A number of publishers who provide new books to the Sabre Book Program do so in the form of unsorted donations. In particular, Sabre takes in substantial quantities of books and CD-ROMs in the areas of science, technology and medicine this way. These materials are in high demand overseas, since they feature current editions covering a wide range of titles. Because the Sabre warehouse staff is busy pulling and packing orders from partners overseas, the additional work needed to screen, sort and inventory these invaluable books has required the efforts of dedicated volunteer groups. Most notably, a group of MIT graduate students who form the organization ASPIRE (American Students Promoting IRAqi Education) has spent a considerable portion of their available time at Sabre’s warehouse in Lawrence, MA, processing these books for shipments to universities and medical schools in countries around the world, including Iraq. A number of the individuals involved are profiled below; their statements reflect not only the wide variety of backgrounds from which they come, but also their shared understanding of the important role books have played in their own lives and the necessity of helping make high-quality educational resources available to their fellow students in other countries.

Maha J. Issa Malaika, Humphrey Fellow, Department of Urban Studies and Planning (from Iraq)
I was very much interested in joining the volunteering work in Sabre Foundation, due to the noble goal of supporting education in developing countries and especially Iraq which faced years of shortage in scientific books.

Burhan Saifaddin, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Materials Engineering (from Mecca, Saudi Arabia)
I study organic solar cells in the materials engineering department. I want to help the community of Iraqi students who are re-building their country and society. Our work could have an impact on their future.

Sarah Nothnagel, Ph.D. Candidate in Aeronautics and Astronautics (from California)
I am from Riverside, California, and I'm a first-year grad student in Aeronautics and Astronautics. I've always believed that education is the best way to open up new opportunities in life. But I've had the advantage of growing up in the United States, with easy access to so many excellent educational resources, and I think it's important to remember not to take that for granted. Volunteering with ASPIRE and the Sabre Foundation is a way for me to do my part in extending these resources and opportunities to people around the world.

Jonathan Tong, Ph.D. Candidate in Mechanical Engineering (from Ashburn, Virginia)
I initially volunteered for ASPIRE as part of MIT's graduate student volunteer day. But, following my first experience, I was amazed at how sorting textbooks, a seemingly small act, could have such a profound impact in providing institutions in need with thousands of textbooks.
Given the goals of this organization and the people who comprise it, I've felt compelled to continue volunteering since!

Ari Le, Ph.D. Candidate in Plasma Physics  
(from New York City)  
My favorite textbooks each took months to study, and they continually occupy my home and office for frequent reference. I am happy to volunteer with Sabre knowing it will provide someone else with the everyday tools of scientific scholarship and technical training that I take for granted.

Mike Szulczewski, Ph.D. Candidate in Civil and Environmental Engineering  
I'm currently working on a PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering at MIT. Before starting MIT, I worked and studied at a few places around the world, and my current research has an international focus. I volunteer with Sabre because it helps me give back to the world some of the education it has given to me.

Adrian Liu, Ph.D. Candidate in Astrophysics  
(from Hong Kong)  
I'm originally from Hong Kong, but I now study astrophysics at MIT. I volunteer with SABRE for two very simple reasons. First, I consider the donation of books to developing countries an unequivocally good cause. Moreover, the process itself is fun for us participants, so there is really no reason for us not to!

Cornwall Lau, Ph.D. Candidate in Plasma Physics  
(from Canada.)  
In this knowledge economy, information and knowledge provided by books are an invaluable part of improving everyday lives. Volunteering with Sabre helps keep this information highway flowing to all regions of the world.

Matt Landreman, Ph.D. Candidate in Plasma Physics  
(from St. Paul, Minnesota.)  
Much of my own interest in science can be traced to the inspiring books I had a chance to read as a child, and I'm sure the other MIT volunteers had the same experience. Even today, in this age of PDF files, and at an institution synonymous with "high-tech," we all rely daily on good old-fashioned hard-copy books to do our jobs. If developing nations are to innovate their way to prosperity and growth, it is essential that students and professionals there have a similar access to information and ideas. The other MIT volunteers and I are therefore delighted to work with Sabre to share our wealth of books and information with innovators around the world.

For additional information, please contact:

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