11-12-1993

Friday Report - Vol. 03, No. 10 - November 12, 1993

University of Massachusetts Boston

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.umb.edu/university_fridayreport

Part of the Higher Education Administration Commons, and the Organizational Communication Commons

Recommended Citation

http://scholarworks.umb.edu/university_fridayreport/55

This University Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the University Publications and Campus Newsletters at ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1991-1996, Friday Report by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. For more information, please contact libraryuasc@umb.edu.
AQUARIUM HONORS RAINFOREST PROJECT

The Rainforest Collaboration, a UMass Boston project aimed at getting young people excited about science, has received the prestigious 1994 New England Aquarium David B. Stone Award. The award has for 25 years honored people for their "service to community and environment." Past winners comprise a distinguished group, including Jacques Cousteau, star of television documentaries on ocean life, and Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, the entrepreneurs who founded Ben and Jerry's Homemade Ice Cream. The co-recipient of the 1994 award is former CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite. The Rainforest Collaboration team includes management's Joan Tonn, project coordinator; biology's Kamal Bawa and Rob Stevenson; Lucia Davis, a staff associate at the Institute for Learning and Teaching; Lisa Riales; and Chris Collins.

The Rainforest Collaboration, founded in 1991, has in the last two years sent 32 Boston middle school students to Costa Rica during February school vacation to study rainforests. The Costa Rica journey is but one aspect of a project that expanded its focus to include year-round academic support for about 75 students, many of them from African American, Cape Verdean, Haitian, Latino and Vietnamese. Today middle school students involved in the Rainforest Collaboration are tutored in several subjects throughout the academic year by UMass Boston undergraduates who volunteer their services. The Rainforest Collaboration also has established middle school-based clubs that bring students together on a weekly basis to discuss science. A club for Rainforest Collaboration students who have gone on to high school meets weekly at UMass Boston. Another facet of the project involves Saturday gatherings in which students pursue a variety of activities. Recently they cleaned up Dorchester beaches and met with professional scientists during a mentoring conference at MIT sponsored by the New England Board of Higher Education. In October the UMass Boston research team led 40 middle school students to the Harvard Forest in central Massachusetts to investigate nature. "Even if these students don't pursue careers in science," says Lucia Davis, "The Rainforest Collaboration at least gives them an opportunity to explore their interests, and provides an intellectual foundation that will enable to have successful academic careers."

The Rainforest Collaboration is primarily supported by a two-year grant for $160,000 awarded in 1991 by the Educational Foundation of America. The Massachusetts Higher Education Coordinating Council and the U.S. Department of Education have contributed $45,000. Additional support is currently being sought.

CPCS to Encourage Collaboration With Boston Area Community Groups

A team of University researchers has begun work on a project that will encourage community organizations in Greater Boston to work collaboratively with faculty and staff at the College of Public and Community Service (CPCS). The 18-month project is supported by a grant of $16,000 from the Poverty and Race Research Action Council, an organization in Washington D.C. that is funding several similar initiatives in cities around the country. The UMass Boston team coordinating the project includes Marie Kennedy, Michael Stone, Andres Torres, Miren Uriarte and Ann Withrom.

The first phase of the project is devoted to establishing a directory of local constituencies, community organizations, activists, researchers, and sources of funding. This information, stored on CPCS computers, will be available to UMass Boston faculty, staff and students, and may eventually be accessible to people outside the University on a computer network. In January the first in of a series of seminars for community activists will take place at the Harbor Campus.

"At CPCS we have considerable experience and skill working with community organizations, but most of our relationships are on an individual basis," says Stone, a community planning professor. "This project will enable us to develop more formal relationships, and help us to identify issues and needs important to the communities." Assisting in the project will be Ty dePass, a former senior organizer at the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority and former teacher at Roxbury Community College.

More than half of the 250 students who turned out last Saturday for a workshop on transferring to UMass Boston were offered admission to the University for the spring semester. The workshop provided prospective students with an instant credit evaluation and a swift decision on admission. The session, which attracted more potential applicants than any previous effort to recruit transfers, was coordinated by Terry Phalen of the undergraduate admissions office.
Adaptive Computing Extends Expertise To Assist Businesses on Disabilities Act

The University has begun a project intended to help Massachusetts’ businesses comply with a federal law requiring employers to accommodate workers with disabilities. A formal announcement was made last month at a University Club breakfast attended by Lieutenant Governor Paul Cellucci. The project encourages cooperative ventures between UMass Boston computer specialists and Massachusetts’ companies with more than 25 employees, which are required under the Americans with Disabilities Act to make reasonable accommodations to ensure that jobs are accessible to people with physical impairments.

Several companies eager to adapt their electronic equipment, including Pizzeria Uno and Digital Equipment, have sought advice from Charlotte Corbett, coordinator of the UMass Boston’s Adaptive Computer Laboratory, a facility with more than $100,000 worth of computer equipment designed specifically for learning disabled and physically challenged students. In his visit to Harbor Campus Cellucci observed an adaptive computer keyboard that has allowed Peggy Burke, a systems operations counselor in the University’s financial aid office, to relieve the stress of tendinitis in her right hand.

Meanwhile, the University has entered the final year of a project to assist a dozen Massachusetts colleges in establishing their own computer labs for students with disabilities. Analysis and design assistance from Corbett and Computing Services’ John Murphy has been instrumental in erecting adaptive computer labs similar to UMass Boston’s at the following community colleges: Cape Cod Community College, Mass Bay, Roxbury and Mount Wachusett. Computer equipment is due to arrive soon at labs at four more community colleges: Springfield Technical, Berkshire, Bristol and Northern Essex.

A research team consisting of Corbett, Murphy and project coordinator Katherine Huggins is now beginning analysis of the adaptive computer needs at North Shore and Holyoke community colleges, as well as Bridgewater and Fitchburg state colleges. The three-year project is funded by a $240,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Additional support is being sought so that the University can help establish adaptive computer labs at 17 more state institutions.

Fundraising Tops $1.5 Million for FY 1993

Private donations to the University during the 1993 fiscal year were $1,564,241, an increase of 22% from 1992 and the largest amount ever raised by UMass Boston in a single year. Donations increased in virtually every category; the largest percentage increase in any category of giving was made to the University’s Student Support Services Center at 60%.


Many corporate and civic leaders assisted the University’s development efforts by serving on such advisory groups as the Campus Council, the Friends of Nursing, the Science and Math Advisory Board, and the College of Management Advisory Board.

Other successful development activities included the Business Breakfast, the Celebration of Black Scholarship in New England, the College of Management Auction and the Graduate College of Education Fellowship Drive.

"The gifts and grants received by the University recognize the worth of our mission and the very high quality of our teaching, research and community outreach programs," said Chancellor Pennry.