly above average. 181 bids were given out, which is more than the total of round 1 attendees last year. Formal registrations increased by 41%, and formal bids increased by 71%. Every chapter made quota, which increased by four this year—this is a first, good news!

Liz Jason reported on IFC. Rush circles ended in September. Informal recruitment events are being held by houses each week, building connections and relationships. These will continue until Thanksgiving break.

Brad reported on the ILGs and the multicultural groups. DSL is having individual conversations with each ILG as to how recruitment will occur. The FSILG Office is also working with the Multicultural Fraternities and Sororities. In general, the FSILG Office is focusing on building retention and community in the chapters in a virtual way.

Lambda Chi Alpha has petitioned to come back. It usually takes at least a year for the application process, which includes a vote by IFC and final approval DSL. Following approval, there is a 3-step probation process that takes at least three semesters.

Summer / Spring Reimbursement Status – Pam reported that 17 applications were sent to VPF, 8 approved by DSL, 8 need info and 2 extensions. Organizations have been very cooperative. Once sent to VPF, each

application is reviewed by MIT legal and Treasurer office then back to DSL for actual checks to be cut, which takes about a week.

FSILG Spring / Summer Outlook

New long-term planning initiative – Through the work of the FSILG Ops team group looking at sustainability, Suzy Nelson and Peter Cummings are bringing a group together to look at the long-term health and concerns to the community. Peter Cummings reached out to Akil, looking for about 6 to 8 members including MIT VPF. Takeaway is that MIT is very supportive now and looking at long term.

AILG was already considering converting/repurposing an FSILG Ops long-term standing committee for looking forward, which this new initiative does not override – both will happen through a coordinated approach. The FSILG committee will likely meet a handful of times, to provide guidance and consider how the community can provide support. Mark Thompson volunteers to be involved, has previous experience with some of those involved.

Alum Advising working group is still proceeding, led by Catherine Higgins. Looking at lessons learned and meeting with DSL FSILG office shortly to discuss the GRA Program and how the alumni can work with them. The volunteers are mostly new, looking forward to the valuable new perspectives.

Brainstorming – FSILG Newsletter and Survey of Alum Community

FSILG Newsletter – Last done in 2011 by Bob Ferrara and sent directly to all alumni of FSILGs, these were very well received. The Alum Advising working group feels the newsletters should be brought back to provide info on what has happened this past spring / summer and fall, since many alumni care but are not as well informed as those who attend these meetings. Newsletters would go out to 30,000+ FSILG alumni and highlight what MIT has done to support the FSILG system this year. Looking at two to three times a year and a bit more concise than before. Potential topics:

- general info about campus and student life
- how MIT is supporting the AILG community
- how alums can help their FSILGs
- how to give to the general/unrestricted fund
- whom alums can contact with questions or concerns
- how alums can connect to the house corporations
- Cecilia suggested highlighting an FSILG alum and how they are helping their organization. Maybe a “Meet the Board” feature for the first issue
- how the AILG has helped specific chapters
- highlight an IRDF grant
- coming up with a house maintenance plan
- spotlight on Peer Visits

This is to engage the FSILG alumni: What does the AILG do for you? (Different from the Community Benefits Report supported by DSL, which is aimed more at parents, potential students, national headquarters.) If you have other ideas, please send them to Pam or Akil.

As for look and feel, it should be clearly recognizable as coming from MIT (as opposed to personal email), but should probably look distinct from MITAA communications, which consistently appeal for contributions. (Do we need a new AILG logo?)

Survey to alum community - No decision about spring as of this time – Suzy talked with Akil about where the community is regarding spring occupancy, asked if the community has been polled. Informally, some alums are OK about the houses being empty, which is manageable as long as MIT is helping financially. But the longer it goes on, the more potential damage to our organizations. Students, anecdotally, are not so happy as is.

