CSDE Researchers Help Expand Anti-Violence Program in Dorchester and Roxbury

By Kari Russ

As city officials and residents look for ways to reduce a surge in gun violence, they’re considering a program currently being evaluated by researchers from the Center for Social Development & Education.

The Holland Community Center in Dorchester will become the latest site to host the Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP), which has been implemented at two Boston Centers for Youth and Family (BCYF) this year in an effort to reduce violence in Boston.

The privately funded program, which is run by Teen Empowerment and BCYF calls on Boston youth to champion the message of nonviolent conflict resolution by conducting workshops within their communities.

Drawing on both the Teen Empowerment model and the HIPP curriculum’s focus on promoting peace, CSDE helped create a program that emphasizes the involvement of youth as agents of positive social change.

“By utilizing evidence-based practices, we can ensure that we are promoting strategies for positive youth development and violence prevention that are effective,” said UMass Boston Assistant Professor of Counseling and School Psychology Melissa Pearrow, Boston mayor Thomas M. Menino, Boston Centers for Youth and Families administrator Selvin Chambers, and UMass Boston’s Center for Social Development & Education director Gary Siperstein at an April 5 community meeting about violence prevention at the Holland Elementary School. (Photo by Harry Brett)

PTSD and New Veterans

On May 11, the William Joiner Center is hosting a conference on Post Traumatic Stress and the New Veterans to discuss how to help veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. See page 8 for details on this and other events in May.

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Spring Enrichment Week 2007 offered a range of lectures, performances, and community service activities both on and off campus.

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More than just books, Healey Library adds new technology to aid research efforts by students, faculty and staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

By Ed Hayward

The list of endowed professorships and chairs at the University of Massachusetts Boston also includes the John Joseph Moakley Chair of Peace and Reconciliation, a distinguished professorship within the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies.

Longtime McCormack researcher and editor Padraig O’Malley has been named to the chair, endowed in memory of the late congressman from South Boston who advocated not only the human rights for people across the globe.

“He is a teacher, scholar, public intellectual, conciliator, peace activist, and editor-chronicler. Congressman Moakley would be proud that the chair that bears his name is first occupied by his friend Padraig.”

“Congressman Moakley lived by his friend and fellow congressman Tip O’Neill’s credo that ‘all politics is local.’ It is fitting that the university and generous supporters have established the Moakley Chair at the McCormack Graduate School, the premier center for scholarship on social issues affecting Boston and the Commonwealth,” McCormack Dean Steve Crosby said. “Padraig O’Malley is a scholar and chronicler worthy of the honor of being the first to hold the Moakley Chair.”

Congressman Moakley was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1972 and served until his death in 2001. In addition to serving as chairman of the powerful House Rules Committee, Moakley investigated the murder of six Jesuit priests in El Salvador, opening the way to a peaceful settlement between the rebels and the Salvadoran government.

The Moakley Chair was funded via gifts from private donors, corporations, foundations, and the state’s public higher education endowment incentive program. Lead donors for this initiative were: Joseph Corcoran, the Es- tate of John Corcoran, Richard Egan, the John Joseph Moakley Charitable Foundation, Liberty Mutual, and Sovereign Bank New England.

Frederick W. Clark Jr., presi-

(Continued on page 4)

UMass Boston Adds the John Joseph Moakley Chair of Peace and Reconciliation to Endowed Professorships

Padraig O’Malley (left), the John Joseph Moakley Distinguished Professor of Peace and Reconciliation, and McCormack Graduate School Dean Steve Crosby. The school’s Moakley Chair is the latest addition to the university’s distinguished professorships. (Photo by Harry Brett)
Q & A with Trotter Institute Director Barbara Lewis

By Jennifer Rosinski

A former reporter, Barbara Lewis jumped at the chance to lead The William Monroe Trotter Institute at UMass Boston. The 23-year-old institute, which works to address the needs of the black community in Boston and beyond, was named for an African-American journalist who founded The Boston Guardian newspaper in 1901.

Lewis came to the institute from the University of Kentucky in Lexington, where she was chair of the Theater Department, and brought with her a depth and breadth of life experience culled from her early years in New York and South Carolina and high school at a French convent in Montreal, Canada. Since her arrival three years ago she has immersed herself and the institute into the most pressing issues of Boston’s African-American community, from health care and housing to jobs and justice.

