



MindHandHeart

Academic Year 2016-17

Annual Report



A Letter from MindHandHeart's Faculty Chair & Executive Administrator

Where do you find 'heart' at MIT? This question has been posed by one of our Innovation Fund winners this spring to help our community reflect on the possibly unspoken things that matter deeply to people at MIT. As we complete the second year of MindHandHeart's efforts, we have much to celebrate—community members presenting new ideas, MIT providing financial support, students, faculty, and staff working together, and many new answers to the opening question.

[MindHandHeart](#) was introduced to the MIT community through a letter from Chancellor Barnhart and former Medical Director William M. Kettyle, M.D., in September 2015. Designed to enhance mental health and well-being, it taps into a growing community sentiment – a powerful concept making 'Heart' as central to MIT as MIT's motto – Mind and Hand. Heart was eloquently featured in the [2016 Moving Day Pageant](#), in [President Reif's 2016 commencement remarks](#), and in [Tim Cook's 2017 commencement speech](#). Students chose to design it into the [2019 Brass Rat](#).

Since its launch the work of the MindHandHeart team has been as much of an innovation as our projects and programs. We have functioned as a think tank, as event planners, as questioners, and conveners. We have enabled volunteers, who have stepped up with passion. Our community has provided us with novel and sometimes off-beat ideas and we have done our best to advance the most promising ones. Like an improv team, we are not likely to do the same thing twice in the same way; we are busy trying new ideas to see which best contribute to an ecosystem of caring and respect. As we learn which ideas succeed, we work with our community to help them find a permanent home.

We know we speak for the whole MindHandHeart team when we say 'thank you' to everyone who has joined on this journey with us. Partners in departments and student groups all over campus have worked hard to incorporate promising MHH programs into their own creative offerings. We hope you see yourself, your values, and our shared community spirit in the pages of this annual report. We invite you to work with us in making it easier for every member of our community to find 'heart' at MIT.

Sincerely,

Rosalind Picard
Professor of Media Arts and Sciences, MIT; Faculty Chair, MindHandHeart

&

Maryanne Kirkbride
Clinical Director for Campus Life, MIT Medical; Executive Administrator,
MindHandHeart



Image: Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Week
preparation, March 2017



MindHandHeart's Mission and Strategy

MindHandHeart is a coalition of students, faculty, and staff with fresh insights, new ideas, and diverse perspectives working collaboratively and strategically to strengthen the fabric of our MIT community.

Co-sponsored by the Office of the Chancellor and MIT Medical and led by Faculty Chair Rosalind Picard, MHH is filling a strategic niche in areas shown by research to promote mental health and well-being and reduce the risk of suicide. In academic year 2016-17, MHH did this through three main channels:

1. Our **Innovation Fund** seeding novel approaches to well-being, and mentoring passionate students as their innovative ideas develop.
2. Our **working groups** bringing voices from across the Institute together to solve problems and develop opportunities in new ways.
3. And, our **strategic partnerships** designed to connect MHH with other culture-shaping initiatives promoting respect, health, and our shared humanity.

Guided by the [Jed Foundation](#) Campus Program, now supporting over 150 colleges, MindHandHeart is tapping into the creativity of the entire MIT community to spur action and positively shape our culture. Over time, we aim for awareness of our "heart" to be fully alive on our campus; inseparable from "mind and hand" and equally valued as a component of our success in making a better world.

Image: Zine created as part of the
OpenMind::OpenArt project, February 2017



MindHandHeart AY 2016-17 By the Numbers

Over 4,400

Attendees at
MindHandHeart
Events

229

MindHandHeart
Sponsored
Events

Every

incoming AY16-17
student participated
in **Kognito** * *

Over 150

MIT community
members volunteered
with MindHandHeart

11

AY15-16
Innovation Fund
projects are now
self-sustaining

\$55,031

awarded to AY16-17
Innovation Fund
winners

2,871

Paired
connections via
MIT Connect * * *

Every

incoming AY17-18
freshman will
receive a copy of
**Portraits of
Resilience** * * * *

18

New
Innovation Fund
Projects *

*40 Innovation Fund projects funded to date and over \$130,000 awarded.

