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## THE UMASS BOSTON

Volume 6  
Number 4  
April 12, 1996

News and information  
about and for the  
University Community from  
the Chancellor's Office

# Friday

## REPORT

### C a m p u s N o t e s

**Prof. Russell Schutt**, Chair of the Sociology Department and Director of the UMass Boston/City of Boston Supportive Housing Evaluation Project, is currently working on a project evaluating the effectiveness of twenty local homeless service programs, including Action for Boston Community Development and the Greater Boston Housing Initiative. Schutt is collaborating with Kelley Cronin, Director of the Emergency Shelter Commission, and Bruce Ehrlich of Boston's Public Facilities Department. The initiative is funded through a three-year grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Steward B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

The Fall/95-Winter/96 issue of the **Trotter Review**, *The Information Superhighway and Communities of Color*, contains articles and essays on ways the black community can expand access and achieve information technology management positions. South African President Nelson Mandela's comments from last October's 7th World Telecommunications Conference and Exhibition held in Geneva, Switzerland are printed in the review. Mandela offered suggestions on building a global information society, while saying that "Not even the most repressive regime can stop human beings from finding ways of communicating and obtaining access to information."

*Mental Health, Racism, and Sexism*, a book co-edited by **Emeritus Psychology Prof. Bernard Kramer** of UMass Boston, has been published by the University of Pittsburgh Press. It contains a collection of essays that examine racism and sexism and their effects on mental health. **Prof. Castellano Turner** of UMass Boston's Psychology Department contributed to the book.

**Emeritus Sociology Prof. Robert Weiss** moderated a conference, *The Human Consequences of Downsizing*, held in Washington, D.C. in February, by The Center for Mental Health Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Prof. Margaret Musmon** of the Human Performance and Fitness Department received an Outstanding Professional Award in Dance on March 9 from the Eastern District Association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

**The Center for Survey Research (CSR)** received a \$220,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest philanthropy devoted to health and health care. Principal Investigator Lois Biener, Ph.D., and CSR staff members will assess public reaction to the 1993 Massachusetts Tobacco Control Program and its influence on the smoking population.

**Art Prof. Pamela Jones-Rothwell** gave the keynote address, "Federico Borromeo as a Religious Writer and Art Collector," at a symposium on Charles and Federico Borromeo at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan, Italy. She was inducted into the Accademia di San Carlo for her work on Federico Borromeo.

On **April 24**, the Music Department will host a Studio Faculty Recital at 3:30 pm in the Snowden Auditorium, Wheatley Hall. For further information, please call 287-6980.

On **April 17**, The Graduate College of Education's Boston Minority Teacher Preparation Program and the Trotter Institute are co-sponsoring a panel discussion on *The Affirmative Action Issue: Significant or Insignificant?* The forum will be held in the Media Conference Center in Healey Library, Lower Level, from 2:30 - 4:00 pm. For further information, please contact Dr. Harold Horton at 287-5888.

#### Attention Readers:

Send news information to Annette Fernie or Donna Roveto at the Office of Public Information, Second Floor, Quinn Administration Building. Or you may e-mail news information to [Fri\\_Report@umbosky.cc.umb.edu](mailto:Fri_Report@umbosky.cc.umb.edu).

## General Education Focus of Recent Conference

Three experts with wide experience in general education reform were the speakers at UMass Boston's Conference on General Education held March 29. The Conference is part of an on-going effort to develop a general education program that will be appropriate to UMass Boston students and have potential for successful implementation. This event was sponsored by the office of Provost Louis Esposito, planned by the General Education Steering Committee chaired by English Professor Robert Crossley, and coordinated by College of Arts and Sciences Dean of Undergraduate Education Patricia Davidson.

The goal of a general education program, according to Professor Crossley, is providing students with "the means for acquiring a critical and sympathetic intelligence, including the habits of mind and the practical abilities to locate, develop, analyze, communicate, share, and apply information, ideas and values."