Q: How does your background as a professor of theater arts and a writer for the black press fit into your work as the director of the Trotter Institute?

A: For me one of the really exciting things about the theater is it can take on any subject. It has a wide lens. That’s one of the reasons I feel I can walk into a situation, ask questions about it, and find out what’s important. And in terms of being a writer, I want to look at a situation, understand it, and be able to translate it for a target audience.

Q: The Trotter Institute is in the middle of a series of roundtable discussions about issues confronting Boston’s African-American community. Is there a risk in holding discussions about neighborhood crime or the quality of education focused on a single ethnic group?

A: For the institute not to find out and not to look at what the most important issues are, that’s where the risk would be. For me, looking at the issues and trying to find a way to make a positive change—that outweighs any risk there might be.

Q: What has changed at the Trotter Institute in the three years you’ve served as director?

A: We’re trying to bring different groups together, groups within the university and groups outside the university. I want to hear the voices that matter on a particular subject and learn where do we go from here. What the Trotter would like to move toward creating is a place where people can talk to each other so the voices aren’t competing, so they are a choir.

Q: What is your view on the place the Trotter Institute should occupy in the broader Boston community?

A: It can serve as a forum for issues that have to do with equality, that have to do with justice. Unfortunately, Boston is a very segregated city. It’s split along race lines and I think a dialogue has to go on along those lines. I see Trotter as a place where that dialogue can be encouraged.
A century-old mathematical problem that may help solve the mysteries of the universe and lead to new breakthroughs in science, engineering, and finance has been computed by an international group of mathematicians, including UMass Boston professor Alfred Noel.

“It is a mathematical break-through that may change the way mathematicians and scientists approach research,” Noel said.

Noel is one of 18 mathematicians, mostly U.S.-based, who worked for four years to unravel E8, a calculation so large that, if it was printed out, would cover the island of Manhattan. A mathematician-programmer, Noel’s role within the group was to develop mathematical techniques that could be programmed on a computer, most importantly an algorithm that computed “standard representations.”

In basic terms, E8 is a mathematical tool to study symmetry. A 248-dimensional structure, E8 is the most complicated of the so-called Lie groups, named for the 19th-century Norwegian mathematician who first studied them. Cylinders, cones, and balls — which remain symmetrical under one degree of rotation — are examples of Lie groups.

“A thorough understanding of such symmetries will help mathematicians tackle numerous unsolved problems,” said Noel.

Among those problems is the unified theory — better known as the theory of everything — which physicists have sought for nearly two centuries, and could also aid research by Noel’s colleagues in the Mathematics and Computer Science Department at UMass Boston.

Noel, who joined the research team in February of last year, currently splits his time between teaching calculus and probability and statistics courses at UMass and conducting research at MIT, where he is a visiting scholar.

Working with a driven group of researchers, including one of his mentors, Massachusetts Institute of Technology mathematics professor David Vogan, is nothing new for Noel, who said he is constantly challenged by UMass math professor Steven Jackson in their representation theory research group.

His role on the dream team, he said, is “business as usual.”

The discovery is part of a larger project funded by the National Science Foundation. Called the Atlas of Lie Groups and Representations, it aims to solve one of math’s greatest problems, “the determination of the unitary dual,” and provide computing software.

“The E8 computation, although exceptional, is only the first step in a vast and complex program which will last for several years,” Noel said. “This is one of the most important problems in mathematics or even in all the so-called hard sciences. This is the Holy Grail of representation theory.”

Before joining the Department of Mathematics at UMass in 1998, Noel was a research engineer at Peritus Software Services in Billerica and a lecturer at local colleges and universities.

Noel’s research on representation theory of Lie groups and math education has been published in dozens of mathematics journals, including Experimental Mathematics and the Journal of Algebra. In 2005 and 2004, he was honored with outstanding achievement awards in research (jointly with Professor Steven Jackson) by UMass.
Healey Library Rewrites Its Service Script

By Alia Anor Akaeze and Kim Trauenieck

This spring, UMass Boston's Joseph P. Healey Library is embarking on an exciting journey to embrace state-of-the-art information-delivery techniques, transforming the library into a dynamic, full-service information resource that can better serve the increasingly complex research demands of 21st-century students and faculty.

