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The UMass/Boston Friday Report

Volume 2, Number 7
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News and information about and for the
University Community from the Chancellor's Office

Letter on Pay Raises Sent to Governor -- Governor William Weld

received a letter concerning the issue of pay raises for faculty and staff on Wednesday, October 28, from Chancellor **Sherry H. Penney**, chair of the executive council of presidents and chancellors of public colleges and universities in the state. The letter, which also was signed by the 29 presidents and chancellors, requests that the Governor take action on the critical issue of lack of salary increases for the institutions' faculties and staffs to maintain the "long term health and quality" of the campuses. The presidents and chancellors are seeking a meeting with the Governor "to express in person our concerns about achievement of appropriate salary levels in higher education and to hear your views on this critical subject." The following information is included in the letter:

Since the fall of 1988, the salaries of the employees of public colleges and universities in the state have not kept pace with inflation, as defined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Eastern Massachusetts area. To keep pace with inflation, faculty and staff salaries would have had to increase by 21%. As the letter states: "Their salaries, indeed, can be considered to have today only about 80% of the buying power they had in the fall of 1988." The presidents and chancellors estimate that about \$66 million is needed for all public institutions to make current salaries reflect increases in the CPI since 1988. Furthermore, faculty salaries at 12 Boston area institutions (excluding Harvard University and MIT) increased an average of 16.8% between the fall of 1988 and the fall of 1991, "almost keeping pace with inflation." (The 12 institutions are Babson, Bentley, Brandeis, Boston College, Clark, Emerson, Northeastern, Simmons, Suffolk, Tufts, Wellesley and Wheelock.) And across the nation, continuing faculty in public community colleges, four-year colleges and universities received an increase of 17.8% during the same time period.

In addition, by the fall of 1991 the average salaries of full professors at the Boston and Lowell campuses of the University of Massachusetts system had dropped to 80% of the mean wages earned by their colleagues at public and private New England doctoral-granting institutions. The letter makes the point that the lack of salary increases has created a significant problem for the state's public institutions in recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty, and "thereby impairs our ability to maintain and improve the quality of instruction." Also, in trying to be competitive when hiring new faculty members, public institutions are forced to pay salaries above the level of those who were employed two to four years ago. This "creates significant salary inequities, contributing to poor morale, and, in effect, encouraging the departure of continuing faculty."

The letter to Governor Weld also points out that recent reports in the news media that some state employees have received cost of living increases "are extremely misleading." According to the letter, certain bargaining units of classified employees have received step increases, but most are already on their pay scale's final step. As an illustration, the letter states that UMass/Boston this fall has 420 state employees in this classification, and that 65% of them are not eligible for any such step increases. The letter states, "To imply that pay increases have been adequate or have kept up with inflation is simply not true."

COMEC Campaign Gets Underway -- The University's campus committee for the 1992 Commonwealth of Massachusetts Employee Campaign (COMEC) is now distributing information to faculty and staff regarding the fund drive. If you have not received information on COMEC and a pledge card, please contact your COMEC building representative. They representatives are: Healey Library, **Panit Satyasai** (7-5912); McCormack, **Len Konarski**, University Advising Center (7-5500); Quinn Administration/Clark Athletic Center, **Miguel Alvarez**, Admissions Office (7-6102); Science, **Henry Mariani**, Chemistry Department 7-6141); and Wheatley, **Vincent Cristiani**, Graduate College of Education (7-7604), and **Phyllis Wesley**, Student Affairs (7-7160). According to **Harold Horton**, the University's chair of the COMEC campaign, pledge cards and contributions should be returned to building representatives and not department heads, as indicated on the pledge card. If you have any questions regarding the COMEC campaign, please call your building representative or Horton (7-5880).

Campus Notes -- Sociology professor **Philip S. Hart**, whose PBS television documentary about black aviators unveiled a part of American history that classroom texts seldom examine, has written a children's book based on his highly-acclaimed film. The book, *Flying Free: America's First Black Aviators*, is published by Lerner Publications in Minneapolis. It chronicles the achievements and ordeals of black aviators in the 1920s and 1930s, and contains interviews and vintage photographs that were used in Hart's 1987 film, *Flyers In Search of a Dream*.

- Political Science Professor **Keitha S. Fine** will attend a conference on "Human Rights and Human Rights Education in the Process of Transition to Democracy" in Prague, Czechoslovakia, next week. She will address the conference about the issue from the perspective of the transition from authoritarianism in Latin American and Eastern Europe.
- The Children's Literature in-Service Program based at the Institute for Learning and Teaching is encouraging faculty and staff to become guest readers at schools from November 16 to 20 in a program, "New Age Role Models and Friends," sponsored by the national Reading is Fundamental organization. Contact: **Cathie Slater Spence** (7-7640).
- The McCormack Institute is sponsoring a "first-come, first seated bring your own lunch" discussion at 12 p.m. on Monday, November 9, featuring Secretary of Administration **Peter Nessen**. The place: faculty staff lounge, 11th floor, Healey Library.

- At the rededication of the Max Delbrück Center, the former Institute for Brain Research in Berlin-Buch (formerly part of East Germany) on October 16-17, Political Science Professor **Diane Paul** presented one of the five keynote addresses to a colloquium audience which included Germany's leading genetics scientists. Her address on the figure of Nickolai V. Timoféeff-Ressovsky, who directed the department of experimental genetics at the institute from 1925 to 1945. According to Political Science Chair **Kathleen Hartford**, Professor Paul's analysis of the issue of passive collaboration caused a sensation at the meeting, and was the focus of an article in the Sunday issue of Berlin's *Der Tagesspiegel*.
- Students looking for apartments or houses to rent, or who are seeking roommates, can take advantage of the University's new Housing Referral Service. According to director **Sherry Thomas**, the service makes available for free to students a listing of apartments, houses and rooms for rent, as well as information on students who are looking for roommates. There's also a list of homeowners who are offering students room and board accommodations in exchange for such services as housekeeping, or care for a child or elderly person. All of this information will soon be stored on computers at the service's offices, located on the first floor of the Quinn Administration Building.