In Convocation Address, Chancellor Calls For Expanded Access to Higher Education

By DeWayne Lehman

Chancellor J. Keith Motley kicked off the 2008-2009 academic year with a convocation address that called for increased investment in public higher education, and challenged elected leaders and the university community to work toward expanding the role of public colleges and universities in addressing the challenges facing the nation. The chancellor's address led a day of convocation activities at the campus, including remarks by UMass President Jack Wilson and Massachusetts Secretary of Education Paul Reville, a cook-out for the university community on the front lawn of the Campus Center, and an evening community reception.

In his second convocation speech as chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Boston, Dr. Motley outlined the challenges and the important role of public research universities in a statewide environment that often favors private higher education. “We are facing a new frontier in the United States and in Massachusetts…. The challenges on our frontier have to do with global economic and technical competition, global warming, crumbling physical infrastructure, fossil fuel scarcity, unprecedented diversity, increased investment in public higher education, and addressing the needs of our aging population.”

Even in difficult times, said Chancellor Motley, UMass Boston continues to make progress.

Record-Setting Year for Grants and Sponsored Programs

By Jim Mortenson

Records are made to be broken, and once again the faculty, staff, and students of UMass Boston set a new record in FY 2008 for grant and sponsored program awards—$45.4 million, an 8.77 percent increase from the previous year.

“I am so pleased that we have solidified and are continuing to enhance our reputation as a research university,” said Chancellor J. Keith Motley. “Now, as I stated in my recent convocation address, we need to look at our various research projects, see who is working on what and how the cross-pollination of efforts can have a multiplier effect. That’s the purpose of the new research clusters we have formed.”

Motley went on to say how he believes that the soon-to-open Venture Development Center will.

Venture Development Center: An Engine for Innovation

By Geoffrey Kula

After six months of construction, the former cafeteria in Wheatley Hall is in the final stages of its transformation into the Venture Development Center, a collaborative and cross-disciplinary research space that will stimulate innovation among students and faculty, and help drive the Massachusetts economy.

The 18,000-square-foot facility, designed by Sasaki Associates, Inc., and built by J & J Contractors, Inc., is outfitted with four wet labs (two with fume hoods, and another two with the option of installing them at a later date), and two dry labs, as well as ten offices, which are expected to be licensed for 18- to 24-month periods. The Center will also feature space for conferences, presentations, and meetings. Two-thirds of the space will be dedicated to “non-hard sciences,” and, in a throwback to its roots, the VDC will also house a coffee bar, around which Vice Provost for Research Richard Antonak hopes “A-haat!” moments will happen as researchers cross paths in what he envisions as “a home away from home for visionaries.”

On the organizational side, the VDC will draw on the combined century-plus of business experience of its staff, including William Brahe, assistant vice provost for research and executive director; John Ciccarelli, associate vice chancellor for government relations, public affairs, and economic development; Susan Dauvelin, director of industry relations; and Christine DePalma, program director. The team will help entrepreneurs who are looking to develop a business plan, get funding, and make the connections necessary to take an idea from concept to reality. Furthermore, by facilitating partnerships between the university, private industry, state, local, and federal government agencies, as well as quasi-governmental institutions, the VDC will enhance the school’s mission of forging stronger ties with the community, one of the cornerstones of the university’s Strategic Plan. For Brahe, increasing the cachet of the university to that of its peers across the river will, in his words, “extend the Red Line.”

“We’re trying to bring innovation to this side of town,” he said, noting that he sees the VDC as a way to expand UMass Boston’s reach not only in Greater Boston, but also across the state and around the globe. Students will also benefit: The VDC will link them to paid internships, sponsor a business plan competition each year, and provide mentorship from an entrepreneur-in-residence, Dan Phillips, who has funded a dozen UMass Boston
By Brian Middleton

Many Americans, if asked to play word association, would probably follow “Kazakhstan” with “Borat.” But this Central Asian nation of more than 15 million citizens, far from being the agrarian backwater portrayed in Sacha Baron Cohen’s 2006 mockumentary, is an emerging industrial and financial leader in its region, one of the world’s fastest-growing oil producers, and a target of more than $40 billion in foreign investment in the past decade.

Kazakhstan’s impressive economic growth has brought both opportunities and challenges, making it a fertile environment for the study of international business. To that end, UMass Boston’s College of Management (CM) and Division of Corporate, Continuing and Distance Education (CCDE) have collaborated to develop a new program, “Focus on Kazakhstan and Central Asia: International Perspectives on Business and Government,” that saw its first successful run this June. CM Director of Graduate Programs William S. Koehler and CCDE International Programs Director Stanley Wanncha described the month-long program as even more successful than they had expected.

