National Science Foundation Funds Noyce Scholars Program to Train Math and Science Teachers for City Schools

By Ed Hayward

A new University of Massachusetts Boston project designed to prepare teachers of math and science for work in the Boston Public Schools (BPS) has received funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) that will support 39 graduate and undergraduate students in their teacher preparation studies over the next three years.

Building on the university’s model urban teacher training program Teach Next Year, the Noyce Scholars Program will focus on preparing students to meet the high demand for subject-trained math and science teachers in the classrooms of the Boston Public Schools. (Photo by Harry Brett)

Does Childhood Asthma Alter More Than Breathing? UMass Boston Clinical Psychologist Studies the Debate

By Peter Grennen

Even the most conscientious researchers may fall victim to a certain professional myopia, pursuing their own narrow interests so intently that they lose sight of their work’s larger significance. When a UMass Boston graduate student encountered this problem in the scholarly record on a topic of interest to her, she decided she should begin to set matters straight—and in so doing provided valuable insight about interpreting research in her field.

For years, pediatric researchers have been locked in a stand-off over the role of childhood asthma in human psychosocial development. On one side are those who claim that asthma makes children susceptible to depression and other “internalizing” illnesses, leading in many cases to social maladjustment. On the other are the authors of studies showing that children with asthma function about as well in social settings as do their healthy peers.

Jennifer Bender Berz, a doctoral student in clinical psychology, has weighed in on the subject by calling attention to a telling demographic. “Only a handful of studies have examined the psychosocial functioning of children from urban environments, where asthma is most prevalent,” she writes in “Children’s Asthma, Internalizing Problems, and Social Functioning: An Urban Perspective,” a coauthored study that appeared recently in the quarterly Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing.

A fuller understanding of asthma’s effects on a child’s psyche will surely help answer questions about human social development and be useful in devising effective interventions. At stake, ultimately, is the ability of young asthma sufferers to form...
Sociologist Examines the Lives of Retirees in New Book

By Lisa Gertes

UMass Boston’s Biology and Computer Science Departments are helping students at the Edward Everett School combine technology and science to create their own web-based nature guide.

Armed with digital cameras loaned by UMass Boston, about a dozen third, fourth, and fifth graders from the Edward Everett School’s Science Photography Club participated in a photo treasure hunt in UMass Boston’s three on-campus greenhouses last month.

The Biology and Computer Science Departments are teaming up with the young scientists under the university’s Electronic Field Guide Project. The project, funded by the National Science Foundation, creates web-based databases for recording and identifying species and ecological observations, according to its website.

This was the first time the project has been teamed with students in Dorchester, according to Jennifer Forman Orth, a biologist and post-doctorate research associate in the Computer Science Department.

“They don’t spend a lot of time with nature,” Orth said of the urban youngsters. “It’s fun to help them find out about it.”

At the greenhouse treasure hunt, students had to find 12 different items and take digital photos of each, which will be posted online, she said. The UMass Boston project coordinators are also helping the students create a full-sized poster of their favorite photos, which include pictures taken at their schoolyard of berries, fruit, and fall leaves.

Edward Everett School contributors previously had helped make the students’ ‘schoolyard-sat-able for play and outdoor learning,” said Orth. “Parents were concerned this generation of students in school were losing their connection to nature,” Orth said. “They wanted city kids to be stewards of the environment.”

The photo project is more of a way of getting students started,” Orth said. It introduces students to a botanical vocabulary, and a fuller understanding of asthma’s effects on a child’s psyche provides them with an introduction to start learning how to identify the plants on their own.

UMass Boston’s two departments will continue to work with the children throughout the school year on their field guide project, she said.

The university’s Electronic Field Guide Project has collaborators all over the world, according to Orth.

She said the Edward Everett School is one of the many contributors, which include a contributor in Costa Rica creating a field guide on butterflies, and one in Nantucket who created a guide on invasive plants.

Eventually, UMass Boston’s project team would like to be able to get information to scientists out in the field instantly, through the Internet via cell phones or Palm Pilots, to help them identify a species on the spot, she said.

Robert Morris of UMass Boston’s Computer Science Department and Robert Stevenson of the Biology Department are part of the project team. Ruth Heeseplink, former school librarian, and Alicia Zipp, a community organizer, are helping facilitate the students at the Edward Everett School.

For more information, go to www.electronicfieldguide.org or check out the students’ photos at gallery.cs.umb.edu/gallery/edwardeverettschool.

By Leigh DuPuy

A new book by UMass Boston’s Robert Weiss is helping people navigate through the issues that surround retirement. While some daydream of the freedom retirement provides, and make it an entirely desired milestone, Weiss found that retirees who were happiest had been able to be active participants in community work.

Despite the allure of having more time for themselves, many retirees struggle to find meaning in lives no longer defined by the job. “Work provides support, benefits, and gratifications,” says Weiss. “It provides ties to the rest of society and makes us a part of things.”

With the absence of work, people can find themselves marginalized and unsure of how to occupy their time. Many worry about how best to use the freedom retirement brings.

Weiss says: “Although not quite an existential crisis, people do ask the questions: What do I want to do? Who am I? You have all this freedom, but how do you use it?”

However, Weiss’s findings were not entirely grim — far from it. Most retirees found ways to surround retirement’s challenges. “Some traveled, or did other things they’d long wanted to do,” he says.

