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Performance of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* Is First Phase of Mayor Menino's Project Reach Back

The first phase of Project Reach Back has brought together theatre arts students and high school seniors from Boston for a performance of Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. The performance will take place at 6 p.m. Thursday, December 15, at the University Club, 11th floor, Healey Library.

Project Reach Back is an initiative articulated by Boston Mayor Thomas Menino during his address at UMass Boston's commencement ceremonies in June. It is a collaborative endeavor of Mayor Menino's Office, the Chancellor's Office, the Graduate College of Education, and the Theatre Arts Department.

The goal of Project Reach Back's drama program is to supplement the city's high school curriculum and enhance the academic skills of young people by providing artistic enrichment to encourage motivation and help them develop self confidence. A grant of \$50,000 from the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees is supporting Project Reach Back's initial venture.

Collaboration is the Key

UMass Boston undergraduates serve as mentors to the city's high school students participating in the performance of *A Child's Christmas In Wales*. Eight University students and eight high school students will recite the story.

For several weeks, the eight students, who attend either Jeremiah Burke, Madison Park or South Boston high schools, have been coming to UMass Boston after school to rehearse.

U. S. News And World Report Survey Shows Gains In University's Regional Standing

In *U. S. News and World Report's* most recent rankings of American colleges, reported in *America's Best Colleges, 1995 College Guide*, UMass Boston, classified as a regional university, was ranked 19th out of 141 northern colleges and universities in terms of academic reputation by a group of presidents, deans and admissions directors. Last year, the University ranked 27th among these institutions. Sixteen of the

Campus Notes

The UMass Boston jazz band will perform a concert on Thursday, December 8, at 8:00 p.m. in Snowden Auditorium. The band will also play at the Wit's End cafe on Monday, December 5, at 2:00 p.m. Admission to both performances is free.

Daniel Taylor, chairman of the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees, will be at the Boston campus on Thursday, December 8, to discuss the future of higher education. His talk will take

place in the library staff lounge, 11th floor, Healey Library.

Marta Montero-Sieburth of the Gaston Institute will discuss "Encouraging Students to Develop Multicultural Perspectives" on Tuesday, December 6, from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. in Wheatley Hall, sixth floor, room 47.

The Center for the Improvement of Teaching's next faculty forum will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, December 5, Wheatley Hall, first floor, room 41.

"At first, some of the high school students were reluctant to be involved," says Hadley Luddy, Reach Back coordinator. "But now they're getting excited about their performance. I think this is an effective method to bring to the forefront the talents of these young people."

Each of the high school students who will perform in *A Child's Christmas In Wales* is enrolled in the University's Upward Bound College Prep Program. Kewanee McGhee, a senior at Madison Park High School, hopes her Reach Back experience will help prepare her for success in college. "I want to become a doctor some day," says McGhee, who is a member of the Madison Park choir and played Ophelia in a school production of *Hamlet*.

Talents Uncovered

Another Madison Park senior, Michael Brantley, says his interest in the performing arts was uncovered last spring when he participated in a Shakespeare institute taught by Luddy.

"I had never read Shakespeare before, and I really enjoyed it," says Brantley, who can recall verbatim his favorite passage from *Julius Caesar*. "Michael has a lot of energy and an artistic side that can only be termed a natural gift," says Project Reach Back mentor Richard LaFrance, a UMass Boston junior and veteran community theater performer. "This is work, but it's fun and the students we're helping are quite intelligent," says senior Susan LaBrecque, a Reach Back mentor who teaches dance at Brookline High School and is interested in a career in choreography.

18 colleges and universities that were ranked ahead of UMass Boston this year are private institutions. The two exceptions are the State University of New York's College at Geneseo and Trenton State College in New Jersey.

All 18 institutions ranked ahead of UMass Boston have residence halls. All 18 institutions had an average SAT score for freshmen of 965 or higher in 1993; 16 of these institutions had an average SAT score for freshmen of 1,000 or higher, well above UMass Boston's average SAT score for freshmen of 895. In all, of the 18 institutions ranked ahead of UMass Boston, at least 50% of their freshmen in 1993 were in the top quarter of their high school class. UMass Boston had 29% of their freshmen that year in the top quarter of their high school class.

