

## MIT professors to speak at forum

By Billy Chamberlin

Taiwan's efforts to move towards a knowledge-based economy, as heralded by President Chen Shui-bian, has become the focus of the Epoch Foundation and is the topic for the foundation's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary forum to be held today.

Held in conjunction with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the forum will feature MIT professors speaking on subjects ranging from global trends in venture capital and the world of biotechnology to the impact of globalization and corporate competitive strategies.

The Epoch foundation's relationship with MIT stretches back to the founding days of Epoch in 1990, and Taiwan boasts nearly 400 MIT alumni. The foundation has facilitated various types of cooperation between MIT and local industries, academia and government agencies.

"Epoch has been a true catalyst, and let me emphasize the word 'catalyst,' in introducing us to Taiwan companies," said Charles Vest, president of MIT, adding that MIT has worked with various Taiwan companies in fields ranging from IT to microphotonics.

Supported by 20 companies, such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), Acer Inc. and Shin Kong Life Insurance, Epoch's mission is to combine the resources of the private sector with the world's best academic institutions to enhance research on Taiwan's economic issues. The foundation also hopes to facilitate the island's economic development by opening up windows to advanced technologies and management trends.

MIT Provost Robert Brown, who will be speaking at today's forum on biotechnology, came to Taiwan in the early '90s thanks to Epoch, when he was a professor of chemical engineering at MIT. "I came to understand Taiwan's chemical industry and out of that came a deeper understanding of the island's economic issues," he said.

To the foundation's credit, when MIT announced the Oxygen Alliance to the world in June of last year, two Taiwan companies, Acer Inc. and Delta Electronics, were invited to join the alliance alongside Nokia, Philips, and Hewlett-Packard, to

jointly develop the next generation of computers.

Epoch attributes part of this success to the close working relationship the foundation has formed with MIT and Taiwan's IT industries. Epoch's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration will run from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. today at the Grand Formosa Regent Hotel Taipei.