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Volume 4
Number 3
March 31, 1995

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

Campus Notes

Prof. Helen Tager-Flusberg of the Psychology Department has been chosen to be a member of the Human Development and Aging Section, Division of Research Grants. Members are chosen on their credentials which include quality of research accomplishments, publications in scientific journals, and competence and achievement in their scientific discipline.

Under the direction of Jon Mitchel, the UMass Boston orchestra will hold its inaugural concert at 8:00 pm on April 7th at St. Paul's Church.

Prof. Lloyd Shwartz of the English department, who won a 1994 Pulitzer Prize for his music reviews, has completed a three-day jurying at Columbia University of the 1995 Pulitzer Prize in Criticism.

Prof. Andres Torres, of the College of Public and Community Service has published a book, *Between Melting Pot and Mosaic: African-Americans and Puerto Ricans in the New York Political Economy*. The Spring issue of *New England Journal of Public Policy* will include his article, *Latinos and Labor: Challenges and Prospects*.

UMass Boston is building a consortium to help other colleges in the Commonwealth establish computer laboratories for physically challenged students. Two years ago, the U.S. Department of Education awarded UMass Boston \$240,000 to help a dozen Massachusetts' colleges and community colleges start adaptive computing labs. Each of these schools now participates in the Massachusetts Adaptive Computing Technology in Higher Education Consortium (MassACT). Presently, at UMB, 120 students, faculty, and staff use this technology, which is valued at approximately \$100,000.

Professor Frances L. Portnoy of the College of Nursing was selected by the Board of the Fulbright Foundation of Norway and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, to conduct research in Norway.

The following Research Fellows have been elected to the Institute for Asian American Studies: Jonathan M. Chu, Associate Prof. of History, Linda Dittmar, Prof. of English, Mary Anna Domokos-Cheng Ham, Associate Prof., Counseling and School Psychology, Fang Liu, doctoral student in the Early Childhood and Human Development Program, UMass Amherst; and John M. Wiecha, Assistant Prof., UMass School of Medicine. Each recipient will receive \$1,500 in order to support his or her research.

Four faculty members from the College of Public and Community Service were awarded Professional Development Grants: Prof. Joan Arches for her proposal, *The Meaning of Multicultural Organizations: What Administrators Have to Say*, Prof. Carroy Ferguson for her work on *Anti-Black Disposition as a Function of an Outer vs. Inner Orientation: A Cross Racial and Multicultural Perspective*, Prof. Luis Aponte-Pares for *Peguenas Patrias: Appropriating Place in the American City*, and Prof. Mark Freeman for his Proposal, *Aids Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

Governor William Weld has chosen Prof. Jane Cloutterbuck from the College of Nursing, to represent Massachusetts at the 1995 White House Conference on Aging this May.

Members of the Theater Arts Department will be featured in local productions. Prof. John Conlon opened in *Damn Yankees* at the Company Theater in Norwell on March 17. Prof. Thomas Ouellette joined the cast of *Shear Madness* on March 16. In May, Prof. Diane Almeida will direct a radio production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. Theater Arts faculty and students will be included in the cast and crew.

Kathy Allen, Director of the Institute for Affirmative Action made an appearance on WGBH Television, Channel 2, *The Group*, with Richard Cole, Chief of the Civil Rights Division, Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. Richard Cole. She has also debated with Boston City Councilor, Peggy Davis-Mullen about the benefits of affirmative action during WUMB's radio show, *Connection*, hosted by Chris Lydon.

Environmentalists to Begin Scottish Exchange

UMass Boston established a major cooperative agreement on March 7 with a Scottish University also intensely engaged in oceanic environmental research, the University of Strathclyde, in Glasgow. The agreement will make possible an exchange of faculty and students between the two universities and joint research projects on environmental management.

The agreement was signed in Glasgow by Dean of Science Christine Armett-Kibel; Professor Joseph Cooney, chair of the Environmental Science Doctoral Program, and Richard Delaney, director of the Urban Harbors Institute. Delaney stressed the parallels between Glasgow and Boston. "Glasgow has many similarities including some major pol-

lution difficulties with its port development and its watershed. Changes in the economy have caused both cities to go through transitions."