Weiss found that retirees who were happiest had been able to become active participants in communities that mattered to them as had their community of work. They became volunteers, joined craft or hobby groups, or found part-time retirement work. “Many retirees do well when half their week is filled with obligations that, while not stressful, reassure them that they still matter. Then they can spend the rest of their time in whatever way they want,” says Weiss.

Eighty-year-old Weiss knows a bit about the phenomenon himself, having retired as a professor of sociology in 1989 after sixteen years at UMass Boston. For a time, he continued to conduct research as director of the university’s now defunct Work and Family Research Unit and for the past decade he has been a senior fellow at the Gerontology Institute.

“It is a marvelous association,” says Weiss. He said that he especially enjoys working with graduate students.

Weiss believes social networks, meaningful connections, and attitudes make big differences in how people fare in retirement. His recommendation: “Cherish the freedom retirement provides, and make sure you keep mattering somewhere.”

Dorchester Students Craft Web-Based Nature Guides at UMass Boston

By Lisa Gertes

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University Response Ensures Wheatley Hall Recovers from Storm Damage

By Ed Hayward

The hurricane-like winds that tore apart a synthetic covering atop the roof of Wheatley Hall were matched by the lightning-fast response of university employees and outside contractors who restored the building and made repairs that ensured Wheatley was open for business with the start of the spring semester.

Winds in excess of 70 m.p.h. stripped the waterproof membrane from much of the fourth-floor roof and cracked skylights at approximately 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 18. Without the protective covering, rainwater drained through gaps in the concrete roof and into office space. No one was injured on campus during the severe storm that socked Greater Boston.

The water soaked many Wheatley offices on the fourth and third floors, but faculty, staff, and students in those areas acted quickly to shield computers and sensitive materials from the water. They were joined immediately by the entire Facilities Department staff, armed with tarps, buckets, mops, and pumps, as well as personnel from Information Technology, Customer Service, and the Property Department.

Dean Adenirele Awotona of the College of Public and Community Service, which was affected by the water damage, praised the work of Facilities.

“The response of the Facilities personnel was quite remarkable,” Awotona said. “They arrived in the college within a split second and immediately began to assist the college in securing its equipment, especially the computers. Although they were under a tremendous amount of pressure, they worked diligently and with maximum efficiency throughout the calamity. They treated all faculty and staff members with utmost courtesy at all times.”

The building was closed and faculty, staff, and visitors were given two hours to secure their workspaces, gather belongings, and evacuate the building. The Division of Corporate, Continu- ing and Distance Education, which used the Wheatley classrooms during Winter Session, quickly relocated their evening classes and within hours had secured classroom space in McCormack Hall for the final two days of Winter Session.

Workers from Facilities and cleaning contractor One Source worked throughout the night to remove water and start cleaning carpets, walls, and ceilings following the storm, said Craig Pearson, interim director of Facilities. Public Safety officers remained on site to secure the waterlogged areas.

By dawn on Thursday, much of Wheatley had reopened. A roofing contractor was at work removing the estimated 10,000-15,000 square feet of roof covering and other debris. Faculty and staff from the affected areas were directed to report to work at the Campus Center, where they were made repairs that ensured the building and provided shelter to students and faculty. The campus community was most appreciative of all of the efforts expended to return campus operations to as close to normal as possible.

Inspiration. Achievement. Celebration! Inauguration Week Planning Continues

By Anne-Marie Kent

Mark your calendars! Inauguration Week, April 24 to 29, includes events that you will not want to miss, all of them celebrating the strengths of UMass Boston.

The week’s festivities include a number of academic symposia, a free concert for students, a fundraising gala to raise money for student scholarships, and the ceremonial inauguration of Chancellor Michael F. Collins, M.D. The excitement of the week will be capped off with a special day of celebration for members of the UMass Boston community and their families.

“Chancellor Collins has expressed a desire to host an event to show appreciation for faculty, staff, and their families during the inaugural week,” said Anne Riley, senior budget analyst and chair of the committee organizing the family fun day.

To plan the event for faculty, staff, and their families, Riley and her committee opted to ask for the input of university employees through a survey circulated via broadcast e-mail. “We put together a very short survey with questions that will help us decide how we would like to structure this event,” said Riley, who received 370 responses in less than a week.

“I was delighted that so many responded. One of the comments that we received several times was that folks really appreciated the fact that we asked for their advice,” said Riley, who will meet with her committee to review the results of the survey and to decide how the event should be structured.

“This is really our thank- you to faculty and staff for all that they do for the university,” said Chancellor Collins.

While Riley is spearheading the family day planning, Student Life director Joyce Morgan is currently reviewing top headliners for a student concert, to be held on April 27.

A subcommittee organizing academic symposia is also busy at work. Each college dean’s office is working to arrange an event that features nationally known speakers, alumni panels, lectures, and other presentations.

“All of the major academic units of the university are excitedly pursuing their plans and we will be reporting to the community about the specifics of these plans very shortly,” said Winston Langley, associate provost for academic affairs. “They are quite varied. If there was one feature that characterized them all, it is that of celebrating the campus in a broad, participatory fashion.”

Other events include the inauguration ceremony, scheduled for Friday, April 28. A luncheon androb- ing ceremony for university officials and special guests will be held that afternoon and will be followed by the inauguration of Michael F. Collins, M.D., as the seventh chancel- lor of UMass Boston.

On the following evening, the uni- versity is throwing its annual gala, a fundraising event to raise money for student scholarships on Saturday, April 29. It will be a ticketed event held in the Campus Center.

