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The eighth Commencement of UMass-Boston on Thursday, May 27, possibly can be expressed in these words: The Glory is in the trying.

It is a major day in the lives of our 891 Master's and Bachelor's candidates. To all of them, to their families and friends, to the faculty and staff, our congratulations for being participants in this great adventure that is Education.

Below are vignettes of some of our graduates. These capsules reflect what UMass-Boston is all about.

If one word can describe anyone, "determination" is the one that fits Theresa Griffith of 40 Agassiz Avenue, Belmont.

She even moved from her former home in Waltham to Belmont so she would be closer to the MBTA in order to get to her classes at UMass-Boston.

When one of the courses she wanted to take her last semester was thought to be over-enrolled, she waited outside the classroom to get the instructor's permission to be a part of the class. She wound up with an A.

In fact, her four years at UMass-Boston brought her to Commencement Day with a Summa Cum Laude degree.

This hardly tells the Theresa Griffith story. She is 50 years of age, the mother of three sons-- Edward 23, and twins Joseph and William, 21--and has been blind for the past 16 years of her life.

Prof. Franklin Patterson, the Frank L. Boyden University Professor, who taught her in a Politics course, says she is one of the "very best students I have ever had in my teaching career." Patterson has taught at N.Y.U., Tufts, UMass, and was president of Hampshire College.

One of her academic advisors said, "Theresa really knew how to get around here, and to get the teachers and courses she wanted."

"I could never leave UMass-Boston," she says, "without taking one of Prof. Tom Brown's courses, one I immensely enjoyed."

Of another professor, she said she would rather take his course in Sociology "and get a C rather than an A with someone else." The professor, Richard Robbins in her major Sociology, never came near awarding her a C.

Mrs. Griffith, who has been helped by many people--"my readers are fantastic"--has been of help and inspiration to others. She has taught sightless persons at the Morgan Memorial how to operate telephone switchboards.

Theresa praises her three sons for their help in her college studies, but when she talks about her 88-year-old mother Mrs. Victoria Jerald, she becomes poetic.

"How she helped me," she says. "She is really something else." Mrs. Jeraldi recently had a heart attack, but Theresa hopes she will be able to be at graduation.

Theresa has been named to the National Honor Society of Alpha Gamma Kappa for sociology students of distinction.

And her school days are not over. In September she will be at the Boston College School of Social Work as a candidate for a Master's degree in Social Planning in the BC Community Organization Program.

For 200 years the voters in cities and towns in Massachusetts have been sending legislators to Beacon Hill (even to Watertown in 1775 when Boston was under the British siege), and the youngest of all of them is Karen Swanson, now 22, of 237 Menlo Street, Brockton, who is one of the UMass-Boston degree winners with a Bachelor of Arts degree in what-else--Politics.

She won an amazing victory for her seat in the House of Representatives for Ward 3 and part of Ward 1 in 1974, and from the day she was sworn in as a Legislator she has had a "busy, hectic, and satisfying" career as a student and as a lawmaker.

Rep. Swanson admits that this dual career was very difficult: serving her constituency in Brockton, keeping up with legislative bills, and doing "independent study" at UMass-Boston.

Her instructors have high marks in her book, especially those in the Politics Department, including Robert Steamer, Diane Paul, George Goodwin, and Xandra Kayden.

Karen had no trouble adjusting to legislative life; her fellow legislators "treated me just fine." She also noted that a good number of lawmakers are young and in their 20's.

The new Bachelor of Arts in Politics will be a candidate for reelection in her home city. The idea of serving the public appeals to her.

Scott Wenzell, 60 Higgins Rd., Framingham, is a triple threat in academia. He is graduating from UMass-Boston with three majors in English, Philosophy and Mathematics--a rarity at this or any other institution.

The president of his class at Framingham North High School, a reporter for radio station WKOX, a Town Meeting member in his town, his next move is to the George Washington University Law Center.

He is well prepared for a future law career, according to the variety of instructors he had in his classes. One Department, English, has cited him to be graduated with Honors; his mathematics education, he says, has helped him to think clearly; and his Philosophy courses have given him a wide understanding of knowledge and a "truly liberal education."

Wenzell said he did not want to be locked into one academic concentration, and that's the reason "I kept taking math courses, English offerings, and Philosophy."