"This last year has been one of long-overdue philosophical changes in the academic library world, rethinking how libraries present and deliver instructional resources to the communities they serve," said University Librarian Daniel Ortiz. "The Healey Library is embracing some of this new philosophy, taking advantage of the same digital spaces and tools many students and faculty already know and trust."

Ortiz and his staff have carefully selected low-cost, high-end delivery systems and software that can be used by every student or faculty member, including several easy-to-use guides.

"In addition to our collection, the Healey Library provides services that go beyond the level of most university libraries in New England at this time," said Ortiz. "Thanks to the dedication of our staff, in particular the Reference Outreach and Instruction (ROI) department, most student or faculty requests for assistance—at the 4th-floor Reference Desk or via 24/7— are addressed through 'how-to' presentations and a cooperative research strategy design that incorporates Wiki spaces, VOMP, cutting-edge software, and other Internet resources.

"Our librarians are not just using technology to find and access information," continued Ortiz. "They are collaborating with students and faculty to help them push their research farther than they might have thought possible."

The Healey Library also recently acquired the answering software that will further revolutionize library service delivery. This promising new program will allow the Library to record instruction sessions that students will be able to view at their leisure. The software is also being used to preserve presentations by guest speakers, such as the reading by author Alice Mattison, whose recent visit to campus was sponsored by the English Department's MFA program in creative writing.

Ortiz foresees that all of these new services will greatly enhance and enrich the library experience for UMass Boston's constituency. "Students will benefit from expanded research resources that will be available to them off-campus and accessible 24 hours," he said.

George Hart, Associate University Librarian, believes the Library's new philosophy should include helping to develop a dossier that will meet the resource needs for most of the 40 courses required for graduation at the undergraduate level. Planning is also under way to provide graduate students with similar services, emphasizing the use of research resources at Healey Library, the Boston Library Consortium, and other institutions that have cooperative agreements with UMass Boston.

"We want the Healey Library, the only public university library in Boston, to be more than a place where you get books, better than a Google wildcard search," said Hart. "We want it to be a place where minds meet in traditional, innovative ways—where thinking is a constantly evolving blueprint for new learning strategies."

U Mass Boston Political Scientist Focuses on A New Civic Blueprint for Jerusalem

By Jennifer Rosinski

Leila Farsakh has been working with the fight over Jerusalem since the day she was born in Jordan, where her parents fled after the Arab-Israeli War.

Today, the UMass Boston assistant professor of political science co-directing Jerusalem 2050, a project that seeks to provide solutions to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The project's latest initiative has invited experts from around the world to create a vision of Jerusalem not as a battleground, but as a city that serves all of its citizens.

"How can we think of a city that is open to everybody? How can we think beyond a nation-state? How can we get out of the present impasse—of occupation, separation wall, insecurity, and violence—we see today?" said Farsakh, a Palestinian Muslim who visits her relatives in the West Bank every year. "We are all still human beings."

Unlike her family living 15 miles away, Farsakh can visit Jerusalem anytime she wishes. "I have relatives who haven't seen Jerusalem in 15 years. They can't access the city," said Farsakh, who has been living in the United States for seven years.

Launched last month, Jeru-alem 2050: Vision for a Place of Peace challenges the world's greatest minds—especially those from Israel and Palestine—to use imagination and creativity to determine how Jerusalem can become a vibrant and demo- cratic urban center. The project is sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where Farsakh is a research affiliate at the Center for International Studies.

"It has been very challenging to sit down and question our assumptions over what is a just solution," said Farsakh. "We don't know where people's imaginations will go. That's why it's so interesting."

Farsakh isn't entering the contest, but she has her own vision of what Jerusalem should be. For one thing, it's not the two-state solution—separating Israelis and Arabs—which she grew up believing in.

"My ideal is a Jerusalem which is an international city," said Farsakh, who is married to a Christian man and maintains close friendships with people from many religious backgrounds. "Anyone can live there. They should live as equal citizens, not segregated by nationality."

Farsakh has been an assistant professor at UMass for three years, teaching courses on politics in the Middle East and in developing nations. In September she will co-chair "Engaging Islam," a campus conference that will examine the religion's interplay between politics, culture, and identity.