“The evening will feature a pre- dinner tasting reception and silent auction, ‘Tasting on the Point,’ which will highlight culinary sam- plings from various area restaur- ants, followed by the gala dinner, which will include cocktails, dinner, a live auction, fine entertain- ment, and dancing in the Campus Center,” said Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement Darrell Byers. “The real stars of the evening will be our students for whom we are raising scholar- ship funding. They are our cause for celebration that night.”

January Celebrations at UMass Boston


(Below) Three students take to the ice during a free skate offered throughout the week. UMass Boston welcomed students back to school for the spring semester with a weeklong schedule of activities, including an offering of open houses and information tables, free food, and musical performances. (Photos by Harry Brett)
Exerciser Scientist Brings Innovative Fitness Programming to Ireland

By Leigh DuPuy

It’s a common news story: our children are not getting enough physical activity and are spending too much time in front of televisions and computers, contributing to a national epidemic of childhood obesity. To help combat the problem, UMass Boston’s Kyle McInnis, chair of the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences, is using an innovative approach to turn the tables on the overindulgence of video games. He has created a “virtual gym” experience where kids exercise using interactive and technologically advanced games and equipment. This “video circuit-training" concept is taking off locally, nationally, and now internationally as a means of reaching inactive children and bringing fun back into physical fitness.

In January, McInnis was asked to present his techniques and re-search in Galway, Ireland, for a group of 60 public health and education policy makers concerned about a growing epidemic of childhood obesity and physical inactivity in their country.

“Ireland has really changed a lot in the past ten years. They’ve experienced an economic boom,” says McInnis, “and with it, a cultural shift that brings more technology, more traffic, and more families with two parents working. Like the United States, Ireland is seeing higher rates of inactivity, unhealthy eating, and obesity levels.”

In his presentation, “Obesity in Youth—Tackling a Growing Problem,” McInnis discussed his experiences in working with children in urban community centers and using innovative approaches to bring play back into physical fitness through the use of technology. He also demonstrated cutting-edge fitness programming never seen before in Ireland.

“Kids don’t typically exercise to get fit or to lose weight; rather, they exercise to have fun,” explains McInnis. As the lead in two community projects promoting physical fitness and healthy eating with underserved, urban children in Massachusetts, he has created a fun, circuit-training program using video game technol-ogy developed by Cybex Interna-tional in Medway. With Cybex’s newest equipment, called “Tazer,” kids are fitted with a waist belt equipped with a sensor that allows their virtual image on a video screen to move as they move, and score points by jump-ing, running, or kicking objects that enter the screen. McInnis also uses the game called Sportswall, which involves kids running back and forth and throwing balls to hit lights and score points.

“The kids control the pace,” says McInnis. “The faster they move, the more points they score.” He and researchers then monitor their heart rates and other qualitative measures of physical activity. “It exceeds the typical effort in physical education classes,” he says. “There is very little time that they aren’t actually moving.”

Most importantly, the kids like to do it and are having fun being active. McInnis found that after twelve weeks, 80 percent of his participants stayed with the program, compared to a national re-tention rate in similar community fitness programs of only 40 to 50 percent. McInnis believes this kind of enthusiasm could help change a child’s attitude about physical activity. These results were of high interest to policy makers on children’s health in Ireland who are concerned that the number of young people considered to be seriously overweight has tripled in past the 10 to 15 years.

In addition to helping create a pilot program in Galway, McInnis has been invited to speak at schools in London this summer on the same techniques. While the thought of playing video games may not go hand in hand with being physically fit, McInnis has found it to be a successful way to connect with a population typically hard to reach. “It’s not the com-plete solution, but it is a start and a great way to get these kids to enjoy being active,” he says.

Gerontologist Examines Long-Term Care and Older Workers at White House Conference on Aging

By Robert Geary

This December, the fifth decennial White House Conference on Aging was held in Washing-ton, D.C. The aim was to gather a range of experts and advocates noted for their work on issues in aging to discuss, debate, and prior-itize the major public policy is- sues in aging for the coming de-cade and beyond. The law re-quires that the conference report to the president and Congress by June 2006 to help guide national aging policies.

The 2005 Conference, themed “The Boomings Dynamics of Aging: From Awareness to Action,” occurred as the oldest baby boomers begin to prepare for re-tirement. The delegates were ap-pointed by governors, members of Congress, the National Con-gress of American Indians, and the policy committee of the con- ference.

Professor Yung-Ping (Bing) Chen, holder of the Frank J. Mann- ing Eminient Scholars Chair in Gerontology and senior fellow of the Gerontology Institute, attended the fourth consecutive conference as a delegate, this time appointed by the policy committee. Chen was also a consultant to the 1971 and 1981 conferences. He was commis-sioned to prepare briefing books on retirement income for use by the delegates to both of those confer- ences. For the 1995 conference, he was most concerned with older-worker issues. At the 2005 confer- ence, he was active in advocating reforms of funding and service de-livery of long-term care and the re-moval of barriers to continued em-ployment of older workers.

Delegates were asked to vote on up to 50 choices from 73 resolu-tions presented by the policy com-mittee, and they were asked to de-velop implementation strategies. Many resolutions urged a com-prehensive national strategy for fund-ing and delivery of long-term care.

“The fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population comprises those over age 85, the most likely to need long-term care,” says Chen. “Shortages of geriatric health care providers and in the long-term care workforce constitute a growing problem; the Medi-caid program’s nursing home bias is a serious issue; lack of social and private insurance is a major defi-ciency in funding long-term care; and elders with mental illnesses are much less understood.”

