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Select Class of Writers Provide Instruction
At Joiner Center's Seventh Annual Workshop

A distinguished teaching faculty is at the Harbor Campus until July 1 to lead the Joiner Center's seventh annual two-week workshop for aspiring writers.

Workshops are being conducted by a pair of National Book Award winners: Larry Heinemann, who won in 1987 for "Pape's Story," and Tim O'Brien, who received the honor in 1979 for "Going After Cacciato." O'Brien's recent book about an American infantryman's experience in Vietnam, "The Things They Carried," won the National Magazine Award in fiction.

Many but not all of the instructors in the Joiner Center workshops are writers whose work has been influenced by the experience of war. Among the accomplished individuals on the teaching faculty are poet Carolyn Forche and UMass Boston professors of English Martha Collins, a writer and translator of poems, and Lloyd Schwartz, winner of the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for Criticism for his reviews of classical music.

"This is the equivalent of your son or daughter going to baseball camp and getting instruction from Roger Clemens and Ken Griffeey Jr.," says Michael Sullivan, coordinator of the Joiner Center workshop.

This year's program has attracted a larger-than-usual class of 88 students, who range from aspiring authors to published ones. Instructors critique students' manuscripts and present techniques for writing poetry and prose of various genres.

Several people who have enrolled in the Joiner Center workshop have gone on to have successful careers as writers, including Mildred Ridley, a retired nurse who was in her 50s when she published the novel "Yamilla," the story of an African American romance in 19th century America.

Associated with the Joiner Center workshop is a series of public readings taking place the week of June 26 at the University, at First Parish Church in Harvard Square and at the Boston Public Library on Boylston Street. Also, there will be panel discussion on how to get published.

Campus is Scene of Gala
For Nigeria Soccer Team

UMass Boston will be the scene on Saturday evening of a celebration for Nigeria's World Cup soccer team, which played Argentina that afternoon in an opening round game at Foxboro Stadium.

The celebration for 40 Nigerian team members and officials took place at the Clark Center hockey rink and featured food and live music.

The event was organized by the Nigerian American Multiservice Association, a Boston-based association of some 5,000 Nigerian immigrants who are now living in New England. The group holds its monthly meetings at UMass Boston.

UMass Boston provides space to dozens of community groups and organizations for meeting and social events. "Opening the campus to community groups is a vital component of the University's mission, and we're pleased to help the Nigerian team and its fans observe a very special occasion," says Gail Hobin, UMass Boston director of community relations and special events.

Isongesit Ikobette, a professor of African American history and former assistant soccer coach at UMass Boston who was born and raised in Nigeria, says approximately 10,000 Nigerian citizens have traveled to the United States to watch their country compete in its first-ever World Cup. Some 30,000 Nigerian partisans were expected to attend the match against Argentina.

Ikobette says the Nigerian soccer squad has become a catalyst for national unity and lifted the spirits of a nation frustrated by a beleaguered economy. "This game with Argentina is the biggest sporting event that has ever taken place in the history of Nigeria," Ikobette says. "If it were played on a weekday, I'm certain it would be declared a national holiday. The entire country watched the game on television."
Students Set Sail 
To New England Ports

Sixteen young men and women, most of them UMass Boston students, are aboard an 84-foot schooner in the midst of a seven-day research expedition in southern New England sponsored by the University.

The charter vessel Sylvina W. Beal set sail on Friday, June 17, from Fallon Pier at the John F. Kennedy Library and began a journey that will bring the student researchers to ports in Plymouth, Block Island, Newport, New Bedford, Martha’s Vineyard and Mystic, Connecticut.

During the journey UMass Boston geography professor Jack Looney is leading students in learning about such topics as coastal landforms, currents, tides, wind and water quality. The students also are examining basic concepts in marine ecology and getting a first-hand lesson in seamanship and how to navigate a traditional vessel. While the vessel is sailing, students are taking part in its operation.

The sailing excursion is one component of a five-week program of study at UMass Boston in the coastal environment. During the first two weeks of the program students were at the campus learning about the commercial fishing industry, marine transportation and physical oceanography. They then spent four days doing research on coastal dunes, marshes and salt-water marshes at the University Field Station on Nantucket Island.

“This entire program and particularly the excursion on the Sylvina W. Beal is a special opportunity for students to develop an awareness of the dynamics of the relationship between human beings and the marine environment,” says Looney.

The three-year old coastal environment program is sponsored by the University’s Division of Continuing Education, Urban Harbors Institute and Department of Geography. The Sylvina W. Beal is a knockabout schooner, built in the Frank J. Adams Yard in East Boothbay, Maine. Its captain is Jeffrey Jones.

The students aboard the Sylvina W. Beal include eight men and eight women. Fourteen are UMass Boston undergraduates, and two, Christopher Gurshin of Newburyport and Jessica Hammerly of Sturbridge, are sponsored by the University’s Department of Education as one of the best programs for young people in the country.

Borek has arranged for Envirolab III to spend a few days docked in Martha’s Vineyard, Nantucket and New Bedford so that students in those areas will have easier access to the program.

The Harbor Explorations crew is composed of young men and women interested in educational and professional careers in the sciences. They tend to be like Brad Hubens, who grew up in a boating family and just finished his freshman year at Bates College.

“I can’t think of a better job for the summer,” he says. “It’s nice to see the young kids developing good feelings for the ocean.”

Kids Examine Sea Life

Harbor Explorations Concludes Busiest-Ever Spring Season

The University’s Harbor Explorations initiative this past academic year provided first-hand lessons on the biology of Boston Harbor to about 3000 students, the largest number of participants in the 10-year history of the program.

As many as 150 students per day, many of them from middle and high schools in the Boston area, visited Dorchester Bay aboard the Harbor Explorations research vessel Envirolab III to examine marine life and perform experiments in water quality.

Envirolab III is a 65-foot craft designed specifically for research. The vessel is docked at UMass Boston for about seven months a year. It is owned by Project Oceanology, a non-profit educational corporation of which UMass Boston is the largest among 27 collaborating schools and colleges. Project Oceanology, a non-profit marine science institute in Groton, Connecticut, is a co-sponsor of Harbor Explorations.

All Hands on Deck

“This program emphasizes a hands-on approach, and I don’t think there’s a better way to capture kids curiosity for science,” says Mike Borek, director of Harbor Explorations, which since its inception in 1985 has taught basic marine biology to students ranging from elementary school up to college level.

Borek has for the first time established a waiting list of schools that want to join the program.

“A lot of interest comes from word of mouth among teachers,” Borek says. It also may have helped that Harbor Explorations was selected last year by the U.S. Department of Education as one of the 100 best programs for young people in the country.

Meanwhile, students at the other end of the vessel who calculated the water’s oxygen content discovered the harbor is not as badly polluted as they had expected. “Pollution is usually the first topic that kids will ask about,” noted crew member Michelle Carley.

Harbor Explorations isn’t just for students. Next month the program will hold its annual three-week institute on marine studies for middle and high school teachers. The institute sessions will take place aboard Envirolab III and in laboratories at the Harbor Campus.