

THE DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) TASK FORCE

There are many facets and aspects of people's identities within the MIT community at large, and certainly within the Department of Mechanical Engineering (MechE). These many aspects of our individual identities and experiences are the source of our diversity, and it is everyone's responsibility to work together to make our community a supportive and equitable place for all. In this regard, MIT/MechE has taken concrete actions to address inequalities in our community before. For example, over the past two decades several initiatives within MIT and the MechE department have successfully increased the representation of women (e.g., as compared to the year 2000, the fraction of female undergraduates increased from 34% to 50% and the number of tenured female faculty increased by 6X). However, there is more work to be done at the graduate and faculty levels, and there are also many other facets of the MIT/MechE community that need attention in this regard. On the long-term horizon, the MechE diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) Task Force will work to promote initiatives and activities that will make MIT/MechE an inclusive and equitable place for all groups that are marginalized and/or in need. On the shorter-term horizon, in the wake of recent events and protests against anti-Black racism around the world, MechE will take the lead on several initiatives focused on issues particular to Black community members.

In this regard, it is important context to note that MIT as a whole, has yet to fulfill the 2004 Faculty Policy Committee's unanimous resolution to *"to take all necessary and sufficient steps to increase the percent of underrepresented minority faculty by roughly a factor of two (2) within a decade and underrepresented minority graduate students by roughly a factor of three (3) within a decade."* Although the Black community only represents a portion of the groups typically understood to comprise underrepresented minorities (URMs), there is a need to focus additional efforts on addressing these resolutions, as they pertain to the Black community in the shorter-term horizon. On the longer-term horizon, additional initiatives and efforts will address other URMs and/or groups within the community. Thus, one initial goal of the DEI task force is to help MechE to take a lead role in creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive community at all levels (students, faculty and staff).

The DEI task force's charge will be to organize, develop and facilitate the execution of activities and reforms designed to improve the department's DEI. In its first phase of activity, the DEI task force aims to address anti-Black racism through actionable policy recommendations, define our community values in regards to DEI in general, and develop and implement short-term and long-term initiatives driven by a 5-year action plan. The efforts will be targeted at: (1) increasing representation in the department, at the student, faculty, and staff levels; (2) developing activities and processes to ensure the opportunities, recognition, and experiences of members in the MechE community are equitable; (3) develop efforts to ensure inclusion, promote a culture of respect, and provide support to improve the retention and experience of our

community members; (4) develop internal and external review procedures and protocols that periodically assess the success and equity of these DEI efforts. The DEI task force will consist of members from the faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students that will report directly to the department head. The task force will also engage with the MechE alumni community for feedback that will inform its recommendations and action plan.