Older-worker issues were given prominence as well. Says Chen, “Age discrimination in employ- ment and training remains a prob-lem; impediments to phased and flexible retirement options pose important barriers to continuing work; and lack of employer aware- ness of the value of older workers is another issue.”

Chen argues that innovative solu-tions are needed. “Many of the ideas discussed in the conference have been proposed and debated around the country in academic, prac-tice, and policy circles, some for many years. However, when in- cluded in the conference’s report, these ideas stand better chances of being taken more seriously and may even be adopted,” he says.

“Obesity increases the potential for serious cardiovascular and other health problems in chil-dren,” says McInnis, such as high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes. McInnis was asked to present in Galway in part due to the en-thusiasm of his former student and research assistant Eoin Collier, who was speaking to a prominent sports leader about the work he did with McInnis during his under-graduate career at UMass Boston.

While in Galway, McInnis and his family also connected with another UMass alum, Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, president of the National University of Ireland, Galway, who received an honor- ary degree from the university in 2003.

New Leadership for Gerontology

By Robert Geary

This January, the Gerontology Institute of the McCormick Graduate School of Policy Studies named its first director in Maxmillianeine E. Sinovacova.

“Dr. Sinovacova is a nationally recognized scholar in the areas of older families, late-life labor-force participation, and gender and ag- ing,” says Jeff Buri, graduate pro-gram director. Sinovacova is known as a prodi-gious scholar, having published more than 70 journal articles, book chapters, and books, as well as for her productive grants and research. She is the former Sue Falkiner Scriber Distinguished Professor in Geriatrics at the Glennan Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology at Eastern Virginia Medical School. Sinovacova also holds graduate de-grees in sociology, philosophy, psy-chology, and history from the Uni-versity of Vienna.

Frank Caro recently retired as director after nearly ten years and will remain active as a faculty member, mentor, researcher, and editor of the Journal of Aging & Social Policy.
By Leigh DuPuy

This January, seven students who enrolled in the “International Epidemics” colloquium did more than study disease in the classroom. During a weeklong trip to Cape Town, they worked alongside of South African public health officials and activists in the country’s AIDS/HIV hospices.

The trip was a brainchild of Rajini Srikanth, director of the University Honors Program, who, along with associate director Dick Cluster, is teaching the colloquium series. She was searching for a way to add something more to the year-long course that focuses on academic study and on-the-ground work. The experience, offered by the University Honors Program, is open to honors students as well as recommended juniors and seniors. “I really wanted to offer my students a field experience in an international setting,” she said. Srikanth was able to coordinate an internship-style curriculum for her students in collaboration with Padraig O’Malley, senior fellow at the McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies, who is living in Cape Town while finishing his book. “He promised to make arrangements if I could bring the students there,” she said. With students volunteering to pay their own expenses, including boarding at an area youth hostel, Srikanth was faced with the task of trying to raise money for the cost of travel. “We were able to go because an anonymous donor contributed $11,000 to the project,” said Srikanth.

The group left on January 9, arrived in Cape Town on January 9, and began their work over the course of seven very busy days in a town called Khayelitsha. Noting the immense poverty there, Srikanth said, “It is called the AIDS capital of the world, as well as the TB and murder capital of the world.” The group was able to connect with Mandla Majola, a member of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), a grassroots HIV/AIDS activist organization composed of community members, doctors, public health officials, researchers, and others that provide care, including free antiretroviral treatment, to those who have the disease. “Without us, they would not have had exposure to TAC, the communities they serve, and the work that they do,” said Srikanth. “It is such an incredible organization and the students were really able to see how on-the-ground activists and intellectuals really work.”

Students would spend each morning working at one of three TAC sites. “They helped to provide counseling and education, helped pack medications, whatever it took,” said Srikanth. In the afternoons, they participated in academic-style lectures organized by O’Malley that featured economists, public policymakers, and medical doctors who spoke about the administration of care in a country where more than 3.5 million South Africans are infected with the HIV virus, according to 2003 statistics gathered by the UNAIDS organization. It is the largest number of individuals living with the virus in a single country.

In the evenings, the students met again with TAC workers who arranged meetings with faith healers, rape survivors, men’s support groups, and a church service, where members talked openly of having HIV/AIDS and provided support to each other. “It was humbling to go there and see the level of commitment of the workers,” says Srikanth. “They gave so much of themselves.” The experience also fulfilled one of Srikanth’s goals in teaching: to encourage her students to think in ways that challenge their comfort zone. Catherine Reyes-Spencer, a senior biochemistry major and medical school hopeful, was one of the honors students on the trip. “It was such a positive experience,” she said. “I expected to be depressed, and it was upsetting to hear about people’s traumatic experiences... However, it was amazing to witness the strength of the people living openly with the disease and to see the huge support network of hospices, rape centers, day care, business-owners helping at treatment, education, and prevention.”

The other students on the trip were Kimberley Carroll, Elizabeth Elia, Mirna Ortiz, Catherine Reyes-Spencer, Jessica Santicelli, Elena Stefanova, and OscarYepes. The group was also accompanied by Roberta Dougan, a filmmaker who has documented grassroots activism in countries such as Nepal and Nicaragua. “It was a great way to provide visual evidence of what we were doing,” said Srikanth.

