

## Creation of The Mary Rowe Fund for Conflict Management



*Pictured left to right: Valeria Degroof, Mary Rowe, Jean-Jacques Degroof*

Cambridge, MA., November 1, 2015— The MIT Institute for Work and Employment Research (IWER) has recently received a very generous gift from Jean-Jacques and Valeria Degroof to support Mary Rowe's current research and to support faculty and student activities that apply and further develop tools and systemic approaches to address micro and macro sources of conflict and ways to resolve them equitably in organizations, labor markets, communities and societies.

To those of you who may not have the privilege and honor of knowing Mary, she is

perhaps the world's most highly respected, experienced, and accomplished Ombudsperson, having served in this role with distinction at MIT for forty years. She is a founder of the Ombuds Association and helped mentor countless colleagues as they shaped this role over the years. She is best known for her work on providing multiple options for resolving workplace conflicts, options that together comprise a "systems approach" to conflict management and resolution.

Mary also served Sloan as a masterful teacher over many years. She developed and taught, to rave student reviews/evaluations, the course 15.667 Negotiations and Conflict Management. That course used cases she wrote based on her experiences to create negotiation simulations for students to apply the conflict resolution tools and options that make up a comprehensive system.

So we are very proud to have Mary as a long-term colleague in IWER and at Sloan and are delighted she now is devoting her time to reflecting, researching, and writing up her experiences in ways that will help others to better address the ranges of conflicts that occur in workplaces today.

In addition to supporting Mary's research on her experiences, we anticipate using the fund to:

- host conferences on state-of-the-art organizational conflict management practices;
- review the contributions Sloan School faculty and students have made and continue to make today to the study of diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity;
- develop case studies illustrating the use of effective negotiations and problem-solving tools to resolve conflicts arising in workplaces around the globe;
- examine the potential of the many new approaches that are emerging for workers to express their voice at work and in their communities and societies;
- build exercises and simulations for teaching effective negotiations and conflict management in classroom and online settings;
- bring together business, labor, government, and community leaders to explore how to better address the critical workplace issues of the day.

These are just some initial ideas of how faculty and students, working with Mary and working with Mary's ideas, could advance the cause of effective management and resolution of workplace conflicts and challenges occurring across the globe today. We invite other ideas for ways to use this fund advance these causes.

We can think of nothing better, nor a better place than IWER, to honor Mary's contributions and to put them to work, in new ways, for those who need them—wherever they happen to be in the world.