For more information on the Jerusalem 2050 project, go to web.mit.edu/cis/jerusalem2050.

John Joseph Moakley Chair of Peace and Reconciliation the Newest Endowed Professorship

(continued from page 1)

dent of the John Joseph Moak-ley Charitable Foundation and the congressman’s former dis- trict director, said O’Malley’s work struck a chord with the late congressman, whose legacy is marked by a clear understand- ing of the challenges that face working men and women and their families. "Congressman Moakley’s memory is honored by the human stories that Padraig O’Malley has so carefully docu- mented and preserved as an astute researcher during the last two decades," said Clark. "The Moakley Foundation is proud to partner with UMass Boston's McCormack Graduate School to advance scholarship that supports peace and democracy throughout the world."

O’Malley, the founder of the McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies’ New England Journal of Public Policy, which he edited for more than 20 years, has also authored many books, among them the award- winning Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today, Biting at the Grave, and Shades of Difference, which was published in April. Former South African president Nelson Mandela has written a 10,000- word foreword to the book.

This semester O’Malley is delivering four lectures on cam- pus to share lessons from the past and hopes for a peaceful future across three regions of the world—Northern Ireland, South Africa, and the Middle East.

“My great fortune has been to be present where sometime opponents have sought to re- concile their differences and forge peaceful futures for their countries,” said O’Malley. "The words of those participants hold powerful lessons for societies across the world, and my focus at the McCormack Graduate School has been to try to make those lessons available to as many people as possible."

Arts on the Point

Reception

Natascha Sigmund, of the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation, Professor Paul Tucker, Dorothy Lichtenstein, and foundation executive director Jack Coeurt at the newly installed "Brushstroke Group" sculpture by the late Roy Lichtenstein. (Photo by Harry Brett)

On Wednesday, April 11, Dorothy Lichtenstein, official from the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation, and members of the university community cele- brated the installation of Roy Lichtenstein’s “Brushstroke Group” with a Campus Center reception.

The brightly colored alu- minum sculpture, located by the Campus Center lawn, was loaned to the university from the late artist’s foundation and added to UMass Boston’s Arts on the Point public sculpture exhibit. Chancelor Michael E. Collins, MD, and Distinguished Profes- sor of Art Paul Tucker, who secured the sculpture, welcomed Mrs. Lichtenstein, Jack Cowart, executive director of the artist’s foundation, and local patrons of the arts, including university sup- porters Ellen Poss and Barbara Fish Lee.

The sculpture is one of a dozen Lichtenstein works on display around the world. Roy Lichtenstein remains one of the top-selling artists in the world, with his works fetching $59.7 million in 2006, according to a recent report by ArtPrice, which monitors the world’s auctions and sales. Brushstroke Group is the only Lichtenstein sculpture in the Boston area and the most monumental in New England, according to Tucker.
UMass Boston Welcomes Largest Gathering of Accepted Students at 2007 Welcome Day

By Lisa Gentes

The UMass Boston community hosted more than 1,100 visitors March 31—breaking the school’s record for the largest Welcome Day crowd.

At Welcome Day 2007, 541 incoming students and 605 family members flocked to campus to meet with faculty and staff, take tours, and dine with professors and future classmates.

“That is a ‘wow’ when compared to previous years,” said Lisa Johnson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. Last year, Welcome Day attracted 404 accepted applicants and 335 family members, she said.

“This was our largest and most successful Welcome Day ever,” Johnson said.

Over 250 campus volunteers helped out with the event, including the 25-plus-member Welcome Day Committee. “The real drive behind this day is the UMass Boston community, and Enrollment Management has received so much support from the community,” Johnson said. “Everybody on campus has a role.”

The group effort has helped boost the number of students who attend UMass Boston, she said. In fall 2006, the campus received 8,071 applications and 2,477 new students enrolled, up from 6,920 applications and 1,758 new students in fall 2004. “Our Welcome Day this year attracted the largest audience ever, demonstrating that UMass Boston is a clear and first choice for growing numbers of students,” said Kathleen Tehan, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. “The program was also supported by the largest number of UMass Boston faculty and staff ever, a symbol of everyone’s dedication and commitment to the campus.”