Inspired by the experience, Srikanth said, “I would like to use this model to frame other internships.” She hopes to create a three-credit internship focused on public health that includes preparatory reading, exposure to Xhosa, the language of South Africa, and a ten-day trip to Cape Town. She would also like to design two other international internships, one with an environmental sustainability focus in Costa Rica and another on education issues in India. She points out, with students paying for credits and expenses, it would only require raised funds for travel.

These internships, though organized by the Honors Program, would be open to the wider campus community. Interested students would need to apply. “It gives our students an international experience they don’t ordinarily get,” she said. “The lives our students lead make them great future policymakers and they deserve these opportunities.”

Boston Medical Center Honors Vice Chancellor for Holiday Toy Deliveries

By UMass Boston Athletics Communications

Charlie Titus, vice chancellor for athletics, recreation, and special events, recently was named Boston Medical Center’s “January We Care” award recipient.

Since 1999, Titus has organized a drive for toys for kids at Boston Medical Center (BMC) and its predecessor Boston City Hospital. Each year, just before Christmas, Titus and an entourage of coaches and players from the UMass Boston men’s basketball team have carried sacks of toys to the pediatric emergency room, the inpatient pediatric unit, and throughout the entire ambulatory care center. Over the years, the men’s basketball squad has been joined by the men’s ice hockey team as well.

“UMass Boston teams’ visit to Boston Medical Center is the longest-running, uninterrupted, gift-giving effort among BMC’s many holiday season donors. For his dedication and commitment to the pediatric patients of Boston Medical Center, BMC honored Titus and his team with the award for January.

Titus, now in his 30th season as men’s basketball mentor, was director of athletics from 1980-2004, before stepping away for a year to serve as interim vice chancellor for student affairs. In his new position, Titus works on community service and outreach initiatives that, in his words, “allow me to pursue my passion to help UMass Boston serve the neighborhoods of the city.”

Titus has been instrumental in fueling the university’s commitment to community service, as evidenced by the Department of Athletics involvement throughout the city in helping the University Honors Program, the National Consortium for Academics and Sports named UMass Boston athletics as the top program in the country for community service for the seventh straight year, while the National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators honored UMass Boston with a community service award for the second consecutive year.

University Bids Farewell to Lewis Kerwin

On January 12, the university held a thank-you reception for Annemarie Lewis Kerwin, who resigned as vice chancellor for university communications and community relations in order to start her own strategic communications practice. During a reception that included speeches by former chancellors Sherry Fennelly and Keith Motley, and Provost Paul Fonteyn, Chancellor Michael F. Collins, M.D., thanked her for her service to the university and gave her a UMass Boston commemorative painted mirror as a token of appreciation. (Photo by Harry Brett)
Jorgelina Abbatte-Vaughn, assistant professor in the Graduate College of Education (GCOE), presented “Para Aquí Hoy, Para Añera Tomorrow”: Early Childhood Paraprofessionals’ Beliefs on Preparedness for Work in Urban Schools and NCLB Requirements” at the 21st Annual Conference of the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, held in San Diego.

Pratyush Bharati, assistant professor of management science and information systems, presented “Predicting the Demand for the IT Services Network in India” at the OASIS 2005 Workshop at the International Conference of Information Systems, held on December 11.

Lawrence Blum, professor of philosophy, presented “Traditions of Orientalism, Tradition and Traditions of Patriotism,” a comment on three presentations, including dr. couples Ajumie Wingo’s “To Love Your Mother, to Love Your Country as Your Mother” after 911,” at a session on “Patriotism and Civic Education,” sponsored by the Association for Philosophy of Education at the yearly conference of the eastern division of the American Philosophical Association.

On January 7, staff affiliated with the Center for Social Policy (CSP) represented UMass Boston at the annual meeting of the Labor and Employment Research Organization (Allied Social Sciences Association Meetings). CSP staff and affiliates Francois Carre, Brandynn Holgate, Tatjana Meschede, and Randy Albida presented papers.


Carol Hardy-Fanta, director of the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy (CWP), presented research on women’s political representation in Massachusetts at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Women’s Political Association, held on January 14.

William Kochler, graduate programs director at the College of Management, presented the coauthored paper “Work Habitats: Company Towns for the 21st Century” at the 2006 International Conference on Human Habitat: Shaping Sustainable Work Communities and Human Work Environment, held at the Rice College of Architecture in India.

Arthur MacEwan, chair and professor of economics, presented “Liberalization, Migration and Gender: The Mexican Experience,” at a session sponsored by the International Association for Feminist Economics and the Union for Radical Political Economics at the Allied Social Science Associations meetings, held in Boston on January 6.

Scott Maisano, assistant professor of English, presented his paper “The Pregnant Pause: Anna of Denmark as Queer in Dal Neile in The Drama of the Stuck: Stuck Performances” at the annual conference of the Modern Language Association, held in Washington, D.C. in December. Maisano was also invited to serve as respondent to a panel of papers on the topic “Early Modern Science Fiction.”

Sherry Morrow, undergraduate nursing program director in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS), was the guest speaker at a Quincy College nursing professional recognition ceremony held on January 5.

On January 13, Tatjana Meschede of the Center for Social Policy presented the findings of her research on homelessness at the Women’s Lunch Place. Her research examined the health conditions of homeless street dwellers and also discussed “housing first” strategies to permanently house chronically homeless people based on her ongoing research in Quincy.

Professor Jennifer Radden of the Philosophy Department spoke on “Technology and Virtues” at the American Philosophical Association meeting, held in New York in December.

Anny Rivera-Ottohenger, adjunct professor of political science, presented her paper “Contrasting Models of Local Government and Civil Society in Puebla, Mexico” at the Conference of the Urban Poor in Chile: The Cases of El Bosque and Peñalolén” at the 2003 Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Conference.