When asked why Kazakhstan was chosen as a study abroad destination for MBA students, Koehler offered several reasons, starting with the nation’s growing economic importance: “The recent developments in the country as far as exploration of natural resources played a big role. With oil at $130 a barrel, Kazakhstan becomes more relevant than at $30 a barrel.”

Another reason to study in Kazakstan is its diversity. Koehler describes the republic as “one of the truly ethnically and religiously diverse countries outside Europe and North America.” Ethnic Kazakhs make up just under 60 percent of the population, with a smorgasbord of ethnic groups making up the remainder, including Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, and various Central Asian peoples such as Uighurs and Uzbeks. This diversity is largely a product of the Soviet era, as Kazakhstan was a frequent destination for dissidents and ethnic minorities deported from European Russia by the Stalinist regime during the 1930s and 1940s. The Kazakhstan program structure was similar in most respects to other CM/CCDE partner programs that have run successfully in China and India (continued on page 4)

Grants and Sponsored Programs (cont. from page 1)

play an integral role in bringing togeth er multidisciplinary teams of faculty and research staff to obtain external grants and contracts. This approach is increasingly important, as federal sponsors such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) now often require multidisciplinary, and sometimes multi-institutional, approaches to conducting research.

Interim Provost Winston Langley echoes Morley’s approach: “We are on the cusp of challenging the traditional boundaries of thinking at institutions of higher education. The cross-pollination the chancellor espouses will be perhaps the most critical factor in shaping our identity and success as a research institution in the years ahead. Our students, especially our under graduate students, have much to gain should we succeed.”

UMass Boston was awarded a $7.7 million, five-year grant by the NIH to establish an exploratory center for health and health care disparities that is dedicated to community-based participatory research. UMass Boston, the Harvard School of Public Health, and Brigham and Women’s Hospital have partnered with Cherishing Our Hearts and Souls Coalition of Roxbury, for example, to conduct health disparities-related research projects; offer research training, with an emphasis on community-based participatory research, to faculty, students, and community stakeholders; and build a neighborhood-based infrastructure that can partner with academic institutions in Boston to research and implement best practices in community-based participatory research and academic-community partnerships. Professor Celia Moore, Department of Psychology, is the project’s principal investigator, and faculty from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the College of Public and Community Service are contributing their research expertise.

Professor Ron Etert, Department of Biology, was awarded a $592,000, three-year basic research grant from the NSF for his project “Evolution of Deep Sea Molluscs.” Etert’s research will contribute significantly to answering the two most basic questions about evolutionary diversification in the vast deep-sea environment: Where does it occur? And how does it occur? It will also create a solid conceptual and methodological context for future evolutionary studies in the deep sea.

The NIH awarded Associate Professors Rachel Skvirsky and Adan Colon-Carmona, Department of Biology, a $1.4 million, four-year grant to enhance the academic and research experiences of underrepresented students at the undergraduate level, in order to increase the number pursing doctoral study in biomedical fields and attaining doctoral degrees. The project’s official title is the Initiative for Maximizing Student Diversity, or IMSD, at UMass Boston. A key component of this project is UMass Boston’s partnership with the Dana-Farber Harvard Cancer Center, the main goal of which is to address health disparities in minority populations and to improve research, training, and outreach opportunities for minority students.

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation awarded a three-year, $8.2 million grant to the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies to focus on developing information and tools that improve the integration of natural and social science with ocean management. Stephen Crosby, dean of the McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies, and his colleague Robbin Peach, a senior research fellow, are the project’s co-principal investigators. The grant focuses on science integration efforts that will directly support the state’s formal ocean management planning and decision-making processes.

Peach and her colleagues on the Massachusetts Ocean Management Task Force initiated the concept of securing a grant. The Task Force, composed of state and local officials and private individuals representing diverse ocean user groups, met between June 2003 and March 2004 to develop recommendations for state action. To maintain momentum, Peach organized a group called Massachusetts Ocean Partnership (MOP), now housed at UMass Boston.

With the Moore Foundation grant, MOP will tackle questions such as what tools exist and what tools need to be developed to evaluate economic trade-offs when considering resource management options. MOP also will convene working groups in a nonregulatory setting to seek collaborative solutions to difficult ocean management issues and opportunities for cooperation in internal decision-making processes.

