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MIT student suicide is third of school year



By **Kiera Blessing**

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT MARCH 01, 2015

For the third time this school year, a student of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology took his own life, officials said.

Matthew L. Nehring, a freshman from Colorado, died in an apparent suicide early Sunday, MIT president L. Rafael Reif wrote in an e-mail to the school Sunday.

“In this moment of tragedy, we extend heartfelt sympathies to Matthew’s family and friends,” Reif said. A community gathering will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the Memorial Lobby of Building 10.

Cambridge police responded to an address on Vassar Street for a “sudden death” about 1:40 a.m. after being notified by campus police, Jeremy Warnick, spokesman for Cambridge police, said in an e-mail.

Nehring’s death follows the apparent suicides of two students in September. Austin Travis, a 26-year-old graduate student studying chemistry, died Sept. 3, and Phoebe Wang, a



sophomore studying mechanical engineering, died Sept. 23.

Additionally, another graduate student and a professor have committed suicide since March 2014.

MIT is known to have one of the nation's most comprehensive counseling programs. Some improvements were made following a series of suicides over the last several decades, including that of Elizabeth Shin, who died in 2000. Her parents sued the university, alleging that MIT didn't do enough to protect her. The lawsuit was settled in 2006.

The university is currently battling a similar lawsuit, filed in 2011 by the family of Han Duy Nguyen. A 25-year-old doctoral student, Nguyen jumped to his death in 2009. The family has also sued two professors and an associate dean.

In his e-mail, Reif encouraged students to reach out for psychological support services by contacting MIT's Mental Health Services.

Matt Rocheleau of the Globe staff contributed to this report. Kiera Blessing can be reached at kiera.blessing@globe.com.



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