On January 12, Laura Henze Russell, director of the elder economic security standard project at the Gerontology Institute, co-presented “Senior Property Tax Relief” for 50 seniors at the Older Lifelong Learning Institute’s Brownbag Presentation.

Rob Stevenson, associate professor of biology, arranged and chaired the symposium “Ecophylogeny and Conservation: The Contributions of Energetics” at a January meeting of the Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. He also coauthored a presentation with William Woods: “Condition Indicators for Conservation: New Uses for Evolving Tools.”

On January 5, Professor Nancy Stier of the Art Department delivered the lecture “The City from Above and Below” for the Art Department’s Poster Project. Middle Eastern Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. She also participated in a meeting to organize the ninth international conference of Docomomo, an international organization for the documentation and conservation of modern buildings.


Robert Weinor, chair of the International Relations track in the Master of Science in Public Affairs Program, participated in the “Russian-Ukrainian Natural Gas Conflict” seminar at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, held at Harvard University on January 9.

Jason Wheeler and Joel Tierney of the Institute for Community Inclusion’s National Service Inclusion Project visited Alaska in January to train national and community service program coordinators on disability inclusion basics.


An essay by Prof. Ryan Campbell, assistant professor of economics, co-authored the essay “Writing by the Numbers: Jane Austen’s Meanings and the Art and Form of the Letter,” which was recently published in Persuasions, the journal of the Jane Austen Society of North America.

In January, Stephen Silliman, assistant professor of anthropology, was featured in the book review of “Archeology, co-edited with Martin Hall, with Blackwell Publishing.

Nina M. Silverstein, associate professor of geology, presented “Community Mobility and Supportive Transportation: Special Considerations for Dementia and Other Functional Impairments among Older Drivers” and convened the “Human Factors Workshop” at the Transportation Research Board annual meeting, held in January in Washington, D.C.

An article by professor of history Julie Winch, “No Common Lot: An African American Sailor’s Half-Century in the Age of Sail,” was published in Perspectives on Race, Ethnicity, and Power in Maritime America, edited by Glenn S. Gordiner.

Chi-kan Richard Heng, College of Public and Community Service assistant professor, published the article “Rules and Actions: Departmental Authorization of Staff Actions in Group-Based Microcredit Programs in the United States” in Economic Development Quarterly.

In December, Pascale Joassart, visiting research fellow at the Center for Social Policy and assistant professor in the Department of Economics, was the co-author of the report “Hopeful City: Trends in the informal labor force in Los Angeles and is available at www.econometric.org.

An article by Tatjana Meschede of the Center for Social Policy, “Accessing Housing: Exploring the Impact of Medical and Substance Services on Households’ Affordability for Chronically Homeless Street Dwellers,” was accepted for publication in a special issue of the Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment.


Cheryl Nixon and Louise Penner, assistant professors of English, co-authored the essay “Writing by the Numbers: Jane Austen’s Meanings and the Art and Form of the Letter,” which was recently published in Persuasions, the journal of the Jane Austen Society of North America.

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EXHIBITS, READINGS, PERFORMANCES, AND RECORDINGS

Mary Oleksiewicz, assistant professor of music, performed as flutist for the Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra in three performances of an all-Berlioz program, conducted by Grant Lewellyn, January 13-15 at Symphony Hall in Boston.

GRANTS, RESEARCH, AND PROJECTS

Edmund Redard, Dean of the McCormick Graduate School of Policy Studies, led a delegation of Massachusetts judges and other policy makers from that country. Project partners, including the Massachusetts Judges Conference, conducted workshops, keynote demonstrations, and seminars with the Russian Academy of Justice, the Moscow Commercial Court, Russian graduate students in law and policy, and private-sector stakeholders.

Joseph McDonough, executive director of the Massachusetts Judges Conference, and a visiting fellow in the McCormick Graduate School, joined the delegation.

EEOs professor Robert Chen and co-principal investigators Hannah Sevian of GCOE, Arthur Eisenkraft of COMMC, Marilyn Decker of the Boston School System, and Adam Colon-Carmona of the Biology Department, were awarded a $2M, 5-year grant from the National Science Foundation’s K-12 program for their proposal “Watershed-Integrated Sciences Partnership II (WISP-2).” This grant is a continuation of an initial grant that provides full fellowships for graduate students in the sciences to work with middle school teachers and students to improve science education.

A report by GCOE assistant professor Alexia Dowd, “Data Don’t Drive: Building a Practitioner-Driver Culture of Inquiry to Access Community College Performance,” was released in December by Lumina Foundation for Education. The report explores how community colleges can best use data to improve student services and is available at www.luminafoundation.org/publications.

Peter Kiang, director of the Asian American Studies Program and professor of education, served as a hearing officer for the National Public Education Network’s Massachusetts statewide hearing on No Child Left Behind legislation— one of ten in the country.
CAMPUS NOTES

Noyce Scholars (cont.)

strategic strength in mathematic-
s or science, and an interest in and a commitment to teach-
ing. The goal of UMass Boston's Noyce Scholars Program is to increase the number of qualifi-
ced Science, Technology, Engi-
neering, and Mathematics (STEM) graduates who are qualified to teach mathematics or science in the Boston area during the next three years. The program will work in partner-
ship with Boston schools so that teacher training and pro-
fessional development programs meet the needs of the city and the state.
The Noyce Scholars team consists of Graduate College of Education faculty Lisa Gonsalves, assistant professor of literacy and assessment, and Jordelina Abate- Vaughan, assist-
tant professor in curriculum and instruction; College of Science and Math faculty Brian White, assistant professor of biology, and Marietta Schwartz, associ-
ate professor in chemistry.