Now in the fourth of a five-year $12.5 million National Science Foundation grant, UMass Boston received $2.6 million to continue leading the work of the Boston Science Partnership (BSP). The BSP brings together three of Boston’s major educational institutions—UMass Boston, Northern University, and the Boston Public Schools—to raise student achievement in science among all students in Boston, from grade six through the university level. Hannah Sevian, who holds a joint appointment as associate profes sor of chemistry in the College of Science and Mathematics (CSM) and of curriculum and instruction in the Graduate College of Education (GCE), is the project’s principal investigator.

In partnership with Boston University, Boston Public Schools, and the Los Angeles Unified School District, Eisenkraft will develop, implement, and study a dual model of professional teacher development. The dual model will combine traditional professional development with an online professional development platform known as the Active Teachers Community.

“Our research accomplish ments were many and varied this past year,” said Vice Provost for Research Richard Antonak. “I am looking forward to another year of providing and enhancing an environment that encourages our faculty and staff to reach for and achieve even greater successes. Our faculty and staff are superb. And I am especially excited to be able to provide them with additional research infrastructure and innovation support in the form of the Venture Development Center.”

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A Facebook Group for Safety Awareness
By Anne-Marie Kent

Known primarily for its place at the start of every academic year, September has a new official identity nationwide. It’s now Emergency Preparedness Month.

Throughout the year, UMass Boston has made significant strides to refine its emergency preparedness planning and now—just in time for Emergency Preparedness Month—has unveiled the “UMass Boston Safety Awareness” group on Facebook.

“It’s a place where people can find general safety information about safety at UMass Boston, share their ideas on the message wall, learn about the campus emergency notification system, find event dates, and look at photos from past training exercises,” says Agne, who notes that the site will soon feature video produced by the UMass Boston Video Production Center, with involvement from UMass Boston Athletics. Created in early September, the Facebook group currently boasts a membership of fifteen.

UMass Boston is not alone in this foray onto Facebook for emergency preparedness. The University of Maryland and others have established these groups, which offer the benefit of interactive communication and idea-sharing. In addition, UMass Boston has other active Facebook groups, including groups for alumni and fans of the university.

“Nationwide, the expectation is that there are colleges and universities that have established these groups, which offer the benefit of interactive communication and idea-sharing,” says Richard Lee, assistant director of Public Safety, who is a certified critical scene incident management trainer for the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

He notes that the Facebook page is just one of many safety-related initiatives under way on campus. Some 2,000 safety awareness bookmarks developed by Agne’s subcommittee are being distributed by the campus bookstores, Healey Library, Student Life, and others; matching posters are prominently displayed throughout campus. Fire drills have taken place through the month of September, and in addition, the Security Sub-committee of the Public Affairs staff are being trained in crisis call answering.

The Safety Committee completed its second tabletop exercise in Incident Command System training on September 29, and GRPA and IT will conduct a tabletop exercise on October 2.

During October, the university’s Needs Assessment will be reviewed and the appendices to the Emergency Operations Plan will be refined and incorporated into the larger plan, just in time for its first annual revision in December.

Venture Development Center (cont. from page 1)

student scholarships over the past 15 years.

The idea of the VDC, which will begin operations in early 2009, has been germinating for years, Antonak said, but it was a university-commissioned report by the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice that helped solidify an action plan. The study defined the school’s sponsored program strengths, identified where there was room to grow, and suggested opportunities; one of those suggestions involved building stronger ties with business partners. But UMass Boston didn’t do it in a one-departmental or intercollege programs in place, which industry partners prefer to work with when conducting research aimed at putting new products on the market.

“We needed resources that allowed this collaboration,” Antonak said. “Before the VDC, the university’s resources were there, but they were ‘isled’ —they existed and, up to this point in time, thrived independent of each other, each in its separate location on campus.” The VDC team therefore had a twofold mission from the onset: Create a space at a time when, all across the country, production plants or companies were moving to a manufacturer or service provider. If an innovation project is the project has also been crucial.

“Once a prototype is developed, new investors react to an incubator to test the proof-of-concept,” he continued. “Partners—angels, venture capitalists—will be brought in to make the product viable. Finally, we make to a manufacturer or production plant or a company is spun out of the incubator, yet it remains under the wing and guidance of all involved.”

Developing the VDC itself also involved some friends in high places, said Brah, noting former Chancellor Jo Ann Gora’s influence on the project.