A number of efforts have led to the increased enrollment figures. A combination of more marketing, better communication with prospective students, and targeting college deans and faculty on campus have all helped, Johnson said.

“Welcome Day is the day we invite our accepted students to come back to the campus to be able to get to know us a little bit better,” she said. “We know good students are accepted today by multiple institutions; we want them to enroll at UMass Boston.”

The university gives prospective students a chance to get an up-close look at the campus, take tours of nearby housing options, meet with faculty and college deans, get one-on-one financial aid counseling, and talk to members of student organizations in order to learn about life outside of the classroom.

If they really spend some time in our community—it’s such a welcoming community—they will want to join us in the fall,” according to Johnson.

For the last three years, the campus has run Welcome Day as more than an open house, adding more academic touches to the event, she said.

“One of the things I can tell you, our freshmen yield from acceptance to enrollment was 36.4 percent in fall of 2004,” Johnson said. “It was 41.9 percent in fall of 2006. The things we are doing to yield our accepted students are making an impact, because that number has improved very much. We have the best yield in the UMass system.

“Our numbers for this coming fall are looking strong again and it looks like, once again, we will beat our record of new students,” Johnson said. “UMass Boston is definitely a hot campus right now.”

U Mass Boston Community Shows Support for Virginia Tech

By Will Kilburn

Inspired by similar efforts at other college campuses, members of the Student Arts and Events Council led a fundraising and outreach drive in support of their peers at Virginia Tech during the last week of April in the Campus Center.

“Sam and I have a friend who’s at Virginia Tech, so we had been talking to her all day,” said sophomore Hayley Goff. “It just really hit close to home. I saw that BC had a candlelight vigil the next night, and I was like, ‘We have to do something.’”

Their support efforts included ribbons and wristbands in Hokie colors, and a banner of support which by midweek had already been nearly filled with messages of support from the UMass Boston community, including several from people who knew victim Ross Alameddine, a 20-year-old sophomore from Saratoga. The SUAC also held a fundraiser for families of the victims, which raised over $1500 by week’s end.

The fact that it happened hundreds of miles away didn’t matter, said the students. The national tragedy has affected communities far from the sprawling Virginia Tech campus.

“It’s hard, but we’ve got to go on,” said Rincon. “We can’t just sit here and be scared.”

Social Theory Forum Takes New Look at Work of Author Fanon

By Will Kilburn

For a time, the work of Frantz Fanon, who wrote about racism, colonialism, and violence from the 1940s until his death in 1961, was on the verge of going out of style. But at the fourth annual Social Theory Forum, held March 27-28 at UMass Boston, close to 1,000 scholars and students from across the country and around the world took a fresh look at Fanon, who was born in 1925 in the French colony of Martinique, volunteered to fight in World War II, and later became a physician before turning his focus to writing.

“We usually choose figures who are already well known,” said Mohammed Tamdgidi, assistant professor in the Department of Sociology, which organized the event. Previous Forum editions have analyzed the works of Paulo Freire, Edward Said, and Gloria Anzaldúa, creating what Tamdgidi jokes is a kind of “Dead Theorists Society.”

At this year’s Forum, a number of Fanon scholars were pleased to find that Fanon, best known for the books Black Skin, White Masks and The Wretched of the Earth, is back in the spotlight.

“Of the things that I find ironic, and also tragic, is that I don’t think many of his critics today understand that he was hoping that he was wrong,” he said. “He would love nothing more than for us to be able to say, ’Those ideas belong in the 1950s.’ But unfortunately, that’s not so.”

Another Fanon scholar, sociologist professor Marnia Lazreg of the City University of New York’s Hunter College, was also impressed by the number of students who took part in the event, and at the nuanced view many have of Fanon.

“There were people who actually had a critical perspective on Fanon, but not the usually dismissive critical perspective,” she said, also noting the wide range of topics covered at the Forum, from the arts to literature to politics. “There was a whole range of issues that had been addressed which shows how inspiring, for many, Fanon remains.”

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Dr. Robin S. Coding, an assistant professor in the Department of Counseling and School Psychology, is presenting a paper entitled “Different Observation of Treatment Intensity: Assessing Observer Reactivity” at the annual convention for the Association for Applied Behavior Analysis in San Diego, California, on May 27.

