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

Center for Study of Social Acceptance Wins \$675,000 Grant to Study Middle School Stress

Gary Siperstein and Melodie Wenz-Gross of the University's Center for the Study of Social Acceptance have received a four-year grant for \$675,000 to examine the problems that children, particularly those with learning disabilities, experience in making the transition from elementary to middle school.

The grant, from the U. S. Office of Education, will enable Siperstein and Wenz-Gross to follow for three years selected public school students in Greater Boston as they advance from elementary school through the first two years of middle school.

"The transition from elementary to middle school is considered a stressful period, a time when many kids begin to experience problems because of the structural changes they encounter and the new social demands that are thrust upon them," says Wenz-Gross. "I'm especially interested to find out if children with learning problems experience even more stress than their peers."

Says Siperstein, "Children who do not make a successful transition to middle school are often those who become alienated, exhibit behavioral problems and may eventually drop out."

Science is Latest Pursuit for Martin Scholarship Winner

Judith Grubbs of Dorchester is the first recipient of the Arthur W. Martin Scholarship, named after the distinguished and longtime UMass Boston physics professor who died in 1992.

Grubbs, who is pursuing a double major in mathematics and physics, holds a 3.86 grade point average and expects to receive her bachelors degree in 1995. She already holds two degrees — a bachelors in sociology that she received in 1966 from Radcliffe College, and a masters in city and regional planning she earned at the University of California at Berkeley.

A longtime resident of Uphams Corner, Grubbs has been employed full-time for the last 16 years as a machinist at General Electric in Lynn, where she is still considered a rarity in a field dominated by men. "It's hard work, and I like it," she says, referring to

Wenz-Gross will spend the first year of the grant identifying students with learning disabilities as well as students classified as "low achievers" and "normal achievers." These three groups — about 360 children — will then be tracked beginning in the fall of 1995. The students will be interviewed individually six times over a three-year period, and parents and teachers will also be queried.

In 1990 Wenz-Gross received a three-year grant from the U. S. Office of Education to study middle school transition by students with developmental disabilities. Last year Siperstein and Wenz-Gross collaborated on a year-long study of stress in middle school students.

Siperstein has a Ph.D. in psychology from Yeshiva University and is a professor in the Human Services Center at the College of Public and Community Service. He founded the Center for the Study of Social Acceptance in 1976.

Wenz-Gross has a Ph.D. in developmental psychology from Boston College and worked for several years as a counselor before joining the Center for the Study of Social Acceptance in 1989.

the various jobs she's held at the plant, from building multi-ton components for steam turbines to tool and die making for jet engines.

A former shop steward of Local 201 of the International Union of Electrical Workers, Grubbs has a variety of professional and intellectual experiences. After graduation from Radcliffe, she spent a year teaching English, math and science at a middle school in Tanzania. While attending Berkeley, she interned in New Delhi, India, as a city planner, and after graduation took a job with the Boston Public Schools as a facilities planning specialist.

In the 1980s she took Spanish language courses at UMass Boston, and in 1990 began studying math and computer science. She also studied physics, and now hopes to pursue graduate study, and perhaps a new career, in the sciences.

Campus Notes

Sociology professor Gerald Garrett was at Washington State University July 11 and 12 to lead a workshop for law enforcement officials on drugs, alcohol and community policing.

English professor Robert Crossley has written *Olaf Stapledon: Speaking for the Future*, a 480-page biography of the English science fiction pioneer. The book is pub-

lished by Syracuse University Press.

UMass president Michael Hooker will be at the Harbor Campus on September 28 to discuss the future of higher education. His talk will take place from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. at Lipke Auditorium.

McCormack Institute senior fellow Dick Manley has been appointed director of the

UMass Economic Project, a system-wide initiative to conduct research and analysis of the state's economy.

The Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Education Program has awarded money for the 1994-1995 academic year to two UMass Boston programs: \$82,100 to the Harbor Explorations program; and \$40,000 to the Rainforest Collaboration.

A total ban on smoking in campus buildings becomes effective on September 1. Smoking outdoors will be permitted and receptacles for cigarettes will be provided.

