University of Massachusetts Boston

Spring Convocation

College of Liberal Arts

University Hall Auditorium

Wednesday, May 24, 2017
Academic Costume and Regalia

The academic regalia worn by faculty at this convocation represents traditions which come down from the Middle Ages, when European universities were institutions of the church. At that time, robes were a common form of dress, particularly for officials of church and state. The cut of the robe, its adornment, and the colors used comprised a specialized heraldry that conveyed the rank and station of the wearer. At the universities, both faculty and students were considered to be part of the church hierarchy and were expected to wear the prescribed gowns. As society moved toward more modern forms of dress, only royalty, clergy, judges, and academics retained the traditional regalia, reserving it only for ceremonial use.

Modern academic regalia retains some of the symbols of the earlier forms of ceremonial dress. The gown tends to be fullest, longest, and heaviest for the doctoral degree. The sleeves for the bachelor’s and master’s gowns are typically open at the wrist. Cuffs are more common on the doctoral gown, and its sleeves are adorned by three velvet stripes, symbolic of the degree. The mantle worn about the shoulders, called the hood, is the remnant of functional headgear worn for warmth in the unheated classrooms of medieval universities.

The usual color for academic gowns in the United States is black. However, almost three dozen universities in this country and many others throughout the world have adopted more colorful robes. In general, this practice has been limited to schools more than one hundred years old. Among the schools represented by colorful robes at commencement ceremonies are Boston College, Brown, City University of New York, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Duke, Harvard, New York, Oxford, Princeton, Rutgers, Stanford, Tufts, and Yale Universities and the Universities of California, Kansas, and Rhode Island.
Program

Academic Procession

National Anthem  Jacsonn Jean, Department of Performing Arts

Greetings of the University  J. Keith Motley, Chancellor

Welcome  David Terkla, Dean College of Liberal Arts

Presentation of Departmental Distinctions  David Terkla

Presentation of Senior Honors  David Terkla

Recognition of John F. Kennedy Award  David Terkla

Nominees  Daniela Bravo-Terkia, Anthropology
           Juan Blanco, Philosophy
# Table of Contents

**Departmental Distinctions**  
**Senior Honors**  

**Recognition of John F. Kennedy Award Nominees**  
Daniela Bravo-Terkia *(Winner of the 2017 UMass Boston JFK Award)*  
Juan Blanco  

**Undergraduate Awards**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Recipients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinton M. Jean Prize</td>
<td>Africana Studies Department</td>
<td>Mirlande Thermidor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American Studies Founder's Award</td>
<td>American Studies Department</td>
<td>Thomas G. Lawrenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Goss Memorial Prize</td>
<td>Anthropology Department</td>
<td>Daniela Bravo-Terkia <em>(Winner of the 2017 UMass Boston JFK Award)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Butler Scholarship</td>
<td>Art Department</td>
<td>Sylvain Malfroy-Camine, Li Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Lafargue Award for Excellence in Asian Studies</td>
<td>Asian Studies Department</td>
<td>Heather N. Black, Samantha J. Ciaraldi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding Achievement in Classical Languages</td>
<td>Classics Department</td>
<td>Timothy Brady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding Achievement in Classical Studies</td>
<td>Classics Department</td>
<td>Matthew Hardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Risse Prize in Communication Studies</td>
<td>Communication Department</td>
<td>Jens Peterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard J. Kirsch Memorial Prize</td>
<td>Economics Department</td>
<td>Nicole Erin Corcoran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joann P. Stewart Award</td>
<td>Economics Department</td>
<td>Marilyn Pineda, Rachael Roberts-Toler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice E. Trost Memorial Prize</td>
<td>Economics Department</td>
<td>Shandalee Colon, Thomas Kraemer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Eleanor Marie Fay and James William Fay Memorial Prize  
(English Department)  
Eileen Cullen 18

Alfred R. Ferguson Award for Distinguished Work in American Literature  
(English Department)  
Victoria McCandless 18

Francis Russell Hart Prize  
(English Department)  
Nathan Goudreault 19

Marcia Keach Memorial Poetry Prize  
(English Department, Creative Writing)  
Anna Xie 20

Chet Frederick Fiction Prize  
(English Department, Creative Writing)  
Bailey “Edym” McKelvey 20

Paul F. Boller Prize  
(History Department)  
Po-Yu Huang 21

Outstanding Achievement in History  
(History Department)  
Cecilia Paquette 21

Human Services Award for Academic Excellence  
(Human Services Department)  
Alannah Brennan 22

Ann S. Blum Memorial Fund Award  
(Latin American and Iberian Studies Department)  
Hella Dijsselbloem-Girón 23  
Nathalie Pacas 23  
Esteban Tula 23

Outstanding Achievements in Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures  
(Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Department)  
Marie Shubow 24

John J. Conlon Prize in Theatre Arts  
(Performing Arts Department)  
Erin Reilly 24

Louis E. Roberts Prize in Theatre Arts  
(Performing Arts Department)  
Patrick McCarthy 25

