



Issue 7
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Newsletter Postdocs @ MIT



MIT Postdoctoral Scholars Advisory Council <http://web.mit.edu/mitpostdocs>

News from the MIT Libraries

Greetings to all new and returning postdoctoral fellows! The MIT Libraries have been developing new digital products that we hope will enhance your research at MIT. Here are a few links to get you started:

Our main link to all library resources

<http://libraries.mit.edu>

Subject specialists for research assistance

<http://libraries.mit.edu/ask-us/experts.html>

Retrieve online journal articles available at MIT on VERA

<http://libraries.mit.edu/vera>

Get journal articles NOT available at MIT in pdf format—free service

<http://libraries.mit.edu/ordering/ib.html>

See our libraries' video tutorials from your desktop

<http://libraries.mit.edu/tutorials/video/>

Periodical updates of instructional sessions and other new developments will be sent to the Postdoctoral Council web list moderator for posting.

Louisa Rogers, Science Library, elworthi@mit.edu

Welcome Reception for New International Scholars:

Dr. Anne Copeland, Interchange Institute, speaks about:

"Adjusting to Life in the US"

Wednesday, October 17, 2007
4:00 – 6:00 pm
Mezzanine Lounge, W20-307
Hosted by ISO

What's New?

Child Care Options at MIT

Doug Elder was one of the first people to know that my husband and I were expecting a baby. Who is Doug Elder? My father? Brother? Friend? None of the above: Doug Elder is in charge of enrollment at the Technology Children's Center (TCC) at MIT. We signed up for the waiting list for child care at MIT when I was six weeks pregnant.

As hard as it is to think about day care so early, the reality of life and employment in Boston is that infant care spaces are difficult to find. MIT has several day care centers, all run by the well-respected company Bright Horizons, but there are only spaces for 14 infants, all in the Stata Center. While the Center is nominally open to the public, the reality is that only MIT affiliates get spots, and even MIT affiliates often must wait until a space opens. My son is eighteen months old, and we were very lucky that he got a spot when he was eight months old.

The good news is, we have been thrilled with the care that our son has received in the Stata Center. Because MIT subsidizes the centers, the fees are a bit lower than those of comparable centers in the Kendall Square area. Additionally, the ratios of teachers to students are higher than those mandated by the state. The state requires two teachers for every seven infants, and two teachers for seven infants and three teachers for nine toddlers. The increase in ratio makes a substantial difference in the attention that each child receives. The teachers are loving and attentive, and make every effort to get the children outside every day possible, and to keep them active and engaged with activities, while also allowing a sufficient amount of free play and exploration. The teachers are also very receptive to the parents' wishes about their children's schedule, diet, and nap routine. Like all Bright Horizons facilities, the center has an "open door policy," meaning that parents are welcome to visit anytime. I have felt very welcome visiting my son at TCC—when he was an infant, I would often come over to nurse him, and now that he is a toddler, I will

often have lunch with him and his class. My son is extremely happy, and it is sometimes difficult to tear him away when it is time to go home!

So, it is easy to sign up for the waiting list at the Stata Center as soon as you know you are expecting a baby, but that is no guarantee that your child will have a spot. So what do you do? Bright Horizons allows you to be on the waiting list at several centers for a single application fee, and there are three additional Bright Horizons Centers near MIT—in Kendall Square, Central Square, and on Rodgers St near the Cambridge Galleria. Our son was in the Kendall Square Center for his first five months in day care, and we were very happy there, too. The cost is a bit higher than MIT, since it is not subsidized, and it is not quite as convenient, but the quality of care there is very high.

However, another fact of living in the Boston area is that the cost of child care is very high. The MIT centers offer scholarships to postdoctoral associates and fellows, although the money for fellows is more limited, since it is in the same pool with graduate students. If TCC is not an option, for either space or financial reasons, there are many other possibilities for child care, depending on your preferences and circumstances. The MIT Center for Work and Family Life can be a resource. They offer frequent consultations on child care, and can help you decide what kind of child care will be best for you, and give you advice on how to find it. Their website is http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/cc_info.html.

There are many additional resources on the web that can be helpful, one is <http://www.bostoncentral.com/educare/daycare.php>.

What works for one family will not work for all—every child is different. But there are resources at MIT to help us figure out how to take care of our children while we are at work.

Sheryl Krevsky Elkin

Postdoctoral Scholars Advisory Council

CONTACTS:

Debra Martin
Marilyn Smith

PHONE:

617-253-0473

FAX:

617-252-1003

E-MAIL:

mitpostdocs-www@mit.edu

WEB:

<http://web.mit.edu/mitpostdocs>

Our Members:

Daniel Abrams (EAPS), Jacob Berlin (Chemistry), Yu Chen (Research Lab for Electronics), Peter Chien (Biology), Eric Elmquist (BioEngineering), Kathryn Jones (Biology), Ajay Joshi (Research Lab of Electronics), Elizabeth Mann (Math), Rong Mao, (Picower Institute for Learning & Memory), Brenda Minesinger (Biology), Elaine Pinheiro (Biology), Gajendra Singh (Physics), Timothy Stoneman (Science, Technology & Society), Peter Tarsa (Biological Engineering), Wilton Virgo (Chemistry), Yongting Wang (Biology), Winne Ye (Microphotonics Center).

We try to represent postdocs across all disciplines of MIT, as space permits. If you are interested in joining the Council, please contact us at the email address at left.

Nature Network Boston:

A group on Nature Network has created a feature called "Ask the Editor" where scientists can ask questions about publishing in Nature and get answers from real, live Nature editors.

Several top-level editors have agreed to entertain questions about peer review, the publishing process, how to get published in Nature and the other Nature journals, etc. There are a few questions and answers posted already at the site.

The site was launched as a community service to help build closer ties with scientists and Nature Editors. It's free for anyone to join. The website is: <http://network.nature.com/group/askthenatureeditor>

Be sure to check out the main website of Nature Network Boston at: <http://network.nature.com/boston>

Did you know ... ?

Check out:

openwetware.org

This wiki-based effort founded by MIT students shares information about biology and bioengineering among a number of labs. It includes, but is not limited to, basic **research** findings, general scientific **ideas**, and practical **protocols** for those in the biological sciences. Take a look, or simply join up!



MIT Careers office offers another resource for networking purposes:

MIT Online Alumni Directory:

To request access to the website, <http://alum.mit.edu/index.html>, contact Kimberley Balkus, Manager, Alumni Records Data Entry Services at 617-253-8272. You must provide a letter from your supervisor stating your length of time as a postdoc, the type of postdoc, etc. signed by your supervisor. Postdocs must have been at MIT for at least 2 full semesters (academic year) in order to be eligible for Infinite Connection Access.

National Postdoctoral Association:

The National Postdoctoral Association is a professional association that provides a unique, national voice for postdoctoral scholars. The NPA was founded in 2003, with an ambitious agenda to enhance the quality of the postdoctoral experience.

MIT is a sustaining member of this association so postdocs can join for free as an affiliate member.

Check out the webpage at <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/site>.

♦ *Do you have ideas to make your postdoctoral time at MIT more rewarding? Do you want to network with other postdocs across the Institute? Join the Postdoc Advisory Council and let your voice be heard. The Council meets once a month for a luncheon to discuss topics of interest to all postdocs. Contact Marilyn Smith or Debra Martin about joining.*