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The UMass/Boston Friday Report #6

News and information about and for
the Community from the Chancellor's Office

December 6, 1991

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Students in the Rainforest -- Several faculty members will accompany 12 seventh-graders and 4 teachers from three Boston junior high schools when they visit Costa Rica for ten days in the middle of February to study that nation's rainforests. The trip is the highlight of the first year of a UMass/Boston program -- The Rainforest Collaboration -- designed to encourage minorities to study the sciences. Students and teachers from Grover Cleveland, Martin Luther King, Jr. and John W. McCormack schools in Dorchester will fly to Costa Rica on February 16th to participate in a series of instructional programs at the Wilson Botanical Garden. Their trip is underwritten in part by the Education Foundation of America, which recently awarded the University a grant of \$159,460 to establish a two-year program to help persuade minority students that learning about science can be both fun and interesting.

Nearly all of the students who are flying to Costa Rica are black, Latino or Asian, reflecting the composition of the student populations at their schools. During their visit they and their teachers will acquire first-hand experience in dealing with the biological issues of the tropical rainforest by observing many of the 300 bird species, 80 species of mammals, 71 different reptiles and nearly 2,000 kinds of plants that thrive on the 335 acres of the Wilson Botanical Garden. The students and teachers will focus their attention on the destruction caused to Costa Rica's tropical rainforests by the farming, cattle and logging industries. The trip to Costa Rica is only one of the educational activities proposed by The Rainforest Collaboration. Since September, faculty from the participating schools have been meeting with UMass/Boston faculty to discuss strategies for integrating education about rainforests into their regular classroom curricula.

"The goal of the project is to encourage minority and young women students who possess curiosity and talent to pursue science studies and science-related careers," says **Joan C. Tonn**, a College of Management professor and chief coordinator of the program. "In addition, we want participating students and their teachers to gain an appreciation for ecology, biodiversity and the protection of the environment." Besides Tonn, three other members of the University community are working for the project. They are biology professor **Robert Stevenson**, who will direct the students in field site studies and conduct workshops for the teachers; biology professor **Kamal Bawa**, the project's senior scientist, who pursues research in the biodiversity of rainforests; and **Lucia Mayerson-David**, staff associate at the University's Institute of Learning and Teaching (ILT) and director of the TAG and Alerta enrichment programs for Latino students, who is in charge of developing relationships between The Rainforest Collaborative and Boston school administrators and teachers. Bates College biologist **Sharon Kinsman**, a specialist in tropical biology and president of the International Children's Rainforest Project, and Professor Ann Lewis of UMass/Amherst, are project consultants. (OVER)

Friday Report Cont'd

McCormack Institute News -- The McCormack Institute has awarded five faculty members grants to conduct research in applied public policy. The recipients and their research proposals are **Paul Benson**, Sociology, *Family Care of the Mentally Ill: A Public Policy Perspective*; **James Campen**, Economics, *Analysis of Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (MHDA) Data for Boston*; **Phyllis Freeman**, CPCS, *Immunization of Children: Policy Implications*; **Richard Keith**, College of Management, *Study of Medicaid Eligible Services in Massachusetts*; **Bette Woody**, CPCS, *Community Economic Development Policy Using Airport Expansion as a Catalyst*. • For the last three years, the McCormack Institute has been working with the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Administration and Finance to bring about more efficient management of federal entitlement programs in various state agencies. This UMass/Boston project is a very successful attempt to maximize revenues for the state. To date, the Institute has been responsible for identifying at least \$150 million in both cost savings and opportunities for generating new non-tax income to shore up Massachusetts' beleaguered budget.

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Campus Notes -- The Environmental Sciences Program and the Biology Department invite the University Community to a seminar by **Paul F. Kingston**, one of the world's foremost authorities on the impact of oil spills on the environment, at 4 p.m., Tuesday, December 10th, in Snowden Auditorium. Kingston, assistant director of the United Kingdom Institute of Offshore Engineering, will be discussing *Recovery of Alaska's Prince William Sound from the 1989 Oil Spill*. • The state's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs has selected the Urban Harbors Institute as the agency that will determine how \$338,000 in Massachusetts Bays Program grants should be used to conduct research on the water quality of both Massachusetts and Cape Cod bays, and on the water quality of rivers feeding into them. • **Eric Robinson**, History, will be spending his sabbatical next semester as a visiting professor at Anglia Polytechnic in Chelmsford, Essex, England. He is in the midst of editing an eight-volume collection of the poems of John Clare (1793-1864). • Management College Dean **Daniel G. Shimshak** is now coordinating a statistical study of temporomandibular joints disorders for the Jaw Joints and Allied Musculo-Skeletal Disorders group, which is investigating the impact of the disorders on both patients and their health insurers. • **Carmelo Bazzano**, Nursing, presented a paper November 8th to the New England College of Sport Medicine on *The Relationship of Physical Fitness and Blood Pressure in Children*. • **Morton A. Myers**, manager of the federal General Accounting Offices' regional branch, will be working with Continuing Education for the next year in its Auditor's Institute, a training program for private and public sector professionals. His salary will be paid by the GAO under a law allowing federal employees to take on temporary assignments for state and local government entities, including higher education institutions. • The Department of Health and Human Services has given **Robert Weiss** of the Work and Family Research Program a \$334,866 grant to evaluate a pilot program that helps divorced parents work together to care for their children. The study is being conducted in cooperation with the Family Relations Clinic at Middlesex Probate Court, which administers the program. The research project's goal is to learn more about the problems of parents who live in different households.