Asthma and Children (cont.)

last personal ties in their adult years. “Children’s social function-
ing in middle childhood is predic-
tive of relationships at later points in development,” says Bender Berz, whose academic specializa-
tion is child psychology. It is logical to posit a link be-
tween childhood asthma and psych-
odifficulties, as Bender Berz did. “Kids with asthma are typically more restricted in their recreational activity, and this can give rise to depressed mood,” she says. “Perhaps more important, asthma attacks often come on quickly and without warning, which can be very anxiety-pro-
voking.”

But the study itself, which fol-
lowed forty-eight urban kids eight to twelve years of age, told a dif-
f erent story: It produced no evi-
dence that asthma predisposes kids to other illness. Instead, the study’s asthmatic and healthy chil-
dren were found to be at similar risk for psychosocial problems, including symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Bender Berz believes that an explanation of that outcome lies inevitably to the specifics of her sample and methods. Far from proving that asthma and psycho-
social problems are unrelated, she says, her data may merely indicate a need to reassess the validity of existing measures for minority children. Or they may point to the diminished relative importance of asthma considered as one of a host of urban-life stressors. Re-
gardless, the study underscores, as Bender Berz says, “the importance of examining co-occurring diffi-
culties in psychosocial develop-
ment among urban children.”

One of the study’s more in-
teresting discussion points con-
cerns the effects of asthma treat-
mients: “A child's asthma may de-
mend a type of structured lifestyle—for example, close pa-
rental supervision or routinized medication administration—that could help to foster psychosocial well-being.” Put another way, asthma and its treatment can ac-
tually improve children’s self-
concept and self-esteem. Of course, that’s a thoroughly counterintuitive bit of reasoning, in view of the research model in which it is stated, however, it should not come as a surprise. “Epidemiological studies tend to provide more of a big-picture view of the nature of the relation-
ship between asthma and psycho-
social functioning,” Bender Berz says.

As she well knows, that perspec-
tive has been missing from the scholarly debate about child-
hood asthma for far too long.

Correction

In the January University Reporter, Meng Zhou was listed as a co-
principal investigator on Bob Chen’s new $528,697 Office of Naval Research grant “Predicting Chromophoric Dissolved Organic Matter Distributions in Coastal Waters.” The co-principal investigators are Yong Tian and Bernie Gardner.

In the News

Los Biener, senior research fellow at the Center for Survey Research, appeared on NBC's Today show on January 3 in a segment about new anti-tobacco advertisements broadcasting in New York.

James Campen, research associate at the Gaston Institute and professor emeritus of economics, was quoted in the Boston Globe on January 10 on his recent report finding a dramatic increase in out-
of-state lenders.

Research by CWPPP director Carol Hardy-Fanta and her co-principal investigators on the Gender and Multicultural Leadership Project was cited in a 2005 issue of Hispanic Business. She was also quoted in the Nashua Telegraph on January 8 on the low numbers of New Hampshire municipal officehold-
ers who are women.

Christine Holmes, an alumna of the exercise science program, was featured in the Boston Globe in January for her successful entrepre-
neurship in opening her own gym, Fitness Vibe, which has grown to 600 members since April.

Peter Xiang, professor of education and director of the Asian American Studies Program, and graduate student Jennifer Nguyen were quoted in a December 15 article in Diversity Issues in Higher Education on the effects of Hurricane Katrina on the Vietnamese population in the Gulf states.

Ashley McNulty, a candidate for a master's degree in education, was profiled for her teaching techniques by the response journals in the Danbury Clipper on December 14.

The Experience of Retirement, a new book by Robert Weiss, senior fellow at the Gerontology Institute and professor emeritus of sociol-
ology, was featured in the January 6 Chronicle of Higher Education's Nota Bie column.

Graduate Student Assembly Presents: Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day

Tuesday, February 7

4:00 p.m., Campus Center, Ballroom, 3rd fl.
Featuring author Joan Bolker
Book signing and reception to follow discussion
Contact: 7-7975 or gsaassembly@umb.edu

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The Calendar of Events is published monthly by the Office of University Communications and Community Relations. All events are open to the public and free, unless otherwise noted. From off campus, dial (617) 28 and the last five digits below each event.

Submit March calendar listings by Tuesday, February 14 to umb.news/calendar.

Thursday 2

Trotter Institute Presents:
Authors Stephen Fox and Derri Greenidge
Converse: 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Healey Library, Faculty Staff Lounge, 11th fl. Two biographers will share insights and perspectives on the life of William Monroe Trotter. Contact: 7-5885 or yvonne.gonzalez-umb@umb.edu.

College of Management MBA Forum
5:00 – 6:00 p.m., location to be announced. Featuring Daniel Joyce ’82, president of Moors & Cabot, Inc. Contact: www.managem.umb.edu/calendar/50th.php.

