



## Sailing into the Future

“Fran Charles has enriched lives at MIT and across the Greater Boston community through the sport of sailing. By championing community partnerships that emphasize accessibility and inclusion, he has brought sailing to all. At the same time, he has elevated the competitive performance of MIT varsity sailors nationally. An endowed coaching position named in Fran’s honor will recognize the tremendous legacy he has established.”

G. Anthony Grant, PhD

Director of Athletics

MIT Department of Athletics,  
Physical Education and  
Recreation

Sails dotting the Charles River in front of the Great Dome form an iconic view of MIT. For the more than 2,000 members of the MIT community each year who take to the river in boats, sailing is a beloved activity. MIT’s recreational sailing program, with a fleet of more than 100 boats, offers free lessons that have enabled generations of students, faculty, alumni, and staff to learn an enjoyable lifelong skill. The MIT Wood Sailing Pavilion, built in 1935, is considered the birthplace of US intercollegiate sailing, and MIT hosts more collegiate regattas than any other site in the country.

### **Honoring a great mentor while ensuring long-term continuity in coaching**

After more than 30 years as the guiding force behind the MIT Sailing program, Cucchiaro Family Sailing Master Fran Charles is retiring in June 2023.

In honor of Charles’s impact at MIT on and off the water, the Institute has created an opportunity to endow a sailing head coach position in his name. Support for this vital role in the Department of Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation will help to sustain the sailing program by ensuring a source of annual funds in perpetuity and will extend Charles’s remarkable legacy for generations to come.

Above: An iconic view of MIT: With a fleet of more than 100 boats, MIT’s recreational sailing program enables students, faculty, alumni, and staff to learn an enjoyable lifelong skill.

## FRAN CHARLES'S LEGACY: SAILING FOR ALL

Over the past 25 years, MIT has consistently been among the top-20 sailing schools in the country across all divisions. MIT Sailing is a development program: many of the All-Americans MIT has produced had never been in a sailboat before arriving on campus.

All MIT students are eligible for sailing cards, and thousands each year make use of the more than 100 sailboats in the MIT fleet. The varsity sailing coach plays a critical role in the daily operations of the Sailing Pavilion, teaching daily physical education and wellness classes and coaching the sailing teams each afternoon and every weekend during the season. Coaches are some of the closest and most influential mentors in students' lives at MIT.

Fran Charles came to MIT in 1992 as a varsity sailing coach and assistant to former longtime sailing master Hatch Brown. Today, as Cucchiaro Family Sailing Master, he is responsible for the entire MIT recreational sailing program and is an integral part of the success of MIT varsity sailing. He is only the fourth sailing master at MIT since 1935.

On the water, Charles competed for the national sailing team and the US Olympic team, winning US and North American titles, earning a silver medal at the Pan American Games, and finishing fourth, sixth, and eighth in the World Championships. A member of the Inter-Collegiate Sailing Association Hall of Fame, he is a recipient of the Graham Hall Award for Outstanding Service by a college sailing professional.

Over the years, Charles has taught sailing to city children as a director of the Courageous Sailing Center in Boston, has managed the sailing competition for the Massachusetts Special Olympics, and has led many clinics, seminars, and competitions for junior sailors in the area.

Creating an endowed head sailing coach position will ensure funding for this important role in perpetuity. Naming the position after Fran Charles is a fitting tribute to a wonderful coach and mentor who has brought sailing to all at MIT.



Fran Charles, the Cucchiaro Family Sailing Master, has been responsible for the MIT recreational sailing program and an integral part of MIT varsity sailing's success.

### To further discuss this opportunity, contact:

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### Learn more:

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