Susan Cunningham Campbell Endowed Scholarship  
(Performing Arts Department)  
John Nilsson 26  
Angelica Rodriguez 26
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martin Andic Prize for Distinction in Philosophy</td>
<td>Philosophy Department</td>
<td>Juan P. Blanco</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shay Henckel</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Feinstein Award for Distinction in Public Policy</td>
<td>Political Science Department</td>
<td>Ashley Pierre-Louis</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard J. Landry Award for Distinction in Political Theory</td>
<td>Political Science Department</td>
<td>Jasmine Taylor</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurizio Vnnicelli Award</td>
<td>Political Science Department</td>
<td>Phillip Early</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Jill Barnett Memorial Prize for Academic Excellence</td>
<td>Psychology Department</td>
<td>Mariana Lacolla</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ina Samuels Memorial Prize</td>
<td>Psychology Department</td>
<td>Zara Khan</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Scott Miyakawa Memorial Prize</td>
<td>Sociology Department</td>
<td>Lydia Grasso</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founder's Award for Excellence in Women's and Gender Studies and Social Activism</td>
<td>Women's and Gender Studies Department</td>
<td>Arusa Zama</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduate Awards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The American Studies Book Prize</td>
<td>American Studies Department</td>
<td>James Simons</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Barbara E. Leudtke Book Award for Academic Excellence in Historical Archaeology</td>
<td>Anthropology Department</td>
<td>Katherine Wagner</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Award for Academic Excellence in Applied Economics</td>
<td>Applied Economics Department</td>
<td>Gazi Joki Uddin</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur MacEwan Award for Excellence in Political Economy</td>
<td>Applied Economics Department</td>
<td>Aimée Bell-Pasht</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Award for Academic Excellence in Applied Linguistics</td>
<td>Applied Linguistics Department</td>
<td>Kristen Schlapp</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Award for Academic Excellence in Applied Sociology</td>
<td>Applied Sociology Department</td>
<td>Lucina Fox</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The James E. Blackwell Prize in Applied Sociology
(Applied Sociology Department)
Carian Diaz Rivera 37

The Award for Academic Excellence in Latin and Classical Humanities
(Classics and Religious Studies Department)
Amanda Miller 38

The Creative Writing Award for Outstanding Achievement
(English, Creative Writing Department)
Robert Sykora 38

The English Program Award for Outstanding Achievement
(English Department)
Melanie Doyle 39

The Ann E. Berthoff Prize for Excellence in Composition Studies
(English Department)
Abigail Thibodeau 39

The David A. Kennedy Prize for Outstanding Work in the Field of Poetry
(English Department)
Theresa Dietrich 40

The Alvan S. Ryan Award for Best Literature Paper
(English Department)
Amanda Miller 40

The Robert Crossley Award for Most Innovative Final Project
(English Department)
Jay Brewer 40

The Award for Academic Excellence in History
(History Department)
Alexandra Borkowski 41

The History Program Book Award for Best Final Project
(History Department)
Tasnin Chowdhury 41

The Graduate Award for Academic Excellence in Human Services
(Human Services Department)
Carol Dumas 42

The Clinical Psychology Book Award
(Psychology Department)
Natalie Arbid 43

The Maxwell J. Schleifer Memorial Prize
(Psychology Department)
Julie Neuspiel 43

Marcia Keach Prize-Winning Poem
Anna Xie 44

Chet Frederick Prize-Winning Story
Bailey “Edym” McKelvey 45
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rakan Al Ghalayini</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Andrick</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Baima</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyssa Benalfew</td>
<td>Philosophy and Public Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore Biv</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Clare Blankenship</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijan Bowen</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alannah Brennan</td>
<td>Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabella Brown</td>
<td>Philosophy, Ethics, Social and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasey Cameron</td>
<td>Political Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Corcoran</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joclyn Crivello</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Cummings</td>
<td>Asian Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Cusack</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hella Dijselbloem-Girón</td>
<td>Women's and Gender Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler Donovan</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Embrey</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Fischer</td>
<td>American Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenneth Gatewood</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arjun Grama</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erica Gryzwacz</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Higgins</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niaa Ijezie</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Keech</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexa Knight</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Leahy</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelo Lima</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Lucey</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvain Malfroy-Camine</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeannette Mejia</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tori Moline</td>
<td>Performing Arts, Theatre Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Monteserin</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Mulkerrin</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Mulloy</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Nilsson</td>
<td>Performing Arts, Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn Pineda</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blair Piper</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enxhi Qirici</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachael Roberts-Toler</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Ruel</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Seaver</td>
<td>Anthropology, Archaeology and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Shubow</td>
<td>Modern Languages/French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eduardo Souza</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Taylor</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernando Andino Valdes</td>
<td>Psychology and Social Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Wallace</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa Yeh</td>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Senior Honors

Rossie Alvarez
Anthropology

Nate Goudreault
English

Patrick McCarthy
Performing Arts

Deavoni Beckford
Creative Writing (English)

Josiah Hillner
English

Brendan McDonough
English

Danielle Briggs
Psychology

Po-Yu Huang
History

Bailey Edym McKelvey
Creative Writing (English)