UMB Boston Athletics: Men’s Basketball vs. Tufts University
7:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

Friday 3

Same-Sex Marriage: A Symposium
9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Campus Center.
Featuring George Chassigny, E.J. Gehr, Gary Bosch, Maureen Sullivan, Jeffrey Sincen, David Wilson, and Rob Compton. The symposium organized by the UMass Boston Sexuality Studies Group and the Queer Student Center, with funding from the American Indian Studies Department, American Studies Graduate Student Roundtable, Art Department for Women in Politics and Public Policy, Classics Club, College of Liberal Arts, College of Public and Community Service, Graduate Student Assembly, Hispanic Studies Department, History Department, Philosophy Department, Student Affairs Council, and Women’s Studies Program. Contact: david.aero@umb.edu.

Philosophy Club
2:30 – 4:30 p.m., McCormack Hall, 5-041. All are invited to participate in the weekly presentation. Contact: 7-6406 or peggy.roldan@umb.edu.

Distinguished Speaker in Biology: Guest from the Rho Atmosphere: Roots Influence Soil Organisms through Chemistry and Biology
2:30 – 3:30 p.m., Science Center, Small Samas Lecture Hall, 1st fl. Featuring Jorge Vivanco, associate professor at Colorado State University and director of the Center for Rhizobiology. Sponsored by the Biology Department. Contact: 7-6600 or bio.umb@umb.edu/events.

Saturday 4

UMB Boston Athletics: Women’s Basketball vs. Keene State College
1:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

UMB Boston Athletics: Men’s Basketball vs. Keene State College
3:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

Thursday 9

Mediation Group
2:10 – 3:00 p.m., Thursdays, McCormack Hall, Interfaith Chaplain Ryan Lounge, 3rd fl. Learn to mediate. Guided instruction provided and all are welcome. Sponsored by the University Health Services and the Health, Wellness, and Center. Contact: 7-5624 or lauren.mayhew@umb.edu.

Friday 10

Biology Department Series
2:30-3:10 p.m., Science Center, Small Science Lecture Hall, 1st fl. Featuring N. Michele Holbrook of Harvard Biological Laboratories. Sponsored by the Biology Department. Contact: 7-6600 or www.bio.umb.edu/events.

UMB Boston Athletics: Women’s Ice Hockey vs. Holy Cross College
4:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center,rink. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

UMB Boston Athletics: Men’s Ice Hockey vs. Middlebury College
7:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center, rink. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

Tuesday 11

UMB Boston Athletics: She’s Got Game
12:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center. All-day celebration of women and sports. Events are free and open to the public. See www.umb.edu/umb.

UMB Boston Athletics: Women’s Ice Hockey vs. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
12:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center, rink. Featuring author Joan Boik, book signing and reception to follow discussion. Contact: 7-5797 or gaaassembly.umb.edu.

Trotter Institute Speaker Series: History of Blacks in Boston Theatre
4:00 p.m., Healey Library, gallery, 5th fl. Featuring kay Bourne, author and long-time writer for the Bay State Banner. The Trotter Institute has sponsored the lectures in celebration of Black History Month. Contact: 7-5880.

UMB Boston Athletics: Women’s Basketball vs. Plymouth State College
3:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

UMB Boston Athletics: Men’s Basketball vs. Plymouth State College
7:00 p.m., Clark Athletic Center, rink. See www.umb.edu/clark/events.htm for full schedule.

Tuesday 14

Yoga for All
2:30 – 3:10 p.m., Tuesdays, McCormack Hall, Reazon Center Aerobics Room, 1st fl. Kripalu yoga class open to all. Mats will be provided. Students free. Faculty and staff: $5.00. Sponsored by University Health Services. Contact: 7-5880 or linda.jorgensen@umb.edu.

Trotter Institute Speaker Series: First Against Fascism in Irrational The African Philosophical Influence in American Athletics
4:00 p.m., Healey Library, gallery, 5th fl. Featuring Danny Dawson of New York University. The Trotter Institute has sponsored the lectures in celebration of Black History Month. Contact: 7-5880.

Friday 24

Biological Department Series: Biological Ph.D. Student Presentations
2:10-3:00 p.m., Science Center, Small Science Lecture Hall, 1st fl. Featuring Melinda Gammon: “Molecular and Morphological Evidence of Inversion of Somatic Inversion in the Genus.” Contact: 7-6780 or bio.umb@umb.edu/events.

Monday 27

Colloquium Series: Medically Effective on the Health Care Utilization and Health Care Outcomes of Previous Uninsured
1:00 – 2:15 p.m., Wheatley Hall, 3-125. Featuring Judy Shimmel, assistant professor of economics at Northeastern University. Sponsored by the Gerontology Institute and Department, McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies. Contact: 7-5885.

Monday 28

Trotter Institute Speaker Series: African-Americans in Theatre in Theatre in Theatres
4:00 p.m., Healey Library, gallery, 5th fl. Featuring Lisa D. Johnson, Boston filmmaker and creator of the Trotter Institute on the lecture topic. The Trotter Institute has sponsored the lectures in celebration of Black History Month. Contact: 7-5880.

College of Management Senior Executive Forum
6:00 – 7:30 p.m., Campus Center, 3-3545. Featuring Gianfranco Zaccai, president and CEO of Design Continuum. Contact: cmcvenue@umb.edu.

Miscellaneous

Campus Ministry
Offerings include: Catholic Mass: 1st and 3rd Fridays, 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Ash Wednesday events: Mass, prayer, and Distribution of the Blessed Ashes. Sacramental preparation for Catholics, confirmation classes, and preparation for First Communion. Contact: 7-4389 or www.umb.edu/students/campus_ministry.

New England Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program Training Sessions
Offerings include: coaching and teaching strategies, culture brokering, Social Security information, and employment law. Register at www.nrclep.org.