NSF Grant Funds Professors Moore and White’s Neuroscience Project

Professor Celia Moore and Biology Professor Richard White have received a three-year $250,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to fund research in the area of integrative biology and neuroscience. White’s expertise is electron microscopy, and Moore’s is the relationship between hormones, early experience, and development of both behavior and the nervous system. Their collaboration enables them to examine the fine structures of nerve cells in male and female rats to explore the effects of hormones and social factors on the differential development of the nervous system.

“...my research asks if maternal stimulation contributes to the differences in development of the nervous system between male and females,” says Moore. “Through electron microscopy, we are now looking at differentiation of the axons of nerve cells.” Moore and White are assisted by Neil McGaughigan, an electron microscope technician whose work is supported by the NSF grant.

Moore’s multidisciplinary work in this area has been continuously funded by the NSF since 1976, and led to the discovery that the sense of smell allowed mothers to distinguish between their male and female offspring. Her research established a link between two aspects of animal life that scientists had previously assumed to be independent of each other: social behavior and biology.

Campus Notes

A Higher Education Coordinating Council task force chaired by Chancellor Sherry H. Pennebaker has issued a major report on financial aid programs in Massachusetts. The report was used as a recommendation by HECC Chancellor Stanley 2. Koplik to enhance communications on the availability of financial aid information for the state’s public colleges and universities.

Hubie Jones, Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Urban Affairs, was a featured panelist for a Boston University videoconference, The Challenge of Violence. World-wide, hosted by television journalist Charles Kuralt on February 6. More than 200 schools of social work nationwide used the videoconference as an introduction to the problem of violence in the United States and in developing countries.

WUMB Radio has developed an Artists in Residence Program, bringing blue musicians John Cephas and Phil Wiggins into Boston’s TIMMY, Tobin, and Cleveland Middle Schools this month. The program was developed with funds from the University’s Public Service Endowment Grant Program.

Two graduate students from the Dispute Resolution Program presented papers at the 5th Annual Symposium on Conflict Resolution held in Ottawa, Canada on February 1 and 2. “The Paradox of Ethical Resistance” was presented by Diane Marcincin, and “Ethical Considerations for Mediators” was presented by Claudine Langlois. Gillian Krawejak, Assistant Director of the Dispute Resolution Program, also made a presentation outlining the links between graduate study in dispute resolution and careers in mediation.

An A Dream Deferred examines data from the 1990 U.S. census and other sources, and shows that the population of Boston has been moving towards increasing diversity, with large gains in the percentages of communities of color, and increasing diversity within those communities.

The study presents evidence that gaps are widening between whites and non-whites in the areas of employment and income. While the median income for Boston households increased 36% from 1980 to 1990, the poorest 20% of the population moved further away from the city median during that time. Twenty percent of households made less than 34% of the median income in 1980, and 20% of all households made less than 34% of the median income in 1990.

The study contains an extensive demographic and socioeconomic profile of Boston, citing figures by race, ethnicity, and neighborhood composition, and showing newcomers as percentages of population. It discusses socioeconomic characteristics, such as housing, education, employment, and income. It also provides a recent history of Blacks, Asians, and Latinos in Boston, including institutional responses to the growth of new groups of immigrants.

A Dream Deferred was a joint effort among UMass Boston’s Institute for Asian American Studies, William Monroe Trotter, and Mauricio Gaston Institutes. Paul Watanabe, Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the Institute for Asian American Studies, is principal author of the report and collaborated with James Jennings, Gemima Remy, and Russell Williams of the Trotter Institute; Edwin Melendez and Christina Gomez of the Gaston Institute; and Michael Liu of the Institute for Asian American Studies. Each Institute brought its expertise and cultural perspective to the project.

“We argue that the many diverse communities of Boston should be recognized as a source of strength. If you look beyond downtown Boston, you can see growth in many neighborhoods,” says Watanabe. “Driving this development are groups of new residents. Their energy is going into these areas, unappreciated and unseen by many segments of the Boston community. In our opinion, Boston’s economic, social, cultural, and political life has not kept pace with the big changes that have occurred in the demographics of the city. ‘We want people who care about the present and future of Boston to see this study.’ A Dream Deferred concludes with calls for a broad and inclusive dialogue on the part of Boston’s institutions and individuals who wish to develop a shared sense of community.

