

LETTER FROM THE

# president

“Scientists may come and scientists may go, but Ampere is always current.”

This was one of the submissions to the annual freshmen joke contest.



Our 485 new students represent the largest freshmen class in recent IIT history. In one of my favorite orientation weekend traditions, the freshmen compete to win a bookstore gift certificate by coming up with the corniest joke. (We like to take it easy on freshmen during their first days at IIT—after all, things get a lot tougher in the coming four years.) The winner: “What happened to the frog that parked illegally? It was toad!” This was submitted by Ben Jakobcic, an aerospace engineering major from Royal Oaks, Mich.

What I enjoy even more than announcing the winning freshmen class joke is the opportunity to meet our new students as they embark on one of the most exciting journeys of their lives. And of course, I am honored that these talented young adults have chosen to study at IIT. It is always very rewarding to hear their goals and ambitions, and to remind them of the many ways that IIT will enrich them intellectually and personally, and provide them with the tools for a lifetime of learning and achievement.

As the stories in this issue of *IIT Magazine* demonstrate, IIT’s people give our new students much to be excited about. For example, our faculty members across the disciplines are providing leadership to help the United States manufacturing sector advance its global positioning, both by advancing design at our Institute of Design and through the Manufacturing Productivity Center, spearheaded by Professor Keith McKee. Our Mathematics and Science Education department, under the leadership of Professor Norman Lederman, is developing targeted programs and partnerships to improve the quality of secondary math and science teaching and learning. And our faculty are creating sustainable energy alternatives, working with government and private industry to teach them how these alternatives can help counter rising gas prices as well as a deteriorating global environment; a story about the recent sustainability efforts of Professor Said Al-Hallaj appears in this issue.

Our returning students are also a source of great pride, exemplified by a group of committed student-leaders responsible for a campaign to “bring back The Bog,” a venue that holds nostalgic value for many of you. We are moving this project forward with great anticipation, in the confidence that this “new” facility will once again serve as a gathering space for alumni, students, faculty, and staff when it reopens early next year.

As we enter a new academic year, I look forward to introducing you to the countless students, faculty, and alumni who, through their important academic, research, and civic work, are shining examples for the entire IIT community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lew Collens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lew Collens  
President