The guest speakers were Roberta Matthews, Professor of English and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at La Guardia Community College in Long Island City, New York; Charles R. White, Professor of Political Science and Associate Dean for University Studies at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon; and Daniel Tompkins, Chair of Temple University's Department of Greek, Hebrew and Roman Classics and Faculty Fellow for its Learning Communities Project.

## Center Conducting Two New ADHD Projects

There are two major projects underway at the Center for Social Development and Education concerning children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a condition that affects over three percent of children nationwide.

The first project, directed by the Center's Curriculum Specialist Catherine Marchant, offers elementary school teachers a curriculum for accommodating ADHD children.

As one of the 13 nation-wide sites funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Marchant's project focuses on the social needs of students with ADHD. The goal of the program, named *Striving for Compatibility*, is to offer intervention strategies for teachers that can be used with ADHD students in the classroom environment. A series of workshops exploring short-term accommodations and environment modifications are offered through the program. These workshops help to increase the teacher's awareness of classroom dynamics, which includes how children are grouped together.

The second project, also funded by the Department of Education, is headed by Research Associate Ross Greene and entails a comprehensive study of classroom factors contributing to a school's success in dealing with ADHD children. Greene's project will examine factors such as student characteristics,

In their presentations, the speakers discussed linked courses, learning clusters, coordinated studies, and culminating or "capstone" educational experiences as ways to reach the objectives of an excellent general education program. These models have been developed as a means for delivering course content, engaging students with fellow students and faculty, building community, and delivering quality education on campuses where students commute and frequently have jobs and family responsibilities. Reaching these goals, they agreed, requires the coordination of many campus departments, including orientation, advising services, financial aid, and registration.

"The conference papers reinforce my continuing sense of the excitement and potential benefits of collaborative learning and a common academic experience," commented Chancellor Penney. "The formation of learning communities seems to be a way of addressing something that has been difficult throughout our history--the lack of easy contact among students, and among faculty and students, in a commuter institution," she added.

According to Dean Davidson, the conference was attended by approximately 200 faculty and staff. "This has been an excellent beginning to a series of on-going discussions on general education issues," she said. She added that videotapes of the conference are available on loan through her office.

teacher characteristics, and classroom characteristics to determine their relative influence upon student behavior, and academic and social functioning.

Assisting Greene with his research is Project Coordinator Sara Beszterczey. Together they will examine two groups of students: those with ADHD and a non-ADHD comparison group. Each group of one-hundred students will be observed through two consecutive years of elementary school.

Together, Marchant's and Greene's projects emphasize the social impact of this disorder upon ADHD children's peers, teachers, and upon the classroom environment.

"I hope these projects help stimulate other extensive research on ADHD," says Gary Siperstein, Director of the Center. "There are large numbers of children being diagnosed with ADHD and our curriculum development and research is shedding light on how the educational community addresses their needs," states Siperstein.

*Striving for Compatibility workshops have taken place in various school districts across Massachusetts and have benefitted over 1,000 teachers. Additional workshops will take place this Spring throughout Massachusetts.*



# Network Forum Invites Professional Women to Discuss Their Careers

The Network for Women in Politics and Government held its first spring forum, "Trailblazing Women: Women in Non-Traditional Government Careers," on March 12. Opening remarks were given by Jillian Dickert, Network President, and Janine Getek, Network Director. The five guest panelists were Laurinda Bedingfield; Marisa Lago; Leslie Kirwan; Trudy Cox; and Kathleen O'Toole. Each speaker shared her personal experiences of overcoming numerous obstacles and achieving significant gains in public life in fields traditionally dominated by men. The forum, held at UMass Boston, was made possible through the support of the John W. McCormack Institute's Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy.

Panelist Laurinda Bedingfield, the first woman Commissioner of the Massachusetts Highway Department, spoke about her experiences in the engineering profession. "My advancement within the Highway Department can be directly attributed to the administration's desire to identify and promote qualified and capable women within state government," she explained. Prior to her appointment as Commissioner, Bedingfield served as the first woman District Highway Engineer at thirty-seven years old.