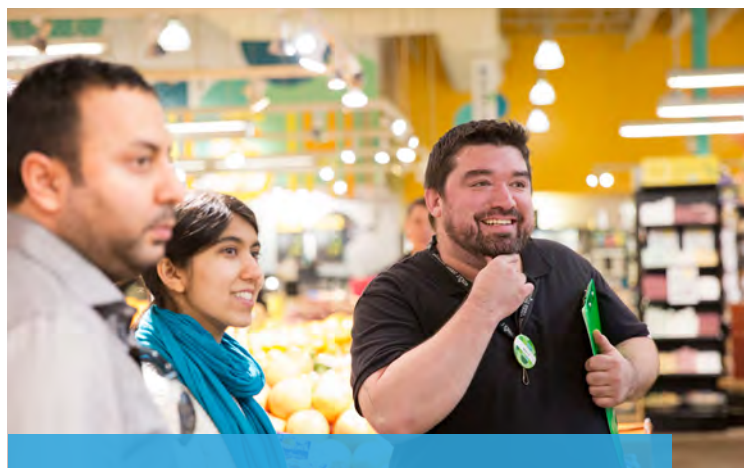
**Called "At Risk," Kognito is an online training module providing strategies for supporting peers in distress.

***MIT Connect is a digital platform connecting members of the MIT community for platonic, one-on-one lunches. It is also supported by ODGE.

****Portraits of Resilience is a book capturing the stories of MIT community members who have overcome adversity.



MindHandHeart Featured Stories



Life Skills Week

Image: Healthy Shopping at Whole Foods Workshop, March 2017

To address gaps in practical knowledge, the Life Skills Working Group organized [Life Skills Week](#) to inform and empower the MIT community. Running from Feb. 27 to March 3, 15 workshops were held across campus on topics like financial literacy, conflict management, and civic participation.

Mercedes Ondik, an MIT junior and member of the Life Skills Working Group, proposed the week as a way to help her peers gain some of the skills she feels fortunate to have learned from her family, and develop skills she wanted to learn herself. Ondik discovered a theme running through the sessions was the importance of self-awareness. “Getting to know yourself is hugely important for college students,” she said. “You have to know your goals and aspirations before the nitty gritty of life skills can fall into place.”



Sleep Study

Image: 'Sleep Champions' event held at Random Hall, April 2017

MindHandHeart's [Wellness Working Group](#) focused on MIT students' sleep habits during AY2016-17. The group flipped the paradigm—working to learn from students who do sleep rather than focusing on students who don't. They held a series of focus groups with MIT 'sleep champions' (students who consistently prioritize sleep) to get practical insight from well-rested students. The study was disseminated to campus stakeholders, and the group presented their findings at two community meetings.

Having completed the sleep study, the group is now promoting MIT specific approaches through a visual campaign and explanatory video. In April, the group organized a panel discussion in Random Hall where student 'sleep champions' advised their peers on what really works to balance schoolwork, extracurricular activities, relationships, sleep, and overall self-care.



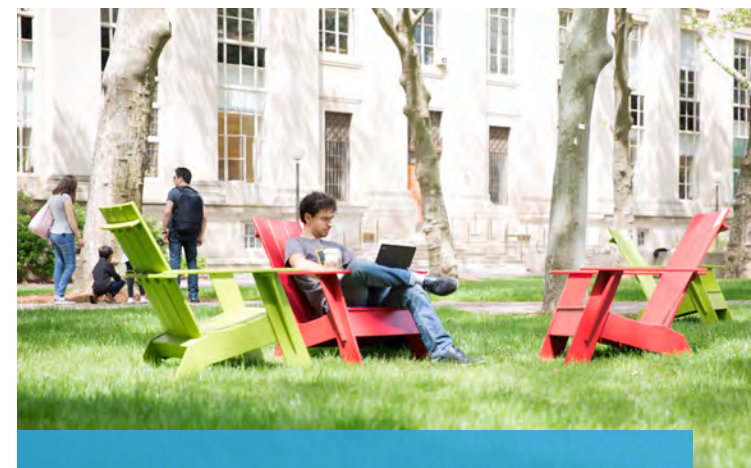
You Belong @ MIT

Image: an interactive seminar on academic belonging, April 2017

[You Belong @ MIT](#) is a three-phase initiative developed by the Teaching and Learning Lab (TLL) designed to increase students' sense of academic belonging. TLL was awarded an Innovation Fund grant in Fall 2017 to pilot the first phase of the three-part initiative, which consisted of a book club and interactive workshop.