Fourteen minority high school students from Massachusetts and two from Connecticut were at UMass Boston from June 26 to July 2 for the seventh annual summer journalism program directed

\$180,000 For Two Years

Skvirsky's Cancer Study Eyes Treatment Obstacle

Biology professor Rachel Skvirsky has been awarded \$180,000 by the American Cancer Society to continue her research in genetics and molecular biology. Skvirsky is examining the mechanisms cells use to move substances across cell membranes. Her work will help scientists better understand "multidrug resistance," an obstacle in cancer treatment.

Multidrug resistance refers to the ability of cancer cells to withstand repeated doses of anti-cancer drugs. This ability comes from a pumping mechanism in cancer cells that discharges the drugs and allows the cell to continue to live. Skvirsky will study in bacteria cells the pumping mechanism that models the mechanism in human cells. Skvirsky's research may also provide insight into the disease cystic fibrosis. Her investigations will take place at the Harbor Campus.

Since she arrived at UMass Boston three years ago, Skvirsky's research has focused on molecular genetics and has been supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, Research Corporation and the University. She presented her research at the national meeting of the American Society for Microbiologists in the spring.

Skvirsky, who holds a Ph.D. in cellular and developmental biology from Harvard University, is a former research associate at Harvard Medical School and science scholar at the Bunting Institute. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in genetics.

One of Skvirsky's students, John Snyder, was chosen for a summer research fellowship by the American Cancer Society and is currently working at the Harbor Campus on a project focusing on the problems of gene expression. Snyder, a resident of Scituate, received a bachelor's degree from UMass Boston in June and will begin work in the fall at the University toward a master's degree in biology.

Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Cape Cod Times, New Bedford Standard Times, Patriot Ledger, Worcester County Newspapers and Worcester Telegram and Gazette.

ABC's "Turning Point" program on July 20 aired speeches given at the Harbor Campus last spring by several of the "Framingham Eight" — including Elaine Hyde, director of the UMB Women's Center.

Gerontology Students To Study Problems of Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren

Students enrolled in the advanced certificate program in gerontology this fall will investigate an increasingly common occurrence -- grandparents being thrust into the role of caring for their grandchildren.

The students' research is made possible by a three-year grant from the Corporation for National Service, which is awarding the Gerontology Institute \$28,000 in the first year and slightly smaller allotments over the next two years.

The grant will enable 13 students in the advanced certificate program in gerontology to meet once a week with about 60 grandparents in Dorchester who are taking care of their grandchildren. The grandparents are members of a support group organized by the Codman Square Health Center called ROCC — Raising Our Children's Children.

"The purpose of this study is to give our students an understanding of the public policies that both help and hinder grandparents who find themselves in this situation," says Ellen Bruce, director of the

public policy division at the Gerontology Institute. "The number of grandparents raising grandchildren is certainly growing, and lately we've seen a number of support groups forming around the state."

Advanced certificate program students will help grandparents try to devise strategies designed to ease some of the conflicts that arise in caring for grandchildren.

The students also will review existing laws that cover grandparent-grandchild arrangements, and perhaps suggest new ones. One specific matter that students will address is the various legal responsibilities that grandparents inherit by becoming guardians, caretakers or foster parents. During the year students will conduct forums around the Boston area and publish a newsletter designed to educate grandparents about caring for grandchildren.

The one year advanced certificate program in gerontology comprises mainly retired persons, many of whom are grandparents.

More Campus Notes

CPCS professor Philip Hart is treasurer of the Boston Emerging Industries Center, a non-profit organization that is working to bring several high-tech firms as well as an education and training center to the former Digital Equipment Corporation facility in Roxbury. These biotech, envirotech and telecommunications firms will ideally be up and running by the end of 1995 and provide jobs to local residents. The Boston Emerging Industries Center is a partnership of the Massachusetts Biotech Research Institute and the Community Development Corporation (CDC) of Boston, of which Hart also is treasurer. Besides his community work, Hart is writing a book about Bessie Coleman, the first black person in the United States to receive an aviator's license. It will be published in 1995 by Carol Rhoda Books in Minneapolis. Hart will teach courses in the fall on American media, and

public and community information gathering.

