

## MIT accepts first Classical grad in over two decades

By David Liscio / The Daily Item

LYNN - Classical High School student Mina Healey is still beaming from news of her acceptance by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as an incoming freshman come September.

No student from the high school has been admitted to MIT in more than 20 years, according to Classical High guidance counselor Franlinette Khuon.

"We are very excited for her and for the school," Khuon said.

The academically charmed 18 year old lives on Sunnyside Road with her parents, Tim and Yassamin Healey, and sister Nadia, 12, a Breed Junior High seventh-grader.

At last count, Healey was maintaining a 4.58 grade point average (GPA) and boning up on advanced placement courses that will push her ahead at MIT.

"I'm so glad I went for early admission," she said during an interview last Wednesday. "It takes away a lot of stress."

Born in Cambridge, Healey's family moved to Lynn when she was in the first grade where she enrolled at Sewall-Anderson Elementary School.

Both parents are professional chefs, her father at MIT and her mother is currently a server at Boston's Clio restaurant.

"My parents met when they were at the Cambridge Culinary Institute. My mother is from Iran. My father is from Melrose," she said, seemingly amused by the family's international flavor.

Ironically she does not want to follow her parents' footsteps.

"Not at all. I definitely don't want to be a chef. I want to become an architect," said Healey.

She recalled relishing playing the Sim City computer game that allows users to virtually design and build communities on the screen.

"My mother's friend, Nader Tehrani, has an architectural firm in Boston, so my interest has been there, too," she said.

Healey's favorite classes are calculus, taught by teacher Chelsea Christian, and Latin, by Daniel McNeill.



Lynn Classical student Mina Healey, shown here beside a statue of the school's trademark ram, is bound for MIT this fall. (Item Photo / Owen O'Rourke)

"This is my third year taking Latin with Mr. McNeill. I really enjoy the class," she said.

When not in class, Healey is busy with other school activities. She is a member of the Science Club, History Club, and the Classical High School College Bowl.

She was treasurer and secretary of the student government in her junior year. She was also elected president of the National Honor Society at Classical High, president of the Classical Key Club, and represents the school on the Northeast Regional Student Advisory Council.

With such an astronomical GPA, she is vying with one other student for the rank of valedictorian.

When not in school, she attends community meetings to voice her opinions on education on the North Shore.

She also volunteers at the My Brother's Table soup kitchen in Lynn, the local homeless shelter, and at Bridgewell, a social service organization where she serves food, cleans kitchens and helps to host dances for mentally challenged clients.

Additionally, she has worked at the Tree of Life Pantry, organizing donations of meals to families in need during the holidays, and participated in the Relay for Life cancer research fund raiser.

Healey's academic accomplishments haven't been all about math and science. She attended the film school at the RAW Art Works studio in downtown Lynn where she collaborated on a film-making project that was shown at the Peabody Essex Museum.

Most days, Healey hangs out with her boyfriend, Sokheng Keo, a Classical High School senior ranked No. 10 in the class and bound for Boston College. She studies, but not for hours at a stretch.

"For fun, I really like to shop," Healey said.

Asked what advice she might impart to younger high achievers, she said, "Lots of kids slack off in middle school, but that's when you really need to start making things happen."

Healey said school has kept her schedule packed, but she managed to work delivering the Daily Item in the eighth and ninth grades.

Classical High Principal Eugene Constantino described Healey as a star, a model for others and a shining example of what students can achieve.

"She got started early," he said. "She didn't wait until junior year. By then it's too late because if you haven't taken AP algebra you can't take geometry. She did it right."