“She set out to make UMass Boston a true research university and connect the school with Boston proper and its economy and resources,” he said. “Our job is to translate that vision into reality.”

This vision, Brah continued, was also shared downtown.

“UMass President Jack Wilson recognizes that all great universities have built [a facility like the VDC],” he said, adding that Chancellor Keith M. Motley’s support for the VDC; and that at least one “innovation economy” had large ties have built [a facility like the VDC]; and that at least one
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development of an idea from concept to reality will be aided by the VDC in three phases, said Antonak.

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There is an open dialogue between the VDC and the university. As Antonak explained, the VDC is open to the general public, as well as to the university community. This dialogue is important, as it helps to ensure that the VDC is meeting the needs of both the university and the public.

The VDC has a number of goals. First, it aims to attract and retain research faculty and staff. Second, it seeks to develop new and existing technologies into viable business ventures. Finally, it hopes to provide an environment that encourages collaboration and innovation.

Two views of the VDC’s open work area. (Photo by Harry Brott; rendering by Sasaki Associates)
Kazakhstan (cont. from page 2)

in recent years, comprising a mix of lectures and discussions, company visits, guest speakers from government and industry, and cultural experiences. The program’s academic component comprised two three-credit courses that counted toward the MBA specialization in International Management, with a research paper required to complete the program.

However, the Kazakhstan program differed from those offered in other international venues in one important feature: a reciprocal arrangement that put four Kazakh graduate students in the classroom alongside the six UMass Boston MBA students and ten participants to UMass Boston for two additional weeks of study to conclude the program. While in Kazakhstan, the students lived in Almaty, the country’s former capital and largest city, and studied at KIMEP, the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics, and Strategic Research.

The idea for this integrative arrangement emerged gradually over the course of a planning process that took more than a year, according to Waunaca.

“As soon as it became clear that KIMEP students could manage coursework in English—fortunately, in most universities in Kazakhstan, courses are taught both in Russian and English—and that their students were equally interested in the academic focus we were proposing, we settled on the idea of our students sitting side by side with the students from Kazakhstan,” he said. “It really is the ideal model: Since these are short-term programs, you have to make the most of your time abroad, and there’s no better way to gain insight, perspective, and concrete understanding about a foreign environment than to study and converse with peers who live in the host country.”

The result was a program that succeeded on multiple levels.

“Our students mixed with the host students both academically and personally,” Koehler notes, adding, “we were surprised at how well the two groups got along—we had hoped for it, but hadn’t necessarily expected it.”

Asked to sum up the importance of a program like this for UMass Boston MBA students, Koehler replied, “The conventional wisdom on study abroad is all correct—students get exposed to different ways of doing business, learn about opportunities for business collaboration on a global scale, begin to appreciate the way that varied cultural norms impact business dealings and negotiations, and develop a greater respect for the value of other cultures.

“A more fundamental result is that MBA students, by being taken out of their accustomed surroundings and experiencing ‘otherness,’ become far more open to unconventional and creative approaches to problem-solving, question their own belief structures, and are then able to listen more receptively to the ideas and needs of others. In short, students become more flexible and less self-centered in their thinking.”

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“Coal,” is inspired by the 2006 Sago Mine disaster, which killed twelve miners. Festival-goers also enjoyed the preeminent male singer/songwriter of the new folk movement, John Gorka, Grammy-nominated songwriter and Austin Music Hall of Fame inductee Eliza Gilkyson, the unique mix of Henry Butler, and the enduring music of David Buskin and Robin Batteau. Fans got to see why a stunning list of musicians have recorded the music of Clift Eberhard, as well as one of the brightest stars currently rising in the already bright Boston folk scene, Eileen Jewell. Another crowd favorite was Susan Werner, who holds multiple degrees in voice, including a master’s from Temple University.

Having lived in Venezuela, Holland, Norway, Texas, New York City, and England, and having played music as diverse as blues, jazz, and heavy metal, Pat Wictor gave the Boston audience his unique take on folk music, as did New England’s own Jason Spooner of the Jason Spooner Trio. Annie Lynch and the Beekeepers, meanwhile, masterfully blended cello, accordion, mandolin, guitar, bass, and even a bow and saw into an old-time Americana sound that took the audience to another world and back.

