

Student Honors & Awards: Undergraduate



ABOVE:

2026 Alan H. Barrett Prize winner and 2026 Morse/Orloff Award for Research winner Vinh Tran. Credit: Steph Stevens.

2026 Alan H. Barrett Prize

The prize honors the late Professor Alan H. Barrett's outstanding influence in the education of physicists and his fundamental contribution to the science and technology of astrophysics. One thousand dollars is awarded to a graduate or undergraduate student with outstanding research in astrophysics.

Vinh Tran SB '26

Academic advisor: Philip Harris

2026 Burchard Scholars

The Burchard Scholars Program brings together distinguished members of the faculty and promising sophomores and juniors who have demonstrated excellence in some aspect of the humanities, arts, and social sciences, as well as in science and engineering. The program is sponsored by the Dean's Office, School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Julia Li SB '27

Vlad Stefan Oros SB '27

The 2026 Morse/Orloff Award for Research

Given in memory of the late MIT Professor of Physics Philip Morse, one of the renowned physicists of the twentieth century, whose contributions spanned basic physics to engineering. Funds are generously provided by Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Orloff in memory of their son Joel, a Physics major, who died in an automobile accident shortly after graduation from MIT in 1978. One thousand dollars is awarded to one or more senior students of high academic standing who plan to pursue graduate studies in physics.

Vinh Tran SB '26

Academic advisor: Philip Harris



The 2026 Joel Matthew Orloff Awards

Established by Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Orloff in memory of their son Joel, a Physics major, who died in an automobile accident shortly after graduation from MIT in 1978. One thousand dollars is awarded to each winner.

SERVICE

Given to the student(s) with the most outstanding service to the Department, Institute, or community.

Felicia Xiao SB '26

Academic advisor: Tracy Slatyer



SCHOLARSHIP

Given to the student(s) with outstanding scholastic achievement in physics.

Munich Tripattaranan SB '26

Academic advisor: Isaac Chuang

RESEARCH

Given to the student(s) with the most outstanding research in Physics.

Katherine Panebianco SB '26

Academic advisor: Philip Harris



ABOVE LEFT:
2026 Joel Matthew Orloff Award for Service winner Felicia Xiao.
Credit: Steph Stevens.

ABOVE RIGHT:
2026 Joel Matthew Orloff Award for Scholarship winner Munich Tripattaranan.
Credit: Steph Stevens.

LEFT:
Joel Matthew Orloff Award for Research winner Katherine Panebianco.
Credit: Steph Stevens.

RIGHT:
2026 Order of the
Lepton Award winner
Yongao Hu. Credit:
Steph Stevens.

The 2026 Order of the Lepton Award

Awarded to a graduating senior who best exemplifies the spirit and characteristics of MIT's Physics students. Established with gifts from alumni and friends of the Department, the Order of the Lepton embodies the community spirit and collaboration that are hallmarks of the MIT Physics Department. The fund provides a prize of \$1,000.

Yongao Hu SB '26

Academic advisor: Richard Milner



2026 Sigma Pi Sigma Inductees

Election to Sigma Pi Sigma is based upon a student's strong academic record. With over 90,000 members throughout its history, its purpose is to be of service to the broader physics community. It encourages scholarship in physics by admitting a student to the fellowship of others with similar interests and accomplishments. This year, MIT's Physics Department inducts 21 new members.

Erez Abrams
Emily Albornoz
Kaylee Barrera
Rebecca Chang
Stanley Chen
Erin Cusson
Ne Dassanayake
Evan Erickson
Matson Garza
Aarush Gupta
Yongao Hu
Haedam Im
Teo Lara
David Lee
Oluyinka Lindblad
Lawrence Long
Max Miller
Max Misterka
Emily Neill

Temujin Orkhon
Sam Packman
Katherine Panebianco
Jiwoo Park
Rishab Parthasarathy
Kartik Pingle
Michael Popik
Diego Rivera
Alexander Sherstnev
Minki Shim
Caio Silva
Gordon Su
Lily Sun
Wendy Sun
Kyle Tignor
Munich Tripattaranan
Felicia Xiao
Lana Xu