Dr. Catherine Good, an expert in the field of academic belonging, led the workshop in April. She presented the latest research on the topic to faculty, postdocs, and administrators from across the Institute. Participants discussed concrete strategies for increasing students' sense of belonging and overall resiliency.

MHH is working with the TLL to create a series of instructional videos on ways to foster academic belonging in the classroom.



Sunshine Makes Us Happy

Image: Adirondack chairs on Eastman Court, May 2017

Conceived by faculty member Regina Bateson, Sunshine Makes Us Happy was an Innovation Fund project that sought to encourage more communal gathering outdoors by installing outdoor furniture in underutilized spaces on MIT's campus. MHH worked closely with MIT's Office of Campus Planning to gain approval for the project and to identify the best location and type of furniture for the installation. In April 2017, ten Adirondack chairs were installed in Eastman Court.

When the weather cooperates, the chairs are in almost constant use. The bright colors of the chairs and increase in people enjoying the grounds has made Eastman Court a more inviting, vibrant space. At least two other offices on campus have reached out to MHH with interest in replicating this project in their own spaces on campus.



Progress in JED Campus Framework Areas

The bedrock of MindHandHeart (MHH) is participation in the [Jed Campus Program](#), a national program to improve wellbeing and reduce risks for self-harm on college campuses. Offered by the Jed Foundation, it is based on work done by the Air Force that reduced suicide by 30% over a 10 year period. In its first year, MHH brought together key stakeholders from across campus to engage in a participatory process with the Jed Foundation. Since then, MHH and its partners across campus have identified opportunities within the Jed Campus framework areas and achieved results to improve wellbeing on-campus. Highlight accomplishments from this past year across the framework areas include:

Academic Environment

- With faculty leadership, MHH engaged the academic community in action-oriented dialogue about the Healthy Minds survey data, involving school deans, the Chair of the Faculty, key department heads, and faculty with relevant expertise.
- The Academic Environment Working Group conducted department-specific student discussion sessions to understand the context of the Healthy Minds data.
- Through the Innovation Fund, MHH supported the Teaching and Learning Lab's [You Belong@MIT](#) initiative, helping the MIT community to develop tools and strategies to enhance academic belonging in academic departments and classrooms.
- MHH worked to support a faculty member piloting a mid-semester climate survey in one large class to help the faculty member and TAs get real-time feedback on how their students were experiencing their course, allowing them to make changes midway through the semester if needed.

Connectedness

- The MHH Connectedness Working Group hosted the 2nd annual Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Week. Hundreds of MIT community members and many departments participated in the event series designed to promote reaching out, making connections, and building community.
- MHH funded a number of other projects focused on community building through its Innovation Fund. Some of these include [Plants for the People](#), a workshop series focused on bringing different communities together to learn about plants; Sunshine Makes Us Happy, a project bringing lawn furniture to Eastman court to encourage more outdoor gathering; and [MIT Connect](#), a website that matches random members of the MIT community together for lunch.

Increasing Help-Seeking

- Working closely with the communications officers in DUE, DSL, ODGE, MIT Medical, the Chancellor's Office, the UA, and the GSC, MHH made improvements to MIT's Student Resources website (resources.mit.edu), a one-stop inventory of services available to MIT students.
- [The Helping You, Helping Others](#) interactive art installation funded by the Innovation Fund engaged over 20 offices on campus in helping normalize help-seeking for students.

Image: Institute Professor Robert Langer speaking at a "Failures in Graduate School" seminar, October 2016



Image: Student Support Services Open House held as part of RAK Week, March 2017



Progress in JED Campus Framework Areas (continued)

Life Skills

- In February 2017, the Life Skills Working Group hosted [Life Skills Week](#), which included 15 workshops and daily tabling, all focused on building practical skills in areas such as personal finance, conflict management, and shopping on a budget.
- In efforts to foster resilience and normalize self-doubt and failure, the [Failures in Graduate School](#) Innovation Fund project brought MIT faculty together with graduate students to discuss the mistakes and challenges the faculty faced when in graduate school themselves.
- Over 140 generous MIT alumni and community members donated funds to provide every incoming AY 2017-18 freshman with a copy of [Portraits of Resilience](#), a book profiling MIT students and faculty who have overcome adversity.