Associate Provost for Continuing Education Terry Mortimer was a panelist at the National University Continuing Education Association's annual summer seminar.

Economic professor Randy Albelda will discuss her research on women and poverty in Massachusetts at a forum on August 31 at Roxbury Community College. The forum will run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. It is co-sponsored by the Boston Network for Women in Politics and Government.

The Veterans Upward Bound Program will hold graduation ceremonies on August 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Small Science Auditorium.

Sally Boland, a professor of English at Plymouth State College in New Hampshire, is working in the Chancellor's Office as a

fellow of the American Council on Education. The fellowship is designed to promote leadership development among educators.

Sen. Michael Barrett, George Bacharach and Rep. Mark Roosevelt, candidates for the Democratic nomination for governor, will be at UMass Boston on September 13 to debate health care. The debate will take place at 7:30 p.m. in the media auditorium. It will be televised by New England Cable News.

On September 24 and 25, the campus will be the site of "Harbor Visions," a brainstorming session devoted to Boston Harbor. About 250 academics, environmentalists, planners, engineers and interested citizens are expected to participate in group talks that will address many issues related to the harbor's future. The event is co-sponsored by the Urban Harbors Institute and many other organizations.

Harbor Explorations director Mike Borek and members of the

EnviroLab III crew -- captain Dave Slocumb and instructors Rich Schmidt and Berit Solstad -- have been awarded certificates of Congressional recognition by Rep. Joe Moakley.

The McCormack Institute has published a special issue of the *The New England Journal of Public Policy* containing essays on many aspects of education reform.

Faculty interested in serving as mentors to UMass Boston students in the upcoming year are encouraged to contact Peter Langer in the Advising Center at 7-5500.

Employers who are interested in having University students fill part-time jobs can list their openings on a campus register by calling 287-6334, or by faxing their information to 287-6335.

Madeleine Walsh of the Urban Harbors Institute has been appointed to the state's Global Education Advisory Council.

Gaston Institute Assists In Film On 1960s Cuban Evacuation

UMass Boston's Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy is assisting researchers in Cuba on a documentary film that will examine the experiences of Cuban-born Americans who as children were evacuated from their homeland without their parents and resettled in the United States.

The film will examine the consequences of Operation Peter Pan, an initiative that sent 15,000 Cuban children between the ages of 6 and 16 to the U. S. so they could escape communism. The resettlements took place from 1960 to 1962.

The film is being produced by the Cuban Institute of Cinemagraphic and Industrial Arts in Havana, and is supported by a grant for \$49,000 from the MacArthur Foundation.

Gaston Institute director Edwin Melendez, who will be interviewed for the film, says many of the children brought to America were forced to live in institutions or with foster parents.

"The film will reveal the many difficulties, dilemmas and fragmented family relationships these people have had to deal with as children and adults," Melendez says. Researchers from the Cuban Institute of Cinemagraphic and Industrial Arts will be in Boston next month to interview people who were evacuated and academics knowledgeable in immigration policy and the history of relations between the U. S. and Cuba. Research will also be conducted in Chicago, New York City, Miami, Tampa, Washington, D. C. and Puerto Rico. The film is expected to be completed in December.

NEA Funds Joiner Poetry Workshops

The Joiner Center has received a grant for \$5,935 from the National Endowment for the Arts to fund a series of poetry reading and writing workshops during the academic year. The workshops will be conducted by John Balaban, winner of the Lamont Poetry Prize; Marilyn Nelson Waniek, author of three poetry volumes; Leroy Quintana, winner of the 1981 American Book Award; and Carl Phillips, winner of the Samuel French Morse Poetry Prize. The four poets will read from their works and offer instruction to students in the University's Creative Writing Program, as well as to students at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Dorchester, and Joseph P. Timilty Middle School in Jamaica Plain. The NEA awarded 38 such grants nationwide. The Joiner Center is the only New England recipient.

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