Her father gave her some kindly advice years ago, and its wisdom has been a guiding force in her life.

"Keep your face toward the sun and let the shadows fall behind," Rev. Jacob P. Cofield, now deceased, told his daughter Dorothy Cofield who is graduating with honors from UMass-Boston and has won a Fellowship and Assistantship at Michigan State University.

Dorothy lives with her mother at 208 Harvard St., Dorchester, and had come to UMass-Boston after being out of school for several years.

The work wasn't easy, a part-time job at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital as a chemistry lab technician took more of her time, but help from many professors helped her follow her father's advice.

One is Prof. Charles Betsey who gave her some other counsel a year ago. Her problem was: should she take a summer job or should she accept an appointment at the American Economics Association's Summer Program for Minority Students at Northwestern University.

His encouragement led her to take the course, a rigorous one. But this summer experience led her to taking more advanced courses at UMass-Boston and led to winning the prized Fellowship at Michigan State.

Her sun is shining and the shadows are behind.

Sheila Stone, 59 Summer St., Plymouth, is one of the commencement speakers at the UMass-Boston exercises. A graduate of the College of Public and Community Service, her degree is in Health Care Administration.

This linked her school work with her professional duties as a Staff Assistant for the State Department of Public Works.

She never thought it was logistically possible to achieve her degree, but she proved "it can be done."

Of her educational pursuits, she says: "College has liberated me. I have finally realized that learning is the responsibility of the individual. The faculty is supportive and does convey knowledge. I can accept that I have acquired the skills to do whatever I choose to do. I can learn as much as I want to learn, and it is my responsibility to do so."

At UMass-Boston she has served on the Educational Planning Task Force, the Policy Committee of her college, and with the State Commission on Public Higher Education.

In her community she has served with the Plymouth Community Family Recreation Center, and the Concerned Citizens Group.

She is a 30-year old single parent whose daughter Cara, 9, will be at her mother's graduation.

"I'm enjoying every minute of this," says Gloria Berman, 46, of 16 Considine Road, Newton, who is graduating with honors in Psychology from UMass-Boston.

"I'm savoring every drop of the excitement of graduating, of picking up my cap and gown, and waiting for the procession to begin."

Truly excited about coming back to school, making outstanding academic achievements, and

planning to attend the Boston University School of Social Work, Mrs. Berman has done this after bringing up four children, Dr. Dene Berman, 28, a psychologist; Robin, 22, a legal secretary; Kathie, 20, a freshman at UMass-Boston; and Pam, a 16-year old high school student.

They, with her husband Jordan Berman will be part of her cheering gallery at graduation.

"I could get on a soap-box and sing the praises of UMass-Boston and my experiences here." she says.

She says it was difficult at first to adjust to an academic routine, after being out of school for a number of years. "But you do adjust and you are happy about it."

Meriting her plaudits are the Returning Women's Students organization of the campus, which gave her "just fabulous moral support."

Her professors win praise, too. "I had to work my head off here, but my teachers pushed, encouraged, and helped me." She describes Dr. Ina Samuels of the Psychology Department as a "super-woman, an advisor as well as a friend."

Two blind students will be among the most joyful of UMass-Boston graduates. Richard Brunson, 315 Huntington Ave., Boston, and Allen Nunnally, 17 Gilbert Ct., Malden, can look back on goals set for themselves and achievements they have accomplished.

Brunson is a History major and will continue his education by enrolling for graduate studies at Simmons College.

Nunnally, as well as Brunson, had many student volunteer readers over the past four years, but he will be marrying one of them next month. Nunnally will be wed to Christine McDonald, a former UMass-Boston student, who assisted him in gaining Dean's List honors for four years.

Both are older than the average college-age student. Brunson is 29, and Nunnally is 26.

Deborah Dulong, 217 Kelton St., Brookline, is a college dropout. Not once but twice. She found herself, she says, at UMass-Boston and it was a great job of discovery because she has won a full Fellowship at the University of Delaware where she will continue her studies in Art History, specializing in American Art.

After she was graduated from Newton High School, she enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh, and dropped out. Coming back to Massachusetts she enrolled at Northeastern University, and dropped out again. At UMass-Boston she was afraid her age might be against her--28. And then she discovered that a great many students were her age or older; one of them is Theresa Griffith, 50, a blind student, for whom Debby served as a volunteer reader. "We learned from one another."