Means Restriction

- MedLinks, a residentially-based peer health advocacy program, helped distribute prescription pill de-activation envelopes to reduce the availability of unused medications in student residences.
- With input from MHH and Jed Foundation experts, MIT took steps to increase campus safety for laboratories and other buildings.
- MHH worked with student leaders from the UA and Campus Facilities to install over 200 rooftop signs designed to prevent suicide and encourage help-seeking via 800-273-TALK, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

- MHH worked with DSL and DUE to have all first-year students come to campus having completed Kognito, an online-learning program focused on identifying and helping peers in distress.
- Under the leadership of the Chancellor's Office, DSL, and MIT Medical, MIT made changes to its [Good Samaritan Policy](#) as well as its [medical leave and hospitalization procedures](#) in efforts to increase help-seeking and foster more transparency and trust. Although MHH was not directly involved in these efforts, we cheered from the sidelines and served as a liaison with the Jed Foundation, sharing information on promising practices.

Wellness

- The MHH Wellness Working Group developed a report based on focus groups with MIT student 'sleep champions.' The report explores barriers to achieving healthy sleep patterns at MIT and highlights strategies for getting more and better rest.
- Using this report, the working group held meetings with key campus decision makers, hosted student learning events on sleep, and developed promotional materials on sleep hygiene.

Image: Live mural painting at the OpenMind::Open Art Gallery Opening, February 2017



MindHandHeart
Communications

MindHandHeart's communications strategy aligns with the larger goals of the initiative to build a healthier, more welcoming MIT community. In the [2017 MIT Student Quality of Life Survey](#), 72% of respondents agreed that MIT students "take pride in how stressed out they are." Working across multiple print and digital channels, MHH aims to counter this prevailing 'culture of suffering' narrative and show how members of our community are prioritizing self-care and overall well-being. To achieve this, we are streamlining communications related to wellness and mental health; publicizing health-related resources, events, and news; using analytics to evaluate our progress; and being agile in responding to the needs of the student body, especially during stressful periods. Lastly, we are promoting the broader communications goals of the Institute to showcase MIT's vibrant community spirit, creative minds, and compassionate hearts.

During the past year, MHH's communications team and a coalition of communications officers from across the Institute have completed a number of projects. Accomplishments include:

- MHH's Communications Specialist revamped MindHandHeart's logo, [website](#), marketing materials, and [social media](#) presence in order to better outline MHH's goals, promote wellness and mental health resources, and share stories of resilience and help-seeking.
- MHH spearheaded the revamping and updating of a website offering a comprehensive list of resources available to MIT students ([resources.mit.edu](#)). Dubbed "How to Find Stuff at MIT," the site provides information on everything from housing to academic planning to mental health and wellness.
- MHH's Innovation Fund projects were featured in 18 articles that were published in MIT News, The Tech, and BostonInno.
- MHH sent out a monthly e-newsletter, [The MindHandHeart Beat](#), to approximately 600 subscribers with an average open rate of over 50%.
- MHH developed a [calendar of events](#) focused on wellness, community, and mental health that was disseminated during May in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month and following the National Election in November. The calendars were well-received and widely disseminated by departments and offices across campus.
- MHH showcased the initiative and its mission at many community-wide events, including Orientation, the Parents Forum, the EVPT Poster Session, the Chemistry Resource Fair, the Sloan Resource Fair, Lobby 10 tabling sessions, as well as the Wellness Fair and MIT Day of Play, which MHH co-sponsored.
- MHH's Communications Specialist created a communications toolkit for Innovation Fund winners, covering best practices for planning events, tracking data, and using modern digital storytelling tools. Additionally, MHH holds weekly office hours where Innovation Fund winners meet with members of the MHH team to develop advertising and outreach plans.



Image: Student artists at the OpenMind::OpenArt Gallery Opening, February 2017



MindHandHeart Quotes

“ If there wasn't a MindHandHeart, I don't think there would be an outlet for people who want to apply their **creativity to support mental health and well-being on campus.**”

-Bettina Arkhurst '18

“Everyone shows you **Superman**, but no one shows you **Clark Kent.**”

-Participant in
You Belong @ MIT
seminar

“When you pick a career, don't do it because of money or any reason other than you **feel in your heart** that you'll love it and it could have an **impact on the world.**”

-Robert Langer, Institute
Professor, speaking at a
Failures in Graduate School
event

“The [OpenMind::OpenArt] gallery opening was a really powerful way for MIT students and the administration to come together and say to the world, or whomever may be listening, that **mental health is important; that it is a priority; and that our community is thinking about these issues.**”

-Larkin Sayre '17

“I don't know of any other initiative on campus that brings together faculty, students, and staff to work in such a collegial way. It's been a **really rewarding experience** getting to know members of the Increase Help-Seeking Working Group, and collaborating towards the shared goal of **making MIT a more supportive place.**”

-Jared Berezin, Lecturer &
Head of House

“**Caring for a plant** in a committed, conscientious way can enrich your life... it's a transferable message that helps students **see the importance of nurturing themselves** — of eating nutritious food, getting enough sleep, and participating in healthy social activities.”

