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The UMass Boston Friday Report

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

Highest-Ever Summer Enrollment Boosts Program That Helps Latino Children To Succeed Academically

Fifty Latino elementary school students from Boston are participating in Project Alerta this summer, the largest enrollment for the campus-based program since it was founded in 1988. Project Alerta provides talented and gifted Latinos in the 3rd through 5th grades with intensive instruction in a range of academic subjects. Its goal is to prepare Latino children with limited proficiency in English to succeed on the SSAT exam, which is the basis for admission into Boston's three select high schools -- Boston Latin, Boston Latin Academy and John O'Bryant Technical High School.

The program operates both in the summer and during the school year. Over the summer Alerta students attend month-long sessions at the University that run weekdays from 9 a.m. until noon. This summer's session, which concludes July 23, presents courses in mathematics, science, reading, history and geography. Students are also studying the Mayan people of Guatemala; this week they will visit an exhibit on Mayan culture at Harvard University's Peabody Museum. During the school year Alerta students participate in three additional hours of learning each week at their schools. Last year 240 students at seven participating elementary schools took part in Alerta activities, which included academic tracks in creative writing, computers, science and math, drama, and culture. Alerta students come from Dever and Marshall schools in Dorchester, Agassiz and Hennigan in Jamaica Plain, Ellis and Hernandez in Roxbury, and Blackstone in the South End.

"One of the most promising developments in the Alerta program is the strong relationship that we've established with the parents of our students," says project coordinator **Mary Linda Daley**, a staff associate at the Institute for Learning and Teaching. "Many parents are involved in the program as volunteers. They're extremely appreciative of what we're doing." Project Alerta is supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The Boston Public Schools also provide financial support.

Grant to Field Center for Teaching And Learning Will Promote Innovative Ideas of K-12 Teachers

The Massachusetts Field Center for Teaching and Learning at the University has received a \$25,000 grant from the Danforth Foundation to encourage teachers to adopt a team approach to developing new ideas about teaching. Money from the grant to the Massachusetts Academy Leadership Program will be distributed among 20 teachers at public and private schools throughout the state. Beginning in September and continuing during the academic year, these teachers will participate in a series of six symposia at the Harbor Campus. The conferences' objective will be to help teachers improve skills in such areas as grant writing, time management, and to develop strategies for strengthening school-based organizations. In addition to the symposia, the 20 teachers will establish working groups among colleagues at their schools to encourage debate about issues important to

teaching. Topics likely to be discussed: curriculum development, school governance, multiculturalism, staff development and conflict resolution. **Karen O'Connor**, executive director of the Field Center for Teaching and Learning, is directing the Academy Leadership Program. Last year the Center ran a similar program, called the Massachusetts Academy for Teachers and underwritten by a \$471,000 grant from the U. S. Department of Education, to support professional development activities among 125 K-12 teachers.

High School Students Interested in Journalism Learn From Professionals At Annual Summer Workshop

Thirteen high school juniors interested in journalism received pointers from professional reporters and editors during a workshop for minority students held from July 5th to 15th at the University. The students, many of whom are on the staff of their high school newspapers, were instructed on techniques for writing news and feature stories, doing layout and design, writing headlines, editing copy and conducting interviews. Daily sessions were held at the Harbor Campus, and during the program students stayed at Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy. With the assistance of Computing Services, a portion of the University Advising Center was transformed into a newsroom, allowing students to type their stories on word processors similar to those used in newsrooms across the country. Editors and reporters from these news organizations worked with the students: The Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Associated Press, Lawrence Eagle Tribune, Bay State Banner, Patriot Ledger, New Bedford Standard Times and Worcester Telegram and Gazette. UMass Boston political science professor **Paul Watanabe**, an elections specialist who often serves as a commentator on television and radio, also took part.

At the conclusion of the workshop the students published their own newspaper, which was printed at no charge by the Lawrence Eagle Tribune. The theme of the student newspaper was the future economy of New England, and state Senator Dianne Wilkerson and former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis attended the workshop so that students could interview them on the subject. As part of the workshop students also got a chance to tour newspaper facilities at The Boston Globe, Boston Herald and Christian Science Monitor. Besides learning about the news business, they also visited the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum and the Commonwealth Museum, and attended a performance of the Boston Pops at Symphony Hall. Two former workshop students were honored at a July 15 awards ceremony. They are 1988 workshop alumna **Angela Clark** of Dorchester, who went on to graduate from UMass Boston and is now a reporter with The Cape Cod Times, and **David Nunez** of Lawrence, a 1990 workshop participant who is currently student government president at UMass Amherst.

This is the sixth year of the UMass Boston High School Journalism Program. It is coordinated by **Carole Remick**, director of cooperative education/internships at the Advising Center. Contributions supporting the workshop have come from The Associated Press, the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, the Cape Cod Times, the Christian Science Monitor, The Boston Globe, the Boston Herald, the Knight-Ridder Corporation, the Lawrence Eagle Tribune, the Middlesex News, the Patriot Ledger, the New Bedford Standard Times, the Worcester County Newspapers, and the Worcester Telegram Gazette.