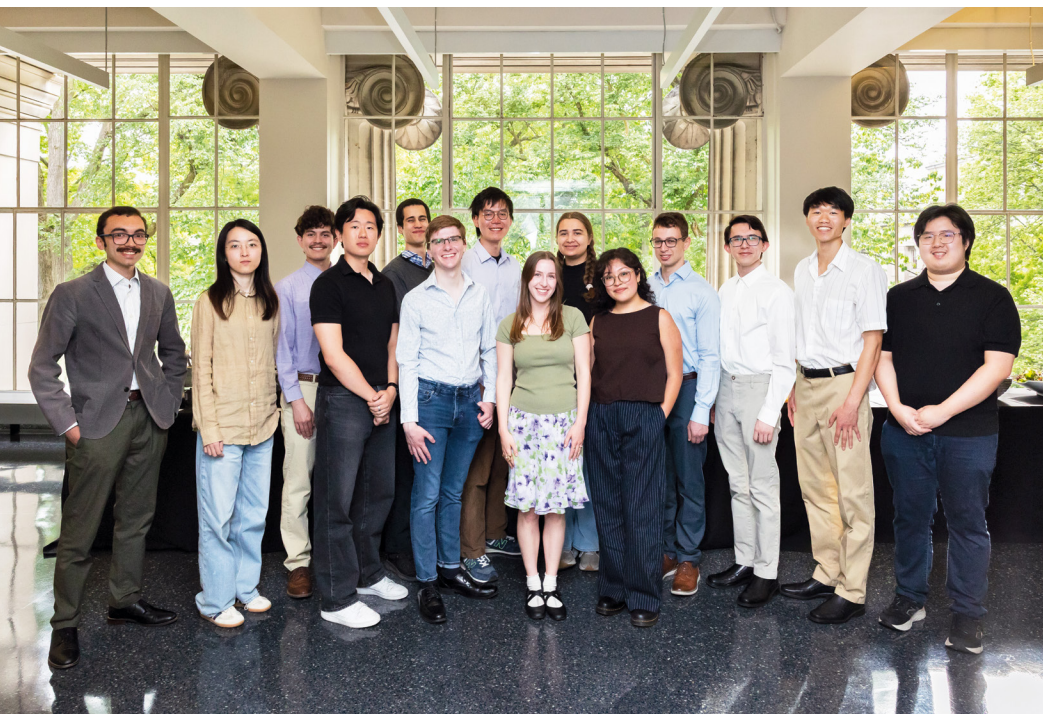
LEFT:
2026 Sigma Pi Sigma
inductees. Credit:
Steph Stevens.

2026 Phi Beta Kappa Inductees

Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest honor society in the United States of America. Less than 10% of the graduating class is invited, and selection is based upon academic record, dedication to the liberal arts and language skills. This year, MIT's Chapter (Xi) of Phi Beta Kappa voted to invite 99 members of the Class of 2026, 22 of whom are physics majors, to membership in the Society.

Kaylee Barrera
Henry Bezos
Evan Erickson
Kevin Cheng
Maston Garza
Alex Gu
Yongao Hu

Luke Kelly
Teo Lara
Oluyinka Lindblad
Skipper Lynch
Max Miller
Emily Neill
Sam Packman
Jiwoo Park
Diego Rivera
Caio Silva
Gordon Su
Wendy Sun
Kyle Tignor
Munich Tripattaranan
Lana Xu



LEFT:
2026 Phi Beta Kappa
inductees. Credit:
Steph Stevens.

2025-2026 Buechner Undergraduate Advising Award

Awarded to faculty members who show exceptional care, mentorship, and guidance for undergraduate students.

Philip Harris PhD '11

Associate Professor of Physics

RIGHT:
Philip Harris PhD '11.
Credit: Justin Knight
Photography.