Donna Stone, 60 Plymouth Rd., Malden, is married to a Psychologist Dr. Mort Stone. Donna's major at UMass-Boston has been Psychology. So what else is new?

She is the mother of three children, Ronald, 14, Suzanne, 12, and Daniel, 7.

Five years ago she began taking courses at Harvard Extension and later when Daniel went to Nursery School she visited UMass-Boston to inquire about part-time courses. She found she could take a full-time schedule by judiciously scheduling morning courses.

"I was very nervous about becoming a full-time student, but my fears were unwarranted," she says. "My teachers were fantastic and they went out of their way to help me make the adjustment as a full-time student."

Later in her UMass-Boston career, she was accepted for the Teacher Certification Program and was assigned teaching duties at the Trotter School in Roxbury--"a most enjoyable experience."

Now she is aiming at a teaching post in Malden schools, continuing on to graduate studies in counseling, and looks upon Commencement as a highlight of her life, with husband and children cheering her in the audience.

Peter Kadzis, 12 Arbella Rd., Dorchester, found that his college education at UMass-Boston was not confined to the classroom.

It came from community work, campus publications, and a unique opportunity as a research assistant for University Professor Adam Yarmolinsky.

For Yarmolinsky he did research on foreign affairs, education, policy making for higher education, and health affairs. "It was a chance to apply what I was reading about in my history and politics courses. It made class work even more interesting."

At Boston Latin School, he was editor of "The Register", the school's literary magazine. At UMass-Boston he was managing editor of the school paper "Mass Media", and also was editor of "Public Housing News", a community publication distributed in Boston Housing Projects.

Among his student activities was serving as a member with faculty, trustees, and staff on the selection committee for the UMass-Boston chancellor when he was a sophomore.

This summer he will be an intern at the Boston Globe. Sometime later he plans to study law or business.

Some people call them "buffs", others say they're "nuts", more describe them as "aficionados", and in the commercial world they may be described as "experts".

When all is said and done about Peter Sheinfeld, 28, of 20 Lee Street, Cambridge, one can call this UMass-Boston graduate a Grade A genius when it comes to anything you want to know--or don't want to know--about transportation.

He is graduating from the College of Public and Community Service with a degree in Transportation. When he came to UMass-Boston in 1969 he began as a liberal arts student and has been in and out of classes since then. The out-of-class time has been in transportation pursuits.

One of the great successes of the new Harbor Campus of UMass-Boston is attributable to him. This is the free shuttle bus system that operates from the Columbia Station of the MBTA to the campus. It's one of the most efficient anywhere in the country.

If you ask Sheinfeld about time tables, he can rattle off schedules that were in existence at the old Boston Elevated Co. years ago. Actually, time tables are an old hobby of his. He has a collection of more than 2000 non-duplicated tables from around the world.

This is only a spin-off of his serious study of transportation modes. He is deeply interested and aware of operating and financial data of transportation systems.

His "competencies" for his degree cover every aspect of public transportation from perceptions of transit service by uses, through operating hours costs of buses and trackless trolleys.

Peggy Nolan, 242 Common Street, Belmont, is the mother of seven children--ranging from 13 to 27--and is graduating from UMass-Boston with honors in Sociology.

Among the highlights of her four years in college--after being away from classrooms for 30 years--was the experience in the Teacher Certification Program. This year she has been teaching two courses at Lexington High. One course is "Crime and Police" and the other is a self-designed course "The Courts and The Law," a subject she is familiar with since her husband is Judge Joseph Nolan of the Brighton District Court.

Graduation day is "one of the best days of my life," she says and she can look back with achievements, honors, praise for her professors and even giving up "my lunch money to some of the unfortunates in the Park Square area" when UMass-Boston's main campus was there.

Her daughter, Maura, 18, is a freshman at UMass-Boston, so mother and daughter shared many educational experiences together. And Maura, along with her husband, Joe, and other members of the family, Jacqueline Nolan Haley, an Assistant District Attorney in Boston; nurses, Barbara and Janice; Leonard, a sports-goods distributor; Martina, a Belmont High senior, and Joe, Jr., who is in middle school, all will be at Peggy Nolan's graduation.

For most of this year she had a unique student experience serving as a member of a selection committee for the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Her judgments, fellow members said, were "Extremely valuable."