Discussion ensued as to what to ask and the purpose of the survey (for example, to inform MIT’s decisions, assess alumni preferences and concerns about re-opening, and/or prompt thinking about risks and reopening paths).

MIT will probably make a decision well before Thanksgiving about Spring, so a full survey (for example, asking whether AILG alums want students back in the houses and eliciting concerns about Covid regulations) would likely not happen soon enough to inform that decision. But if MIT is committing to bring, for example, 3/4 of students back, a “pulse” survey (to one contact in each FSILG, e.g., the head of the house corporation) would help judge whether that’s feasible.

Some context: the new dorm will likely open in January. MIT will be considering various options (one or two students per dorm room, for example). Vaccines will NOT be available to students in general in time for the Spring 2021 semester.

There are questions about the long-term health of the organizations, but every org that opens will have to take on some level of public health risk, likely without the same level of day-to-day oversight as the dorms. How will insurance view this? How will nationals view it?

Even though MIT’s decision may not reflect the wishes of AILG alums, it’s still useful to know where the community is coming from. It should be made clear the survey is a “straw poll” and not a decision-making tool.

At some point, the organizations must consider capacity / path for reopening, assuming it’s not possible to bring all students back at once. (Current seniors won’t be coming back to FSILGs without a miracle.)

Pam: based on another recent survey about another topic, alums are being unusually quiet lately.

Pam and Akil (and anyone else on the board who’s interested) will draft something over the next week and a half, to get a quick pulse before the next plenary in November. Please send any suggested wording to Akil.

Opportunities / Goals for Fall 2020

A. Belongings back to undergraduates – Most students have already picked up belongings, coordinating with the FSILG Office via an approval process. 300–400 students have already contacted DSL. There will be another round in the spring, likely with more students. The process can be similar but scaled up.

B. Best practices for remote alum engagement – At least one alum per organization can have an MIT Kerberos account, which gives access to MIT’s Zoom license. If you need a certificate, reach out to Brad to be sponsored. (This could be on the survey.)

C. Financial support for undergraduates – Panhel looking at using MIT Crowd funding to help offset students’ national dues. This takes time to set up, but it’s in progress.

D. Updating contact directory – Pam and FCI will coordinate on updating the information.

Committee chairs and charges

The AILG Board unanimously approved chairs for three committees:

- Peer Visitation Committee – ML Peters & Roy Russel
- Finance – Stan Wulf
- IT – Bob Xavier & Bob Ferrara

Announcements

FCI annual meeting is 6:30pm on October 21st, please RSVP for the Zoom link. Anyone interested in joining the FCI board (1-year terms, meets once/month), please reach out to Scott Klemm. Current members are Kim Hunter, Mark Thompson, Steve Summit, Larry Stabile.

Virtual Family weekend is October 23rd and 24th

MIT is requiring that all students get the flu shot this year.

Zeta Psi International is starting a colony in Greece.

The next board meeting date is November 5th at 6pm

The next Plenary is November 12th at 6pm.

Adjournment – 7:16pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Kemp-Benedict, AILG Secretary

Abbreviations

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| AILG | Association of Independent Living Groups |
| BSF | Building Safety Facilitator |
| CPW | Campus Preview Weekend |
| DSL | Division of Student Life |
| FCI | FSILG Cooperative, Inc. |
| FSILGs | Fraternities, Sororities and Independent Living Groups |
| IFC | Interfraternity Council |
| ILGs | Independent Living Groups |
| IRDF | Independent Residence Development Fund |
| IS&T | Information Systems & Technology |
| LGC | Living Group Council |
| MITAA | MIT Alumni Association |
| NIC | North American Interfraternity Conference |
| NPC | National Panhellenic Conference |
| Panhel | Panhellenic Association |
| RFM | Release Figure Methodology (algorithm for optimizing Panhel recruitment) |
| SLI | Safety, Licensing, and Inspections |
| VPF | Vice President for Finance |
| VPR | Vice President Recruitment |