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# The UMass Boston Friday Report

Volume 3, Number 9  
October 29, 1993

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

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## **Campus Is Site of Signing of Environmental Cooperation Agreement Between State and University**

State environmental affairs secretary **Trudy Coxe** and University of Massachusetts president **Michael K. Hooker** on October 26 signed a memorandum of understanding during an all-day conference at our campus to facilitate increased cooperation on environmental projects. The pact calls for the state's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the five UMass institutions to establish two committees: one that will review a range of environmental projects and activities; the other to develop strategies to help Massachusetts' burgeoning envirotech industry. Chancellor **Sherry H. Penney** delivered the opening remarks at the conference. She cited the environmental milestones of UMass Boston, including the doctoral program in environmental sciences, various international activities, and the MBA initiatives in environmental management. Regulators at the meeting said that there is a need for increased cooperative assistance in such areas as cranberry growing, urban planning, and coastal zone management.

## **Trotter Study: Minorities Own Disproportionately Small Share of Businesses in Massachusetts**

A report by the Trotter Institute states that the number of Massachusetts businesses owned by people of color is disproportionately small, and for those that do exist, earnings are only a fraction of the statewide average for all businesses. The 52-page report, titled *An Overview of Minority-Owned Businesses in Massachusetts*, is to be released today at a forum in the University Club sponsored by the Massachusetts Black Legislative Caucus, the Minority Business Entrepreneurship Oversight Committee for Massachusetts, the Minority Developers' Association, and the Institute. Expected to attend the forum and discuss the report's findings are Massachusetts attorney general **L. Scott Harshbarger** and three of Governor Weld's cabinet secretaries, including **Mark Robinson**, executive secretary of administration and finance; **Priscilla Douglas**, executive secretary of consumer affairs and business; and **Gloria Larson**, executive secretary of economic affairs. Several state representatives, leaders of several organizations supporting minority-owned businesses and UMass Boston representatives also will attend.

The report is based upon a series of economic surveys conducted every five years by the federal census bureau. The most recent available figures are from 1987. Among its findings, the Trotter Institute report calls for examining the potential existence of systemic barriers, such as a lack of access to borrowed money, that prevents minority entrepreneurs from either getting started or expanding their companies. The report suggests that the economic future of minority-owned businesses is precarious, especially for firms owned by African Americans, whose average sales and receipts in 1987 were lower than those of firms owned by women, Asians, Native Americans and Latinos. The report warns that African Americans and Latinos don't have access to opportunities in such growth industries as biotechnology and telecommunications. According to the report:

- In 1987 blacks, Latinos, Asians and Native Americans comprised more than 12% of Massachusetts' population but owned only 3% of the state's 356,780 firms.



- A disproportionately large number of businesses owned by women, blacks and Hispanics are in low-paying service-delivery industries.
- The lowest proportion of black- and Latino-owned firms is in the finance, insurance, real estate and the wholesale industries.
- More than 80% of the firms owned by blacks and Latinos are so small that they don't have any full time employees other than their owners.

The report was prepared by **Russell Williams**, a research associate at the Trotter Institute who is pursuing a Ph.D. in economics at UMass Amherst. Others who helped prepare the report are Trotter Institute director **James Jennings**, research associate **Suzanne Baker**, and **Juan Evereteze**, a research associate at the institute who is pursuing a Ph.D. in public policy at UMass Boston.

## **Gerontology Institute to Examine Quality of Care in State's Nursing Homes**

The Gerontology Institute has received a federal grant of \$380,000 to study how well Massachusetts nursing homes care for their residents. Over the next 18 months institute researchers will analyze the state's 500 nursing homes and measure the caliber of the care given to their 39,000 residents. The goal of the study is to establish a standard for determining the overall quality of services available at these facilities. Funding for the study comes from the Agency for Health Care Policy, an arm of the National Institutes for Health. The study is the first attempt in Massachusetts to develop a system for assessing the quality of care in nursing homes. The co-investigators are Professors **Frank Caro** and **Frank Porell**, and **Paul Dreyer** of the state's Department of Public Health.

## **CIS Executives Program Begins Second Year**

Twenty-two executives, primarily representing oil and gas industries located in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), have begun taking English language courses at the campus this semester. This is the second year of the University's program for executives from the former Soviet Union, which is coordinated by **John Hughes**, director of professional training programs at the Division of Continuing Education. The two-year program is designed to provide the executives with English language skills and knowledge of capitalist business principles. English proficiency courses are coordinated by the University's Bilingual Studies/English As a Second Language Program. At the conclusion of three semesters of classroom instruction, each student will serve for a year as executive-in-residence at an American company. Graduates of last year's program are currently employed throughout the country at such firms as Chevron Overseas Petroleum, Inc., Stone and Webster Engineering Corporation, and Asea Brown Boveri.

## **UMass Boston a Resource Institution in Diversity Program**

The University is one of 20 institutions that will help 40 other campuses across the country to develop curricula exploring issues of diversity. The two-year project, titled *American Commitments: Diversity, Democracy, and Liberal Learning*, is directed by the Association of American Colleges and funded by the Ford Foundation. The 60 institutions will comprise a faculty development network to foster cooperation and mutual support among universities and colleges attempting to address diversity as a fundamental dimension of education. UMass Boston's consultants on the project are **Esther Kingston-Mann** (American Studies/History, Center for the Improvement of Teaching), **Estelle Disch** (Sociology, CIT), **Peter Kiang** (American Studies, Graduate College of Education), **Tim Sieber** (Anthropology), **Cass Turner** (Psychology), and **Ann Withorn** (General Center, CPCS).