Susan DeCato-Medaia, an assistant professor in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, organized and hosted a preconference workshop called “Building Federal Proposals in Community and Family Interdisciplinary Research: Sharing Next Steps and Lessons Learned” at the Eastern Nursing Research Society’s 19th Annual Conference, held April 12-14 in Providence, Rhode Island.

Yung-Ping (Bing) Chen, holder of the Frank J. Manning Eminent Professorship in the College of Management, coordinated a preconference workshop, March 1, sponsored by the Sociology Department at Harvard University.

Sherry Penny, professor of leadership in the College of Management, spoke at Wellesley College on April 20 to the HERs (Higher Education Resources) alumni group. Her topic was “Women and Leadership in Higher Education.” HERs provides executive training to women leaders in postsecondary education.

Milton Butts Jr., an assistant professor in the Sociology Department, presented “Ironies of Incarceration: An Ethnographic Focus on Juveniles” at the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Austin, Texas, in late April.

Assistant Professor Lisa Rivera’s paper “Sacrifices, Aspirations and Morality: Williams Reconsidered” was published in Ethical Theory and Moral Practice, Vol. 10, in February.

Assistant Professor Laurie L. Charles, an assistant professor of psychology, presented a paper on ‘‘Teacher Perceptions of Overt and Relational Aggression: Differences in Perceptions and Referral Rates Based on Student Gender’’ at the American Psychological Association’s annual meeting in New York City.

Professor of English Yung-Ping (Bing) Chen, holder of the Frank J. Manning Eminent Professorship in the College of Management, hosted a preconference workshop, March 1, sponsored by the Sociology Department at Harvard University.

Patricia Gallagher, a senior research fellow at the Center for Survey Research, delivered a paper entitled “Disability: Collecting Self-Reports and Objective Measures from Students” at the 9th Conference on Survey Research Methods. The conference, sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, was held outside Atlanta, Georgia, in March.

Assistant Professor Melissa Pearrow and two graduate students, Sheila Dravz and Brian Irwin, presented a paper entitled “Empowering Youth to Facilitate Change” at the annual convention of the National Association of Community-Based Schools, held in March in New York City.


Dr. Lisa Rivera was awarded the McCormack Graduate School’s Summer Research Grant for her project entitled “The Politics of Revelation: Secret, or University Produced category for the McCormack Graduate School’s Summer Research Grant.

Terryl Bontrager, a lecturer in the Department of Counseling and School Psychology, coordinated a poster session for the graduating students in the School Psychology Program. The poster session was an opportunity for these students to showcase their work in collecting baseline data, implementing an opportunity for these students to present and discuss their findings. The poster session was a success and was highly praised by the attendees.

College of Management associate professor of marketing Raymond Liu spoke at the Harvard China Review Decennial Annual Conference, China Inc. – Build on the Boston Route.

Dr. Alexey Veraksa, an assistant professor in the Biology Department, received a $390,000 National Science Foundation Grant for his research project titled “Molecular Scaffold in Drepanocytosis Signal Transduction.” In March, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the Center for Social Policy $75,000 to provide technical assistance in implementing homeless management information systems (HMIS).

The European Foundation for Management Development, a global organization devoted to the continuous improvement of management development, has selected CMC’s Center for Collaborative Leadership’s Emerging Leaders Program as one of the three finalists to make a presentation at its annual conference in Brussels on June 11.

Carroy U. Ferguson, associate professor at the College of Public & Community Service, has been awarded a fellowship to the President’s Association for筑牢ological Psychology. In that role, he has published two articles, “Path of the Breaker: AHP’s Role in Co-Creating a New Reality” for Human Togetherness and the Evolution of Consciousness” and “The Violence of Transcendental Archetypes: The Psychic Energy at the Core of AHP: President’s Message in AHP Perpsective, a national and international professional publication.

Kathleen Polley, director of the RN-BS online program, was the recipient of the Alfred P. Sloan Award for her research on "The Politics of Child Poverty: A Comparative Perspective on the Role of Child Poverty in the United States and England." The award was presented to her by Jack Leonard, headmaster of the North-South and St. Stephen’s Church, New York City, on May 21.

The University Reporter was the recipient of the 2007 Distinguished Career Award from the American Sociological Association at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in New York City in August.