Representing the newest generation of folk performers was 18-year-old Emily Elbert, a full-time student at Berklee College of Music. The Boston crowd loved the wit and charm of Andrew McKnight. And after listening to the clear Delta blues-influenced guitar of Danielle Miraglia, it’s surprising to find she’s a native of Revere. The future for folk music in Boston is looking bright, thanks to stars like Chris O’Brien and Jud Caswell, who got first place in the 2006 Boston Folk Festival Songwriting Competition.

“We’ve been regulars at the WUMB festival year after year for seven years now,” said Susan Carpenter, who had driven to Boston from Andover with her daughter Elizabeth and newborn grandson Ben. “All I can say is that going forward, the Boston Folk Festival is assured to have three generations of ardent fans.”

Programs Boost Chinese-Language Skills for Area Students, Teachers

By Brian Middleton

High school and middle school students and teachers from across New England took advantage of a unique opportunity to improve their skills in Mandarin Chinese at the Mandarin Language Summer Camp. The Mandarin Language Summer Camp brought 52 students to the campus for a four-week program combining Chinese-language instruction at three skill levels with cultural and historical education. Students were selected based on recommendations from their teachers; those accepted were given free tuition.

There has been a blossoming of Chinese language being taught in New England public and private schools, said Renee Covalcucci, assistant director of the summer camp program, who described the camp participants as “a population of motivated youth who...will make a difference. One could feel their eagerness and energy. Students who self-select to study Mandarin for weeks of summer must be of a special breed.”

The Chinese Language Teachers Summer Institute was composed of two two-week sessions. The first session was focused on preparing participants to pass the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) exams, while the second session, aimed at teachers with three or more years of Chinese teaching experience, combining technology training with advanced pedagogical skills and resources. Both programs aimed to benefit the body as well as the mind by incorporating Tai Chi exercises into the daily schedule of activities.

The student program in particular drew raves from visiting evaluators, who praised the instructors for their “exemplary organization” and “creative teaching materials, and concluded: "The University of Massachusetts at Boston Chinese program is a model of excellence in design, planning, materials development, and execution in every way, and is a best practices model for new programs.”

The programs were presented by the UMass Boston China Program Center, the University of Massachusetts Confucius Institute at UMass Boston, and the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS), with sponsorship by STARTALK. Launched in 2007 by the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland, STARTALK awards grants to educational and cultural institutions to sponsor summer programs serving teachers and learners of Arabic and Chinese. STARTALK is funded jointly by the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Defense as a component of the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) announced by President Bush in January 2006.

Fans, Performers Brave Blustery Weather at Folk Festival

By Kazuhi Prakash and Patty Domeniconi

Tropical Storm Ike gave the outdoor portion of the 11th annual Boston Folk Festival a thundery reception. Lawn chairs and colorful umbrellas dotted the outdoor venue, where hundreds of guests had braved the weather to support the artists and make the event a success.

“My wife Rachel and I are regulars at all the area folk festivals, and we eagerly watch out for the Boston one every year,” said attendee Mike Donovan. “The Boston Folk Festival has always had a great mix of both young and experienced performers,” added Rachel Donovan.

The festival officially began on Saturday, September 13, with the songwriting competition for up-and-coming performers. Nick Lattanzi of Belmont took first place in the youth division, and Oen Kennedy of Paris, Maine, won the adult division. Both winners performed their winning song on the main field stage Sunday to rousing applause.

Headlining Sunday’s main event was Kathy Mattea, a Grammy-winning veteran of both the country and bluegrass genres of music. She was born into a coal miner’s family, and her most recent album, A kendallblown John Gorka (left) and Grammy winner Kathy Mattea on the main stage on Sunday. (Photos by Harry Brett)

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Research Director Gets Details So That Others Can See Big Picture

By Anne-Marie Kent

It’s no wonder that director of Institutional Research and Policy Studies Jennifer Brown and her staff have a hard time making small talk at parties about what it is that they do.

“It’s a joke in the profession,” she explains in her office in the Quinn Building. “Our own families have a hard time understanding what it is that we do. Basically, I tell people that I count things.”

Of course, it’s a bit more complicated than that: Brown is part detective, part debunker of myths, and part problem-solving, story-telling institutional historian.

A quilter in her spare time, Brown has a knack for seeing patterns and putting them together, a skill that she also applies to her job. “A vital skill as Brown and her staff focus their energies on the university’s Master Plan effort. “We’re trying to figure out what we might look like as a university in the future, so that space planners have information they need to help determine space allocation. We’re also working with a group of folks educating the community,” says Brown, who credits her staff with sharing both her enthusiasm for the work and a willingness to educate others.