It should be pointed that besides not being private, UMass Boston has no dormitories, and by traditional measures does not admit a high proportion of well prepared students. Nevertheless, The University rose in the rankings to 19th out of 141 institutions.

CPCS Partnership Wins Kellogg Foundation Support

The University's College of Public and Community Service is involved in a partnership funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation that will give residents of Chelsea, Dorchester and Roxbury more influence in deciding what types of human services their communities will receive. The partnership includes CPCS, Boston University School of Social Work and two human services organizations, the Chelsea Human Service Collaborative and the Roxbury-based Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. Lee Staples, assistant professor of sociology at Boston University, is the partnership's principal investigator. The Kellogg Foundation has awarded \$765,000 to the partnership for the next three years. UMass Boston's portion of the grant is approximately \$120,000.

According to CPCS professor Ann Withorn, a member of the steering committee, the partnership's aim is to encourage collaboration between citizens and service providers. Faculty and students from the two universities will help the two groups identify and addressing problem areas. The partnership also will provide leadership training to four neighborhood people. Several faculty and as many as 20 undergraduates from UMass Boston will be involved in the partnership each year. Some of these students will conduct an evaluation of the partnership as it is being carried out.

"This partnership is another example of the College of Public and Community Service's commitment to helping people make informed decisions on issues that affect their communities," says Withorn. She notes that the need for services is typically strongest in community development, crisis intervention, cultural awareness and literacy — areas in which CPCS has considerable experience.

UMass Boston Researchers To Survey Women-Owned Businesses in New England

A local business organization has commissioned two faculty members to create a computerized register of women-owned firms in New England and to write a report on the various strengths and weaknesses of enterprises owned by women.

Oscar Gutierrez, associate professor in the College of Management, and Bette Woody, associate professor in the College of Public and Community Service, are collaborating on the 18-month long project. Their work is being underwritten by a \$50,000 grant from New England Women Business Owners (NEWBO), an organization representing some 30,000 companies in the six-state region.

The first phase of the project calls for Gutierrez and Woody to examine women-owned firms in such categories as number of employees, form of ownership, sales, profits, products, wages and location. This information will be installed on a computer database housed at the College of Management. In the second phase of the project, Gutierrez and Woody will analyze several individual firms and try to detect trends that are affecting women-owned companies.

Support Grows For Project That Brings Foreign Scholars to UMB

A grant for \$8,100 from the European Union Commission Delegation of Washington, D. C., is helping to fund visits to UMass Boston this year by six foreign scholars who will teach, lecture and conduct research at the campus for up to six weeks. Now in its second year, the scholar-in-residence program is also supported by the local Spanish and French consulates, each of which has donated \$5,000 for the current year.

Italian anthropologist Marika Danubio and Spanish historian Mercedes Villanova have been at the campus this fall, and four more foreign academics will arrive in the spring. Last year three foreign scholars participated in the program. "A number of foreign academics have expressed to me an interest in our program, so I expect our number of visitors to continue to increase in the future," says organizer Vivien Schmidt, a professor of management and director of the University's European Studies Program. Schmidt says the program's short visits of four to six weeks "are a relatively inexpensive way to internationalize our campus."

Schmidt has a strong interest in international activities; she has written two books on French government, one of which, *Democratizing France* (Cambridge University Press), was honored by the French government as one of the best work on the decentralization movement. In an October ceremony at the Boston consulate, she received the French government's *Palmes Academique* award, an honor bestowed on teachers who successfully promote French culture. Schmidt also was recently named a senior fellow at the McCormack Institute, where she is director of the Center for Emerging Democracies.

Governor's Councillor To Be Honored

Governor's Councillor Dorothy Kelly Gay will be honored as Woman of the Year by the Boston Network for Women in Politics and Government at a dinner at the campus on Wednesday, December 7. A former member of the Somerville school committee, Kelly Gay, a full time nurse, was elected in 1992 to the Governor's Council from the sixth district. She will receive the award at a dinner that will take place from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the University Club, 11th floor, Healey Library.