Besides having comparable student populations, the University of Strathclyde and UMass Boston are both urban institutions, serving older student populations with strong interests in public policy issues. "There is a great excitement from their side and we share that with them. We look forward to becoming partners in many different dimensions," said Delaney.

"By allowing UMass Boston students to study in Scotland, the agreement will broaden their cultural experience," Delaney said. "More generally, our global community is becoming smaller, and it is important that we are better prepared to deal with the increasing number of global issues that affect all of us."

Geneticist Speaks at University

As part of the Women In Science Organization's (WISO) motivational initiative towards female science students, Professor Lynn Margulis of the Biology Department of UMass Amherst, gave a lecture on March 10, "Gaia: The Living Earth." A member of the National Academy of Sciences since 1983, Margulis is characterized by UMB Dean of Science Christine-Armett Kibel as "a very determined woman who is not easily distracted."

Margulis's degrees include a Ph.D. in genetics from the University of California at Berkeley. In 1981, she received a NASA Public Service Award, and currently co-directs NASA's Planetary Biology Internship Program.

While Margulis held a Sherman Fairchild Fellowship at the California Institute of Technology during 1977, she sensed apparent prejudices towards female science majors. "Although these circumstances were acute at California Tech, there were still people who said that 'women just don't belong at this school,'" remembered Margulis.

According to Assistant Dean of Arts and Sciences, Roseanne Donahue, WISO has held two annual meetings to show concern for female science students. At a luncheon last year female students discussed topic that included the development of stronger study skills, the problem of balancing a family and a career, and sexual harassment.

This year the open-house that WISO sponsored focused on role-playing. Estelle Disch of the Sociology Department took the role of sexual harassment officer who was examining circumstances with the students.

A questionnaire to participating students determined that speakers should be brought in to serve as role models and mentoring programs should be instituted to increase the number of female students in the sciences. The Margulis lecture was a result.

On January 26, Chancellor Sherry Penney visited the White House in a group of college and university presidents to discuss the preservation of student financial aid. This exchange of letters followed:

January 31, 1995

Dear Mr. President,

It was heartening to hear your strong support of education, and your understanding of the financial needs of so many of our students...We are the only public university in the City of Boston with, 12,000 students...They are nontraditional in many ways, highly motivated to receive baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees, and they go on to become productive citizens in the Commonwealth and in the country.

Your support for education, as you articulated at our meeting, will be very important for them and for the future of this city. We would hope you are able to visit our campus sometime and meet several of these outstanding students...

Most Sincerely,
Chancellor Sherry H. Penney

March 1, 1995

Dear Sherry,

I was delighted to meet with you last month, and I appreciate your invitation to visit the University.

My administration is working to make college more accessible to all Americans who want to fulfill their dreams of higher education. The insight of education leaders like you are of particular importance to me as we build on our efforts, and I look forward to your continued involvement.

Sincerely,
Bill Clinton

Spring Seminar Addresses Teaching Challenges Posed by Diversity

Supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation, the Center for the Improvement of Teaching (CIT) held a conference *Diversity and Transformation: Teaching and Learning* on January 27th. The purpose was to heighten awareness among faculty of the considerations that arise in dealing with students from different backgrounds.

“The whole conference was really about what has been an ongoing process at UMass Boston,” says Professor Kingston-Mann, who is the director of CIT. Fifty-five faculty members from every college at UMass Boston as well as representatives from Plymouth State College, Bloomfield College, Cornell University, and Middlesex Community College attended the conference.

Professor Amy Rex-Smith of the College of Nursing moderated a workshop on strategies that draw students into the activity of teaching. For example, pairing less advanced students with those who are more advanced helps both. The less advanced student can better relate to what is being taught because she is hearing it in terms explained by a peer. The more advanced student better understands what she has learned through repeating it in her own words. According to Rex-Smith, “this is important for students in terms of them feeling invested in the learning process.”

The Beacon Fitness Center opened officially on March 21 in the former McCormack Building gymnasium. It offers 62 pieces of conditioning equipment, two racketball courts, one squash court, an aerobic room, a walking track, refurbished changing rooms, and a two-level lounge with an observation deck. The Fitness Center is accessible to physically-challenged persons.

