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The UMass Boston Friday Report

Volume 3, Number 3
August 13, 1993

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

Group of Japanese Students from Chukyo University Learn English Language and American Culture

Twenty-seven students from Chukyo University in Japan have been at the Harbor Campus taking courses in English and learning about the history and culture of Boston. The majority of the students are undergraduates at Chukyo who are majoring in English language or literature. A few of them are pursuing graduate study in psychology. Beginning on July 18 and continuing through August 6, the Japanese students attended UMass Boston Mondays through Fridays, taking English language courses each morning. Afternoon sessions were devoted to introducing the students to various aspects of local culture and history. Among the places the students have toured are Plymouth Plantation, Lexington and Concord, Harvard Square and Fenway Park. This is the fourth year that students from Chukyo have taken summer courses at the campus. The program is sponsored by the Division of Continuing Education and organized by **Melissa Roberts**, associate director for credit programs. **Michael Buss** provided some of the instruction, and assistance also was given by UMass Boston undergraduate **Matt Twig** of Hingham, president of the campus Japanese Club.

Center for Survey Research Awarded \$700,000 To Study Tobacco Use and Attitudes Toward It

The Center for Survey Research will conduct separate studies of Massachusetts adults and youths to examine the extent of tobacco use, attitudes toward it, and knowledge of its health effects. The Center has received a \$700,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for the studies, which are scheduled to begin October 1. In the first phase of the project University researchers will contact 16,000 Massachusetts households to determine the extent of smoking and smokeless tobacco usage among their 28,000 adult inhabitants who are at least 18 years of age. More intensive interviews will then be conducted with 4,700 adults and 1,500 youths between the ages of 12 and 17. The research is being conducted for the state's Tobacco Control Program, which is charged with reducing tobacco use among state residents and preventing young people from smoking and chewing tobacco. Results of the Center's survey will be used in the planning and subsequent evaluation of programs funded by the Commonwealth to reduce smoking and tobacco chewing.

McCormack Institute Helps Massachusetts Cities and Towns Claim \$30 Million Annually in Federal Medicaid Funds

A team of UMass Boston researchers providing accounting expertise to the Commonwealth has helped develop a program for cities and towns to claim about \$30 million annually in reimbursements from the federal government. The Municipal Medicaid Program (MMP) allows communities to be reimbursed for 50 percent of the money they spend on Medicaid services for special-needs -- Chapter 766 -- students. The state is able to take advantage of the program due to the efforts of the McCormack Institute, the state Medicaid Division and the Department of Education, which have joined together to form the so-called Federal Financial Assistance project. The project part of an ongoing initiative between UMass Boston and the state in which McCormack staff members review the state's financial

records and recommend strategies for implementing cost-saving measures as well as for increasing the amount of federal reimbursement that the state receives.

Principal investigator of the Federal Financial Assistance project is McCormack senior fellow **Mary K. Grant**. Among other Institute researchers who are involved is **Robert Bucci**, who says that for years states have lagged in submitting the paperwork necessary to claim this type of Medicaid reimbursement. "During the last year we've examined records at 15 public school systems and in 11 private institutions," Bucci says. "The result is that we've established a formula for measuring the level of health-related Medicaid services that are being provided." Approximately 15 percent of the 130,000 Chapter 766 students in Massachusetts receive some level of Medicaid services at a total yearly cost of \$60 million. According to Medicaid director **Bruce Bullen**, "The Municipal Medicaid Program is easily accessible and administratively simple [to use] for all cities and towns. Cities and towns will not be bogged down in red tape in order to receive these reimbursements."

A unique aspect of the Federal Financial Assistance project is that its staff members have the opportunity to provide on-site technical consultation to the Medicaid program. In this capacity, McCormack staff working with Medicaid and the UMass Medical Center analyzed current rates of reimbursement and determined that these rates were not capturing all the charges that they should. Using the revised rates, the Worcester campus should net \$5 million in retroactive charges for FY 1992, \$5.3 million for FY 1993, and a projected \$4.7 million for FY 1994.

Executives from Former Soviet Union Receive Certificates

The University held graduation ceremonies late last month for 37 high-ranking business executives from the former Soviet Union. They spent a year at the College of Management learning about Western management practices and the free enterprise system. The students, representing the oil industry, manufacturing, telecommunications, transportation and banking, will spend the next 12 months as executives-in-residence at various American corporations. The firms include Chevron, Bechtel, Dresser Industries and Capital Trading. This first-hand experience in American firms distinguishes the UMass Boston program from several similar training programs that exist at other institutions across the country. Another group of executives from the CIS is expected to arrive at the University next month to start a year's study.

Campus Notes -- The campus was closed and classes canceled on Wednesday, August 4, following a Boston Edison power outage late the previous night in sections of Dorchester and South Boston. Power returned to the campus in the early hours of Wednesday morning, but Boston Edison could not guarantee uninterrupted service until later that afternoon. As a result the decision was made to close the University, and extensive efforts were made by radio and television to inform the University community. It took several hours on Wednesday for the air handling system to cool the buildings enough so that offices were once again habitable. • **Barbara Buchanan**, director of field education at the College of Public and Community Service, recently returned from Great Britain, where she spent two weeks at universities in Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Newcastle and Portsmouth presenting seminars on competency-based education. • Public safety director **David Cella** was elected president of the Massachusetts Association of College and University Public Safety Directors. • Political science professor **Rita Peters** visited the University of Latvia during May and June to advise that nation's academic leaders. She lectured on decision-making and international relations.