Student Honors & Awards: Graduate

The Department's graduate awards winners for the 2024–2025 academic year (listed below) were publicly announced at an on-campus event in September 2025. A listing of all prizes and winners for 2025–2026 will appear in the Fall 2027 issue of *physics@mit*.

2024–2025 Martin Deutsch Student Award for Excellence in Experimental Physics

Created in 1987 in honor of Professor Martin Deutsch's outstanding career as an experimentalist and for his influence as an educator. One thousand dollars is awarded annually to one or more graduate students mid-way through thesis research in any field, with preference for an experimentalist.

Ruixiao Yao

Atomic Physics

Thesis supervisor: Martin Zwierlein

Alexandra Klipfel

Experimental Nuclear
& Particle Physics

Thesis supervisor: Peter Fisher

2024–2025 Andrew M. Lockett III Memorial Fund Award

Awarded to a graduate student in theoretical physics, with preference given to students from Los Alamos, NM, and New Orleans, LA. The award currently carries a prize of \$1,000. The award was established by Mrs. Lucille Lockett Stone in memory of her husband, Dr. Andrew M. Lockett, who received his PhD in physics from MIT in 1954.

Sal Pace

Theoretical Condensed Matter Physics

Thesis supervisor: Xiao-Gang Wen

Marianne Moore

Center for Theoretical Physics–
A Leinweber Institute

Thesis supervisor: Tracy Slatyer

2024-2025 Sergio Vazquez Prize

Established in memory of Sergio Vazquez, a graduate student in the Center for Theoretical Physics who was killed in an automobile accident on April 1, 1990. One thousand dollars to be awarded annually to a graduate student, with preference for a student from an underrepresented sector of the population who had to overcome racial, physical or financial barriers.

Abdelaziz Hussein

MIT Kavli Center for Astrophysics and Space Research

Thesis supervisor: Lina Necib

2024-2025 Buechner Student Teaching Prize

Awarded to a graduate student for outstanding contributions to the educational program of the Department during the past academic year. The \$1,000 prize was established in 1987 by the late Mrs. Christina Buechner in memory of her husband Prof. William Buechner, who served as Physics department head from 1962-67.

Bahar Shakerifakher

Departments of Brain and Cognitive Sciences and Physics

Thesis supervisor: Ila Fiete

Rachel Steinhorst

Center for Theoretical Physics—
A Leinweber Institute

Thesis supervisor: Krishna Rajagopal

Laurel White

MIT Kavli Center for Astrophysics and Space Research

Thesis supervisor: Michael McDonald

Graduate Degree Recipients 2025-26

(PhD, except as noted)

SEPTEMBER 2025

Ryan Abbott
Samuel Aronson
Artur Avkhadiev
Shankar Balasubramanian
Arkya Chatterjee
Anjie Gao
Hugh Higinbotham
Collin Lewin
Joshua Lin
Ziming Liu
James McGreivy SM
Nisarga Paul
Matthew Peters
Zhiquan Sun
Weiran Xu

FEBRUARY 2026

Jack Bolster
Eric Michaud
Benjamin Reichelt
Anna Simpson SM
Xirui Wang

MAY 2026

Magdalena Allen
Elba Alonso-Monsalve
Sean Benevedes
Kai-Feng Chen
Zhuo Chen

Chung-Tao Chou
David DePalma
Raymond Diab
Dominika Durovcikova
Tonghang Han
Jack Heinzl
Deepti Kannan
Abijith Krishnan
Boning Li
Daniel Mark
Ethan Marx
Megan Masterson
Marianne Moore
Khachatur Nazaryan
Darcy Newmark
Meredith Neyer

Kyoung Hun Oh
Botond Oreg
Sal Pace
Sangeon Park
Aidan Reddy
Jared Rivera
Tzu-An Sheng
Jasmine Sinanan-Singh
Haochen Wang
Philip Weigel
Laurel White
Jixiang Yang
Yunchao Zhang