“I think I have the best staff on campus. They genuinely want to help people find answers and explain data,” says Brown. “We help frame issues, verify claims, and debunk myths. We also keep a lot of facts and figures on hand: leaders need to have someone who knows all this complicated data and can retrieve it quickly.”

Over the past decades, Brown has held leadership positions in several professional associations, such as the Association for Institutional Research, the Northeast Association for Institutional Research, and the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, and was recently elected to the Board of Directors for the Association for Institutional Research. Brown will also serve as the Forum Chair for the 49th Annual Association for Institutional Research Forum, to be held in Atlanta in the spring of 2009, where institutional researchers from around the world will gather to compare notes, and find colleagues who understand their language.

“In each particular business, there is a different language for knowledge. Higher education is one such sector. In addition to all the mandated reporting responsibilities, we try to measure things to help people make informed decisions. Data gives you the parameters of a situation or an issue, but there are always other dimensions that numbers can’t tell,” says Brown, repeating a favorite quote by sociologist Pauline Barn “Everything is data, but data isn’t everything.”

Of course, data can be useful when it comes to myth-busting. Brown, who holds a doctorate in sociology, says, “It’s known as the ‘de-bunking’ science.”

But deconstructing myths and putting together a story around data is easier said than done. Myths can have sticking power. Take, for example, the persistent but not quite accurate notion that UMass Boston primarily serves older students.

“People talk about older students,” says Brown, “but what we really mean is that while traditional-age college students are 19 to 22, ours are 19 to 25.”

Other popular perceptions about UMass Boston are more accurate, says Brown, pointing to the university’s diverse student population. Key to understanding this ever-changing picture is the work of staffer Kevin Murphy, who explored the university’s role in educating immigrants in his PhD dissertation.

“Classic measures of race and ethnicity don’t even begin to describe the diversity that exists here at UMass Boston,” says Brown. “It’s very much tied to our urban mission.”

Over time, says Brown, perceptions about the university change, as do expectations of universities in general. In the nine years since she’s joined the university after serving as executive officer for academic affairs and research for the Board of Trustees of Connecticut’s state university system, Brown has seen a definite trend toward accountability.

“This work is growing by leaps and bounds. The federal government wants to know more and more about our institutions,” says Brown. “We provide information to the Board of Higher Education, the President’s Office, and the U.S. Department of Education’s Integrated Post-Secondary Data System. In each of these cases, issues of accountability and assessment are constantly expanding what we do.”

The media is also demanding: College guides, college boards, and U.S. News & World Report all want to know details so that potential students and their families can compare.

“All of these aren’t mandated, but we can’t afford to be in them,” says Brown. “The work we do is absolutely critical, because you need to know things that are very measurable.”

By Lissa Harris

Psychology professor Joan Liem has only just gotten started as dean of graduate studies, but she’s already proving her commitment to the job by making some big sacrifices: Before accepting the post, Liem was scheduled to go on sabbatical in January. That, she said, will have to wait.

“I’ve had a hard job convincing my husband that that was a smart thing to do,” she laughed.

In the meantime, she’ll have her work cut out for her. On September 1, Liem, a veteran educator and researcher with a long history of service to the university, assumed her new position, a role that was elevated this year to a deanship to reflect the growing importance of graduate study at UMass Boston.

Since joining the faculty in 1974, Liem has juggled a variety of academic and administrative roles on campus, along with conducting research on at-risk adolescents and young adults. She has also served on the boards of directors for the American Psychological Association’s Division 35 - Society for the Psychology of Women, and the Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund for Mental Health & Human Rights.

But Liem’s most proud accomplishment is probably UMass Boston’s PhD program in clinical psychology. The program, which Liem was instrumental in building and has directed for over a decade, is known nationally for its excellence, and was ranked by the Chronicle of Higher Education in 2006 as the tenth best in the country.

“I feel like there’s something quite special here, and I feel I’ve helped develop that,” she said.

Liem’s experience building strong graduate programs will serve the university well, said Winston Langley, interim provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs.

“She is someone who interacts very well with people of different interests, some often conflicting,” said Langley. “She is extremely insightful and creative, and she knows the university well.”

Liem is taking the reins at a time of major change and growth for UMass Boston. Several new graduate programs have been announced in the last year, and more are in the works, while the university’s strategic plan anticipates growth in graduate programs across the campus over the next several years.

“We have to think very carefully about how that growth is going to occur—how much of that is going to be new programs, and how much is going to be the result of strengthening and growing existing programs,” Liem said. “I think that’s always a delicate balance.”