The Distance Learning Video Production Center recently won two national awards for video production: an Award of Distinction in the College or University Produced Video category in the “2006 Communication Awards Competition” for video production on the project “Latin by the Sea,” and another Award of Distinction in the College or University Produced Video category for its work on the show “How to Parole the D by the Sea” video program.
Young Writers Find Their Voices during the Joiner Center’s Hispanic Writers Week

By Will Kilburn

For the many local students who grow up speaking one language at home and another at school, it can be difficult to see a connection between their classroom lessons and the culture of their homes and neighborhoods.

But during Hispanic Writers Week, sponsored by the William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences, a number of authors fanned out to 22 public schools in Boston, Cambridge, and Chelsea to encourage students to find their voices in both English and Spanish, and show them how to use that knowledge to succeed in the real world.

“We bring writers from different countries who have been through similar experiences to come to Boston, share their skill, share their spirits with children and with the community,” said Jaime Rodriguez, a research coordinator at the Joiner Center. “We want the children to understand how creativity works, and how we experienced what we have, and then share that experience with children, and make them a better human being.”

At the Boston Arts Academy, San Juan, Puerto Rico-based journalist Vionette Negretti spent five days with Carlos Gutierrez’s Spanish 4 students, designed for freshmen who speak both English and Spanish but want to improve their Spanish reading and writing skills.

“The seriousness that they have in learning, the commitment they have to learn the language of their parents or their grandparents, it’s what really keeps me going,” said Gutierrez. “These students, when they make a connection with their parents with the language, they came out of the course with a better understanding of their heritage, with who they are.”

At the beginning of the week, Negretti, who directs the news agency NonRed, told the students about her life and career, and encouraged the students to tell their stories as well, whether it be in an essay, a short story, or a poem. Several of the students, said Negretti, didn’t think they had any writing talent—but they could rap, which was just the opening she needed.

“So I tell them ‘OK, let me hear you rap. Now put it in writing,’ and they turn out to be great poets,” she said. “You should have seen their faces when they realized—it hadn’t occurred to them.”

The lessons continued, with students writing and Negretti offering guidance and help in translating English words and phrases into Spanish. The students then read their work out loud, an experience that nearly overwhelmed Negretti.

“I have seen poems that make you cry, like kids saying ‘The world is full of bullets and knives, and I have to walk around them,’ and everything is death,” she said. “And here they’ve sat down and they wrote poems and essays and short stories, and they’ve had fun.

Many of them, for the first time in their lives, were able to put their feelings in paper.”

At the end of the week, students in each classroom voted on what they felt were the best submissions by their peers, with the top three vote-getters in each school invited to a public reading on Saturday at the conclusion of Hispanic Writers Week, an experience which for many was likely the first time they realized that their voices could and would be heard.

“They need to see that their efforts are not just limited to writing and scribbling on paper, but rather they’re going to make an echo beyond these walls,” said Gutierrez. “They understand their abilities, just because someone has not told them, ‘Yes, you can do it.’”

Kiang Delivers First “Last Lecture”

By Will Kilburn

A new tradition at UMass Boston began on May 3 in the Campus Center: “The Last Lecture,” delivered by the recipient of the Chancellor’s Award for Distinguished Teaching.

The 2007 honoree is Professor Peter N. Kiang of the Curriculum and Instruction Department, who delivered the lecture “Crouching Teachers, Hidden Curricula: Classroom/Community Stories with Vi, Katrina, Tiger, and other Pedagogies of Promise and Persistence” to students, staff, and faculty at the Alumni Lounge.

Other award winners this year are Sociology Professor Russell K. Schutt, who will receive the Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award, and Philosophy Professor Jennifer H. Radden, who will receive the Chancellor’s Distinguished Scholarship Award.

Faculty are not the only university employees to be recognized at the close of the semester: On May 22, Chancellor Collins will award the Chancellor’s Achievement Award, which recognizes individuals from both the professional and classified staff who have demonstrated exceptional innovation, initiative, or service.

The award recipients will receive a $3,000 stipend. The awards ceremony also includes the spring ice cream social.
The Calendar of Events is published monthly by the Office of Marketing and Communications. All events are open to the public and free, unless otherwise noted. From off campus, dial (617) 287-7680 or the last five digits listed below each event.