Faculty and staff may purchase memberships for \$100 a year, which is paid as a \$2.50 weekly payroll deduction for 40 weeks. Members may bring one guest per visit for a \$3.00 admission fee.

Attention Readers

Send news information to Donna Roveto or Neal Bruss at the Office of Public Information, Second Floor, Quinn Administration Building.

Professor Estelle Disch of the Sociology Department, and the coordinator of the Diversity Awareness Program in CIT, helped lead a workshop on volatile issues. The need for the volatile issue workshop arose from faculty members who were willing to recognize troubling social issues like racism, but lacked the teaching skills to administer order in their classes when discussions inevitably became heated. “If a course is going to deal with controversial issues, the teacher has to anticipate that a conflict is at least apparent in some of the minds of the students,” said Disch. She suggested that to prevent tension in the classroom guidelines should be set in advance for handling class discussions.

A grading standard workshop allowed professors to consider whether it is possible to find an ideal way of grading. “The notion of grading is not simply to pigeon-hole students,” said Professor Castellano Turner of the Psychology Department who helped lead the workshop, “it should also be in the interest of enhancing them.” The workshop considered the choice between letter grading and written evaluations of students’ performances at the end of a semester. Overall, the workshop “stimulated us to think about these issues and become informed through other professors’ ideas,” explained Turner.

First Welfare Teach-In Shows The Need for Future Involvement

On Wednesday March 1, a Welfare Teach-In titled, “Welfare: It’s Not What You Think It Is,” was held in both the McCormack and Wheatley buildings. For the 385 UMass students who are AFDC recipients this was a day of recognition. According to Vicky Steinitz of the College of Public and Community Service and one of the main organizers of the event, “the occasion made AFDC student aware that they shouldn’t be ashamed and that there is no reason to hide these things.”

The Teach-In focused attention on the negative stigma attached to welfare. A Teach-In fact sheet noted that for every \$1 of welfare fraud there is over \$100 of income tax fraud. "The news takes up one abuser, who is usually an extreme case. All of the stories about people who are struggling to improve themselves and to do better, well, you just don't see them," stated Steinitz, "undoubtedly there are people who beat the system, but they are the minority."

Steinitz had hoped that the Welfare Teach-In would “turn the university into a place where people would support welfare students and not humiliate them.”

The workshops offered those who attended, techniques that they may not have acquired during their schooling. According to Kingston-Mann, “in order to get a Ph.D., most faculty members didn’t have to take courses in teaching, only courses in their subject area.” Thus, becoming a university teacher is “sort of like on-the-job training,” especially in seminars where attitudes and opinions are voiced quick.

The workshops also aimed at breaking the isolation of the staff. “The whole idea was for the faculty not to feel isolated in the classroom and to figure everything out on their own," stated Kingston-Mann.

Two professors who share Kingston-Mann’s enthusiasm for the diversity workshops are Glenn Jacobs of the Sociology Department and Associate Provost Eleanor Kutz of the English Department. According to Jacobs, “the seminar has offered the opportunity to plot new directions in curriculum. The experience has given me the courage to develop courses, to try new strategies, while Kutz feels that they "help to strenthen our instittuion...by enabling us to identify and strengthen other aspect of our work, that contibute to the university's mission."

For instance, there was a table set up at the event with various art materials allowing students to make signs describing their hardships and struggles. These signs were later turned into a paper quilt, displaying in the Wheatley Building.

Though the day was successful Steinitz said more work needs to be done. “We need a welfare rights advocate to help students finding themselves in situations where the welfare worker tells them that the cost of tuition will take away their food stamps." Presently, there is a peer support group on campus, the Arms Advocacy Researchers for Modern Survival, but it does not offer daily counseling and advice. Therefore, at UMass, Steinitz concluded, there is "definitely a sense that a need remains."

Major cleanup efforts in the Science Building were being completed as this issue of The Friday Report went to press. A fire Friday night, March 17, destroyed a research laboratory on the first floor of the Science Building. No injuries were reported, and fire damage was confined to the laboratory itself, with minimal smoke damage to the rest of the building.

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