Tickets are \$30 each for Network members, \$50 for non-members. For reservations call Julia Ketterer, executive director of the Network, at 7-5562. Leaders from the academic and public service fields, as well as current and former elected officials, are expected to attend the dinner.

Algebra Text Written by Professors Kime and Clark Interests Publishing Company, Other Institutions

A major publisher is test marketing a draft of a textbook written by two faculty members whose innovative strategy for teaching algebra is supported by the National Science Foundation and being replicated at other campuses.

After a lengthy review period that is typical in the textbook industry, John Wiley and Sons, a New York City company, is expected in 1996 to issue a preliminary version of the textbook, which is written by UMass Boston's Linda Kime and Judy Clark. Pending approval, the final version of the text will be published in 1997.

Kime, an associate professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, and Clark, an associate professor in the Graduate College of Education, are currently using a three-year grant from the NSF for \$206,000 to further develop their innovative teaching method, which is one of several models on the forefront of a national movement to "reform" the teaching of algebra.

The Numbers Count

Kime's and Clark's text, currently bound in a three-ring notebook, outlines a strategy that call upon students to learn introductory-level algebra by using "real life" numbers, such as census data or figures from the realm of science. The goal is to make learning algebra more challenging and rewarding. "Algebra has always suffered from being presented in

a manner that is boring," says Kime. "It's usually the last math course people ever take, and I have to admit that I was getting so bored teaching it that I was falling asleep. How could I possibly expect students to be excited about learning? Something had to be done."

Algebra, It's a Joy

Two years ago Kime and Clark first tried their new teaching method, and since then approximately 250 UMass Boston students have taken their course. It is held in the campus computer lab, where class size is limited to 24 because that's how many computers there are. Students are encouraged to collaborate in small groups. "Algebra has become a joy to teach," says Kime. "I really look forward to going to class."

Numerous faculty at UMass Boston have been involved in the course development, including Pat Davidson, Linda Falstein and Jack Lutts. A College Algebra Consortium has been formed with outside institutions and has helped inform other campuses of the new algebra strategy. Bridgewater State College and the Massachusetts College of Art are offering the course this semester. The University of Pittsburgh and the University of Southern Mississippi will offer it next spring. And next fall, John Wiley and Sons has arranged for at least 20 community colleges and four-year institutions around the country to serve as test sites for the new text.

More Campus Notes

Approximately 200 leaders and representatives of Greater Boston's Asian-American communities were at UMass Boston November 18 and 19 to discuss strategies for increasing their political clout and improving their status in the areas of education, community development, human services and civil rights. The meeting of the Asian Pacific American Agenda Coalition, an organization established in 1991, attracted members of 31 civic organizations representing local immigrant populations from Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. The meeting was sponsored by the Institute for Asian American Studies. The coalition will meet again at UMass Boston in the spring.

The campus recently was the site of the annual New England Regional Meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies. One hundred Irish studies scholars from Ireland and the United States took part in the conference, which was organized by Tom O'Grady, professor of English and director of our Irish Studies Program since 1983. The theme of the conference was "The Parish and the Universe: Polarizing vs. Pluralizing Perspectives on Irish Society." Dozens of papers were presented by conference participants. Notes O'Grady, "It was a rewarding exploration of the many contradictions, subtleties and paradoxes

that are the complexity of the Irish experience."

Environmental sciences professor Robert Bowen served as one of the key organizers of the important Atlantic Rim conference held this month in Boston. The conference brought together more than 150 business representatives, academics and political leaders to discuss strategies for increasing international trade with Europe, Africa and Latin America. The conference, which took place at the World Trade Center, resulted in the formation of the Atlantic Rim Network, whose headquarters will be in Boston. The Atlantic Rim activities were covered by local newspapers and

television stations, and received strong endorsement from Boston Mayor Menino and Governor Weld. The next step for leaders of the Atlantic Rim Network is to formulate a detailed plan for linking businesses, universities and governments and for generating economic activity.

The Boston State College Class of 1969 will hold its reunion at Jimmy's Harborside Restaurant on Saturday, December 3, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Admission to each event is \$50.

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