At that point in her career, Bedingfield said that she felt isolated because of her age and gender; most district engineers were men averaging fifty-seven years old. It was also at that time Bedingfield learned the value of professional support groups, such as Women in Transportation.

"Being tough is always an issue while having to prove yourself to those who think that you can't do the job," commented Marisa Lago, Chief Economic Development Officer of the Boston Redevelopment Authority. She discussed the importance of showing emotional and intellectual strength in her job. As the only woman on Boston's Megaplex Commission, Lago felt the pressure to represent her gender and her ethnicity. "It was my responsibility as a woman to do the job and do it extraordinarily well because if I failed, I was not just a woman failing, but a Hispanic woman," she added.

Mentoring was the theme of Leslie Kirwan's remarks. As the Commonwealth's Chief of Staff of Administration and Finance, she commented on the significance of women in leadership roles and their responsibility to recognize their mentoring capacity. According to Kirwan, knowingly or unknowingly, professional women assume individual leadership

roles with their colleagues and serve as mentors for women outside their organization. "If professional women look at their peers, they will discover other women who will inspire them through their skills. We must all work together to advance the opportunities of each other," suggested Kirwan.

Panelists Trudy Cox, Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, and Kathleen O'Toole, Secretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety, credited Massachusetts Governor William H. Weld for improving women's access to state government positions. O'Toole stressed that once a woman has obtained a high-level position, it is vital for her to provide mentoring for staff members, whether male or female.

## Greenhouse Wins Spring Flower Show Awards

UMass Boston's greenhouse exhibit, *The Garden: A Celebration of Life*, won a blue ribbon for general display and a certificate for best educational display at the 1996 New England Spring Flower Show. The University, which has won awards at the Flower Show every year since 1984, was the only institution of higher learning to exhibit at the show this year.

The UMass Boston exhibit was displayed in the Discovery Center, along with exhibits from the Horticultural Therapy Association, the Mount Auburn Cemetery, The Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, and the Farm Bureau.

"We presented a tranquil garden scene that could be easily recreated in many New England landscapes," said Richard Doherty, Greenhouse Director. "We wanted to convey the idea that gardens don't have to be formal. A garden can be window boxes with flowers and vegetables for a city-dweller, or for a handicapped person, it can mean simply being able to view or having access to an area where plants are grown," he added.

Doherty said the design was meant to communicate a feeling of serenity, promote an understanding of the therapeutic value of gardens, and show how gardens can be used to celebrate events in a life.

Final remarks were given by moderator Elizabeth Sherman, Director of the Center, who said that conferences such as "Trailblazing Women" help to advance the mission of the Center by supporting women leadership in government positions. "The steady stream of discussions presented through the Center and the Network help give women a collective voice in order to influence public policy," she explained.

### Upcoming Events

The John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs is sponsoring a lecture, "The Holocaust: Interpreting Survivor Testimonies," on April 26 from 1:30-3:30 pm in the McCormack building's Harbor Gallery. Emeritus Professor Lawrence Langer of Simmons College will speak at the event. For further information call 287-5550.

Several of the plants displayed in the exhibit are not well known in New England, but deserve more attention, according to Doherty. The White Fringetree (*Chionanthus Virginicus*) became a focal point because it was in bloom, covered with delicate white flowers. The Franklin Tree (*Franklinia Alatomaha*) is a native American tree identified in the 1700's by William Bartram, considered to be this country's first horticulturalist.

"Bartram found the tree on a trip to Georgia. He brought one back to Philadelphia and named it after his friend, Benjamin Franklin," says Doherty. "In 1792, Bartram returned to Georgia, but could find no trace of the Franklin tree in its former habitat. It has never been seen there since. Every Franklin Tree alive today comes from the specimen Bartram brought to Philadelphia," he explains.

Doherty said that planning and preparing for the Flower Show is a year-round part of his job. The first planning meeting for next year's show has already been held, and by summer, Doherty and his staff of work-study students will be actively preparing for the 1997 show. "From January until the show begins in March, we will be working on the exhibit full-time," he added.

Trees and shrubs displayed in this year's exhibit will be re-planted on campus later in the spring.

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