Please submit calendar list- ings by Friday, May 18, 2007 to umb.edu/news/calendar.

Monday 7
Black Women’s Well-being Group: “How Do Youcope? Different Coping Styles and Strategies?” 3:00 – 4:00 p.m., Campus Center, 2nd floor, room 201B. Black women are invited to come together to engage in a supportive discussion about the ways in which race-re- lated stress, identity, and coping impact psychological well-being. Sponsored by the UHS Counseling Center. For more information, call Brenda Hamady at 7-5690 or email brenda.hamady@umb.edu.

Tuesday 8
A Lecture by Suzanne M. Bump, State Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development: “Women, Work, and Family Across the Life Course” 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., Healey Library, 11th floor conference room. Secretary Bump is expected to address issues related to work-family balance and also discuss the policy priorities of the Patrick administration. For more information, call 7-7501.

Wednesday 9
Eco-tours of UMass Boston 3:00 – 4:00 p.m., Campus Center, 2nd floor, just off campus walkway. Take the eco-tour and learn how you are part of an environmentally responsible campus community. RSVP by phone or email for individuals or groups. For more information, call umbe.green@umb.edu.

Romantic Comedy: The Writings 6:00 p.m., McCormack Hall, 2nd floor, McCormack Theatre. The UMass Boston theatre offers a night of comedy, wit, and romance. Bring a date and come prepared to laugh. Tickets $7 for students, $10 general admission. For more information, call Robert Lublin at 7-5646 or email lublin@umb.edu.

Wednesday 16
Dancing with the Stars of Boston 6:00 – 9:30 p.m., Campus Center Ballroom. Hosted by a television show, this event pairs UMass Boston dance students with celebrities, including former Red Sox pitcher Dennis “Oil Can” Boyd, Miss Massachusetts Despina Louis, WORC’s Julie Devreese, Mt. Washington Bank president Edward Murphy, Channel 5’s Shanay Seymour, comedian Steve Sweeney, and former Patriot Andre Tippett. All proceeds benefit the De- ton Mayor Thomas M. Menino.

UMass Night at the Pops 8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Symphony Hall, Boston. Nobel Laureate Dr. Craig Mello of the University of Massachusetts Medical School will be honored with the President’s Medal, the university’s highest honor, at the event. For more information, go to http://www.mass-achusetts.edu/pops, email popsmail@umb.edu or call 7-3772.

Friday 11
Biology Spring 2007 Seminar Series: “Cell Adhesion and Signaling: Molecular and Developmental Specificity of Diverse Ig-Receptors” 2:30 – 5:30 p.m., Small Lecture Hall 1, 1st floor, room 6 Science Building. Presented by Dr. Dietmar Schramm of the Dana-Farber Cancer Center. All are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served. Call 7-6400 for updates, or visit http://www.bio.umb.edu/events.

Post Traumatic Stress and the New Veterans 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Chancellor’s Conference Room. Hosted by the William Joiner Center, this conference is meant to be an interactive meeting for state veterans outreach providers, VA personnel, and other community professionals to discuss PTSD that is severely impacting the new veterans coming home from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Sunday 13
WUMB’s Commonwealth Journal 7 p.m. on 91.9 FM. Interviews with scholars, writers, and public officials examining current issues or interest to the people of Massachu- setts. Listen online at http://www. wumb.org, or for more information, call 7-4090.

Monday 14
Introduction to American Sign Language 11 a.m. – 12:20 p.m., Campus Center, 3rd floor, room 3001. The Introduction to American Sign Language will be a chance for all to learn a new way to communi- cate, and an opportunity for everyone to learn whether you would like to take a full course in the future. For more information, call Kerri-Anne Bailey and Yu Yau Chong at 7-7965 or email disabilitystudentcenter@umb. edu.

Next month
On a rainy Good Neighbor Day, several volunteers stayed dry in the Campus Center and painted pictures and books for local Jumpstart preschool- ers. Look for a story on their graduation ceremonies next month in the Reporter.

Thursday 10
Yoga for All 2:30 – 3:30 p.m., McCormack Hall, 1st floor, Beacon Fitness Center Aerobics Room. Yoga classes will be provided. Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Students: FREE. Faculty and Staff: $5.00. For more information, go to http://www.umbwellness.org/yoga. htm, or call 7-5680.