-Nelson Feliciano, Plants for the
People Founder & Summer Guest
and Conference Housing
Coordinator

“**Life skills**
really encompass
everything.”

-Meghan Kenney,
Assistant Dean
of New Student
Programming

“It seems like **Puppy Lab** is something a lot of people really wanted and really appreciate.”

-Stephanie Ku '14,
Puppy Lab Founder

Image: Ball pit in the Media Lab as part
of RAK Week, March 2017



MindHandHeart Collaborations & Campus Partners

MIT has a rich tradition of creating venues for community members to work outside their typical roles to solve important problems. Like our efforts around energy, climate change, undergraduate education, and even innovation itself, MHH is organizing groups, projects, networks, and leaders to establish an ecosystem to promote mental well-being and reduce risks for self-harm. Since our launch, we have developed an infrastructure and made alliances that cut across the Institute, engaging over **150 community members** in formal MHH roles. The following represents our current infrastructure and alliances:

Working Groups: Organized around the Jed Campus Program Framework Areas, our working groups currently include the following: (1) [Academic Environment](#), identifying and making accessible promising practices that ease student experience of the academic environment; (2) [Connectedness](#), reducing isolation and loneliness by promoting day-to-day kindness and compassion; (3) [Increasing Help-Seeking](#), increasing the likelihood that students and others will reach out for help when they need it; (4) [Life Skills](#), improving our ability to bounce back from difficulty with better skills and tools; and (5) [Wellness](#), critically examining opportunities to remove barriers to self-care.

Core Team: Made up of senior deans and staff from DUE, DSL, ODGE, MIT Medical and the Chancellor's Office, this group meets regularly to foster collaboration and ensure MHH's alignment with partners across campus.

Senior Review Team: The Chancellor, Medical Director, Chair of the Faculty, Deans of DUE, DSL, and ODGE, and student leaders convene annually with MHH staff to provide direction and guidance to the overall effort.

Communications Team: The communications officers from DUE, DSL, ODGE, MIT Medical, and the Chancellor's Office meet monthly to explore avenues for collaboration and cross-promotion.

Innovation Fund Selection Committee: Co-sponsored by the UA and the GSC, the Innovation Fund selection committee meets each cycle to recommend a panel of finalists to the sponsors.

Community Alliances: Many of the core features of the Jed Campus Program are being advanced by other campus efforts. To foster our 'ecosystem' approach, we have intentionally worked to connect with and support four other key culture shaping movements at MIT: (1) Diversity and Inclusion, staff Alignment Group, ICEO, BSU/BGSA recommendations; (2) Sexual Misconduct, committee on Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response; (3) Office of Sustainability: Campus Resiliency Committee, SustainConnect; and (4) Leader to Leader, sponsored a project to consider expanding the scope of MHH to faculty and staff.

Image: iREF Monika Avello leading a workshop on conflict management as part of Life Skills Week, March 2017





Donate to
MindHandHeart

A donation to MindHandHeart enables students, faculty, and staff to carry out nimble and innovative projects that approach mental health and well-being from diverse perspectives and with wide-ranging talents.

Our generous contributors have increased opportunities for connectedness and caring; sparked conversation; encouraged help-seeking; and raised awareness. They have empowered students like Bettina Arkhurst '18 and Cory Johnson '18, who organized students and engaged departments to join in [Random Acts of Kindness \(RAK\) Week](#), an event series bringing MIT together through small, spontaneous acts of generosity. Our contributors have supported [MIT Connect](#), a digital platform connecting members of the MIT community for platonic, one-on-one lunches. And this year, our donors have made it so that every member of the incoming AY 2017-18 class will receive a copy of [Portraits of Resilience](#), a book profiling MIT students and faculty who have overcome adversity.

On behalf of all the MIT community members involved with MindHandHeart: thank you for helping us to infuse 'cor' (heart) into 'mens et manus' (mind and hand).