Among her priorities, she said, is ensuring that growth at the graduate level helps enrich undergraduate education rather than competing with it—a balancing act she’s familiar with in her own research group, where undergrads work alongside PhD candidates. She’s also committed to getting the word out to the public about the university’s graduate programs.

“It’s going to be important for UMass Boston to establish itself as a university that people think about not just as an undergraduate teaching university, but as a university that has a rich array of graduate programs,” she said.

Liem admits to feeling a little conflicted about leaving the program she’s spent most of her career building and nurturing.

“I’ve been involved with this graduate program for well over 20 years. It’s hard to imagine not being its leader,” she said. “But I’m really looking forward to my new roles and responsibilities.”

Although she may be taking on a wider role, Liem isn’t leaving the Psychology Department behind entirely: She’ll continue to do research and act as a mentor to half a dozen graduate students, the newest of which is just beginning to be involved in the PhD program this fall. And while she’ll be missed by her colleagues in psychology, said Benjamin Donner, a soon-to-be-graduated PhD candidate in Liem’s research group, it’s the rest of the university’s gain.

“She is one of a kind,” he said. “She’s very dedicated to the mission of the program, and UMass Boston’s mission in general, with its emphasis on less-advantaged populations. And she works harder than anyone I’ve ever met in my life, but not at the expense of her humanity and her relationships. Ask anyone in her lab—she’s just rare that way.”

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The rigorous curriculum of the MSF is designed to aid students in earning professional certifications as well, such as the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA), Certified Financial Planner (CFP), Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and Certified Management Accountant (CMA) designations. The MSF builds upon the CM’s established strengths in graduate finance education, represented by its practice-oriented research, internationally recognized faculty, successful alumni, and competitive student population.

Financial services is “the second-largest employer in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts” after the health care industry, and “salaries and job growth are still very robust, despite the recent troubles in the credit and housing markets,” says Professor of Finance Atteya Chakraborty. The U.S. mutual fund industry is centered in Boston as well; many of the world’s largest mutual fund providers and services are headquartered here, including Fidelity Investments, State Street Corporation, Massachusetts Financial Services, Putnam Investments, Liberty Mutual, John Hancock, and Brown Brothers Harriman.

Other major financial services firms, including Bank of America, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young, Deloitte & Touche, Wellington Management, JP-Morgan Chase, and Bank of New York Mellon, have large presences in greater Boston. Many alumni of the College of Management’s undergraduate and graduate programs hold managerial positions with these major firms and regularly offer workshops, lectures, and master classes for the graduate business students at UMass Boston.

The curriculum of the MSF program is designed to provide a solid foundation in the fundamentals of management as well as comprehensive training in corporate finance and investment. The MSF program’s Business Core comprises coursework in accounting, economics, and organizational behavior; students with undergraduate or prior graduate work in business administration or a related field can waive these prerequisites.

The Finance Core covers all aspects of the field, including advanced corporate finance, financial modeling, portfolio analysis, financial statement analysis, mergers and acquisitions, and international financial management. Students in the MSF program can choose from over twenty relevant elective courses, ranging from Risk Management, Derivatives, Federal Tax Planning, and Global Investment Management, to Managing Mutual Funds, Massachusetts in the Global Economy, Health System Financial Management, and Estate and Economic Development, among others.

As the home of the Financial Services Forum (FSF), the College of Management represents an ideal environment in which to study finance.

“The Financial Services Forum is an industry-focused research center and think tank which brings together professionals from New England’s leading corpora tions with scholars and researchers from academic institutions to examine the challenges and opportunities of the financial services industry,” says Professor of Finance Arindam Bandopadhyaya, Director of the Forum and Chair of UMass Boston’s Accounting & Finance Department.

The Financial Services Forum hosts frequent conferences, symposia, and lectures on topics of importance to the industry. Recent events have included “Sarbanes-Oxley and Corporate Liability,” “The Future of the Hedge Fund Industry,” and “The Angel Investors Forum.” The FSF has also released recent Alerts analyzing the state of the five largest financial institutions in Massachusetts and a Report on the economic performance of the New England states. Students in the College of Management’s MSF and MBA programs play an active role in helping to organize these events and have presented their research at these events. Several master’s candidates currently conduct research for the Forum with professors Bandopadhyaya, Chakraborty, and James Grant in Finance and Professor Anne Jones in Accounting.