The report was commissioned by The Boston Foundation, a participant in the Ford Foundation’s Changing Communities, Divros Nads initiative. ‘There is perhaps no more urgent task than generating public dialogue about our differences in order to find and affirm our shared concerns and aspirations,’” according to Anna Fair Jones, president of the Boston Foundation, in her introduction to the report. Jones also offers a strong endorsement of UMass Boston’s unique research and policy analysis capabilities. She notes that the three research institutes have a growing history of collaborative work, and that they provide the City of Boston with a unique institutional capacity for community analysis.
Leadership Development Program Provides Professional Opportunities

Eight UMass Boston students have joined the Leadership Development Program (LDP), bringing the total number of students to twenty-four in two years. The program is designed to enhance leadership skills and gives students the opportunity to make connections in the profession they wish to pursue. It was created through the efforts of Donna Neal, Program Director of Student Life, John Applebee, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, and Kelly Clark, Director of the Student Life Office.

The three-semester program’s first component presents leadership theory and skills through workshops focusing on leadership styles. Topics include education, social welfare, negotiation, volunteerism, team building, health care, ethics, and communication. “We have had some well presented workshops,” says LDP member Brenda Callender, who will complete the program this spring. “During one session, David Matz, Director of the Dispute Resolution Graduate Program, divided the class into groups to analyze a conflict. This workshop showed me the relevance of hearing both sides before reaching a conclusion.”

“Leadership Development Program encourages students to pursue. It was created through the efforts of Donna Neal, Program Director of Student Life, John Applebee, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, and Kelly Clark, Director of the Student Life Office.”

After three semesters, students are awarded a certificate of completion. A copy of this certificate is placed in each student’s folder in the Career Services Department. Employers review these folders when looking for prospective employees. "Employers who see that a student has graduated from the LDP will know that he or she has experience in the professional world," explains Neal.

Students are selected for the program through UMass Boston staff and faculty recommendations, or students may nominate themselves by completing an application. The student is then interviewed by a committee, which consists of Applebee, Clark, Neal, and selected faculty and staff. After the candidates are interviewed, the committee meets to discuss the merits of each applicant and select those who will be accepted.

The deadline for faculty and staff to recommend students for the Leadership Development Program is April 15th. Please contact Donna Neal or Leslie Paladino at 287-7950.

Student Receives First Globe Library Award

UMass Boston senior Jennifer Coffey has received a Boston Globe $2,500 Co-op Tuition Aid Award for her work in the Globe Library. She is the first UMass Boston student to receive the award. Coffey was one of three students selected to receive the award from over sixty college students interning at the Globe last fall. As an intern, Coffey developed background information for Globe news and editorial writers. She was selected on the recommendations of her supervisor, Lisa Tuite, Head Librarian at the Custom House Library.

Coffey, who is majoring in psychology and communications, began her position at the Globe last January and continued in the library until June. "My job at the library included organizing materials, working in the photo library, and retrieving pictures for reporters who were working on deadline," she explains.

"Working in the library can be a stressful job," says Lisa Tuite, Head Librarian at the Boston Globe library and Coffey's supervisor. "Reporters are often under critical deadlines, and Jennifer would have to confirm a specific fact, or compile a comprehensive package of reference work on a particular topic. Jennifer was not someone who could be lulled into giving something out quickly rather than checking it thoroughly."

According to Claire Larson, Human Resource Associate at the Boston Globe, 61 co-op internship positions are available each year. Students from Merrimack College, Suffolk University, University of Connecticut, UMass Amherst, UMass Boston, and Wentworth Institute of Technology are eligible. "When we are choosing students from UMass Boston, I visit the university for a day to conduct interviews," says Larson. "The students then meet with the department supervisors, who pick the students they feel would work well at the newspaper."

"A co-op position is a great opportunity for students to see what they might like to do when they graduate," says Coffey. "It is a great resume builder and it's a nice change from going to classes full time. I was able to work at the Globe for forty hours a week."

The Boston Globe offers co-op students who have worked or are currently working at the newspaper the opportunity to apply for the tuition award. Students are chosen for the award in November of each year, based on their grades, performance on the job, and a letter of application outlining their experience at the Globe and how it has affected their career goals.