Image: Fall 2017 Innovation Fund Winners



Image: Innovation Fund winner Jerry Wang at the "Stick with Me" event, May 2017

Image: "Helping You, Helping Others" sculpture in the Student Center, September 2016

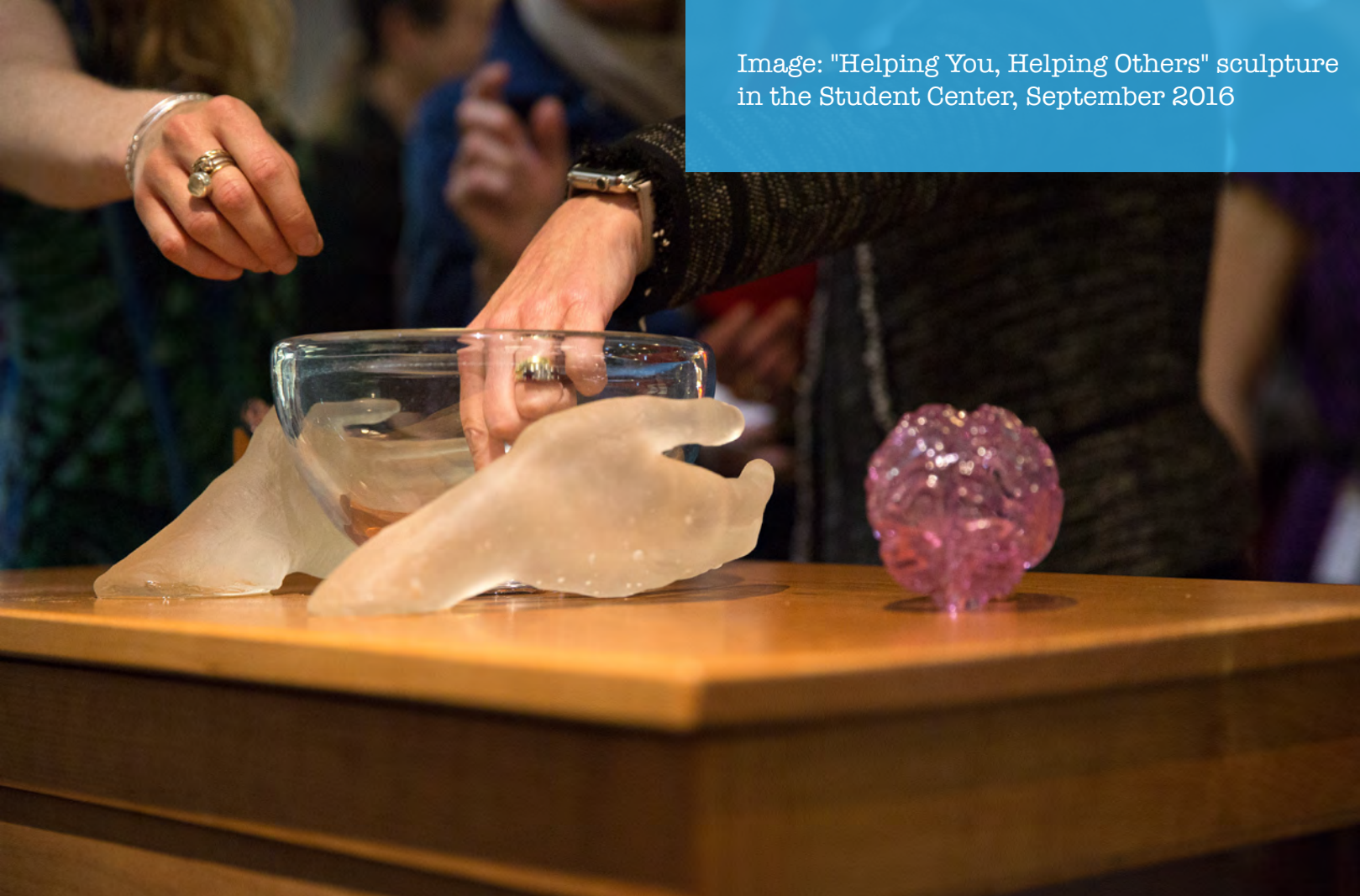


Image: "Plants for the People" event in the Eastgate Apartments penthouse, January 2017



Image: "Helping You, Helping Others" creators, September 2016



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