To be admitted to the MSF program, applicants must demonstrate both the qualifications and potential that spell success in graduate business study. While prior academic record, professional achievements, and GMAT score are important factors, “we also look beyond these criteria to get a sense of an applicant’s maturity, motivation, and interpersonal skills,” says College of Management dean Philip Quagliersi. The MSF program, he said, “provides a hands-on, ‘roll up your sleeves’ approach to finance education, utilizing case studies and real-world projects in addition to case analysis. Prospective students can obtain more information about the program at www.msf.umb.edu or e-mail the Director at bmbo@umb.edu.
Helping the Disabled Get AHEAD

Career of Teaching, "Other presentations in this "strand" included graduate students with disabilities in health professions and law. Carol also served as the program chair for this series of presentations.

On the panel this year were representatives from private institutions and community colleges, and one special panel—Mary DeSouza, Carol’s daughter—who teaches an online course through CCIVE and has worked with the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Graduate College of Education on the preparation of teachers in the area of math education. Mary discussed the technology available for accommodating prospective teachers with disabilities in the state certification exams as well as the clinical setting itself.
All events are open to the public and free unless otherwise noted. From off campus, dial (617) 28 and the last five digits listed below each event. Submit events to news@umb.edu.

Monads 2007

Business Strategy Basics
6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Copley Square Library, 700 Boylston Street, Boston. Whether you’re about to start a business or are already running one, the key to success is having a strategy. This workshop will introduce you to business strategy: its origins, application, and a variety of important models and principles. For more information, call the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center at 7-7730 or register online at www.mdбеж.umb.edu/training.

Friday 10

Breakwater Reading Series
7 p.m., Porter Square Books, Porter Square, Cambridge. UM-Boston fiction writer Jennifer De Leon and poet Jeffrey Taylor will read their work alongside Emerson College poets Matt Summers and nonfiction writer Marc Velasquez. Sponsored by the UMass-Boston and Emerson College Graduate Writing Department. Call 7-6736 for more information.

Monday 13

Columbia Day University closed.

Thursday 16

Testimonios AfroPuertoriquenos
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., Chancellor’s Conference Room. Multidisciplinary presentation will examine the myths of national homogeneity and racial purity in Puerto Rico, and challenge the tenets of Puerto Rican racial discourse and traditional methods of producing and knowledge about the AfroPuerto Rican experience.

Saturday 18

Open House
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. The university welcomes students who are looking to start a college experience, transfer from their current college, or advance their degrees in one of our world-class graduate programs. For details or to volunteer for the event, contact Linda Mickle at 7-6100.

The Center for Collaborative Leadership’s Annual Emerging Leaders Luncheon
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Westin Copley Place Hotel, Back Bay. Event celebrates and honors the 2008 Emerging Leaders Fellows. Keynote speaker and award-winning journalist Liz Walker will be giving the keynote speech, entitled Leading with My Heart: How I Learned to Take Risks. Cost of the luncheon is $50. For more information, please contact Andrea Wight at leader@umb.edu or 7-3890.

Sunday 25

Rememering Home: Memories of Living in Public Housing in Boston
10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Healey Library. Local residents with connections to public housing are invited to bring two or three family photographs to contribute to a statewide educational website at www.MassMemories.net. The event is free and open to all. For more information, call 7-5929.

Orange Park Studios
7 p.m. – 8 p.m., Healey Library, Media Auditorium. Co-sponsored forum on Native history, presented by the Wampanoag Indigenous Program at the Institute of Indigenous Plantation. Contact Barbara Davis 7-6830 for more information.

The event will feature a networking reception and resource tables beginning at 5:30 p.m., with the screening starting at 6 p.m. All are welcome.

Student Volunteers Help Out the Next Generation on Fall Good Neighbor Day

Students Steve Perrello and Tory Fehy on Fall Good Neighbor Day. (Photo by Idah Alubaka)

The Office of Student Leadership and Community Engagement kicked off the year with the Annual Fall Good Neighbor Day on September 5. Dorchester Cares is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to coordinate, develop, and institutionalize comprehensive community-based programs to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect in target neighborhoods in Dorchester. This year UMass Boston students decorated 83 bibs and 38 onesies to be donated to the group’s Welcome Baby Project. Other events coming up this semester include the Boston Pumpkin Festival Monthly Service Day on October 18 and Hunger and Homeless Week from November 17 through 22. For more information on Community Engagement programs call 7-7966 or join our listserv at communityservice-join@lists.umb.edu.