Katelyn Capone
Psychology

Jacsonn Jean
Performing Arts

Phillip McLaughlin
Political Science

Ruben Circelli
English

Jeehye Kang
Performing Arts

Martin Mulkerrin
Political Science

Nora Connolly
English

Alexa Knight
Anthropology

John Nilsson
Performing Arts

Nicole Corcoran
Economics

Thomas Kraemer
Economics

Ashley Pierre-Louis
Political Science

Joclyn Crivello
Political Science

Qingyan Luo
Psychology

Rachel Reed
Art

Eileen Cullen
English

Sean MacLean
Political Science

Esthanette Reid
Psychology

Joe Daley
English

Sylvain Malfroy-Camine
Art

Angelica Rodriguez
Performing Arts

Jessica Decie
English

Sally Mansour
Psychology

John Stotler
Performing Arts

Tyler Donovan
Criminal Justice

Felicia Martis
Performing Arts

Nilam Thaker
Psychology

James Flynn
English

Victoria McCandless
English

Anna Xie
Creative Writing (English)

Students Nominated for the John F. Kennedy Award

Daniela Bravo-Terkia, Anthropology (Winner of the 2017 UMass Boston JFK Award)
Juan Blanco, Philosophy
Undergraduate Awards
Clinton M. Jean Prize
(Africana Studies Department)

The Clinton M. Jean Book Prize in Africana Studies was established in honor of Professor Clinton Jean (1936–1993), former Professor of Black Studies. Born in Trinidad, Professor Jean came to UMass Boston after completing his studies at Columbia University and his PhD in sociology at Brandeis University. A dedicated teacher and scholar, Professor Jean published a number of articles and an acclaimed book, Behind the Eurocentric Veil: The Search for African Realities. His book, published by the University of Massachusetts Press, has been a pioneering work in the area of Afrocentrism, which critiques Eurocentric traditions of social and historical analysis. His death was a major loss to his family, friends, and the field of Africana studies.

The Clinton M. Jean Prize is given each year to a graduating senior who has the highest grade point average in the Department of Africana Studies.

Mirlande Thermidor

The winner of this year's prize is Mirlande Thermidor. In her three years as an Africana studies major at UMass Boston, Mirlande's intellectual curiosity, tireless pursuit of ideas, critically nuanced essays, and culturally astute insights have distinguished her among and set a fine example for her peers. One professor described Mirlande's contribution to class discussions as marked by “grace and substance,” qualities that remind us that classrooms are first and foremost intellectual communities. Mirlande's work at UMass Boston embodies Professor Jean's tradition of scholarly excellence.

American Studies Founder’s Award
(American Studies Department)

The American Studies Founder’s Award is given to a graduating senior in American Studies who has done outstanding work in his or her major and has demonstrated excellence in writing in at least two of the four modes of analysis that form the conceptual basis of our program of study: historical, literary, ethnographic, and media. The prize was made possible by the generosity of the late Emeritus Professor Seymour Katz, who founded the American Studies Program in 1977, and his wife Phyllis Katz.

Thomas G. Lawrenson

Thomas George Lawrenson has demonstrated a passion for learning and a commitment to intellectual debate in his American studies coursework. Thomas brings to his coursework an interest in developing a deeper understanding of the complexities of American identity formation over time with a desire to engage his peers as part of that process. His engagement with course materials and insightful contributions to class discussions demonstrate a profound engagement with the themes of his courses. The three-generation family history project he completed as part in the course “American Identities” showed a sophisticated understanding of the ways family histories develop within broader political, economic, and cultural contexts. His project conveyed beautifully how his grandfather’s coming-of-age during the 1930s and 1940s in France and, later, in the United States influenced the lives of subsequent generations of their family and informed the ways Thomas positions himself in relation to the world around him. Thomas' dedication to broadening his understanding of the world is inspiring, and his enthusiasm in the classroom and intellectual acumen make him a role model among his peers.
Since 1984, the Department of Anthropology has awarded an annual prize in honor of the late Sally Goss. Sally transferred to UMass Boston from Middlesex Community College and completed a bachelor’s degree in anthropology. She was accepted into our master’s program in historical archaeology and worked toward her degree for one and a half years, until her death from cancer in 1982. She was the mother of two sons, and throughout her student career she balanced the conflicting demands of home, school, and work, as well as her illness. Sally was a valued member of our community, and her family and the Anthropology Department are proud to honor her memory with this prize.

The Sally Goss Prize is awarded to an anthropology major who is a returning female student, who has demonstrated academic excellence, and whose education in anthropology has been especially meaningful to her because of the obstacles she has had to overcome to obtain it.

Daniela Bravo-Terkia

Daniela Bravo-Terkia compiled an impressive record as an anthropology major. She accomplished this, not as a high school graduate heading right into college, but instead as a Chilean immigrant who worked a few jobs after high school because she was unable to enroll in higher education, explored a couple of community college classes, had to put that pursuit on hold due to personal circumstances, and finally could enroll at UMass Boston to pursue a bachelor’s degree. She has availed herself of opportunities on campus and put her convictions into practice. She participated in the Latino Leadership Opportunities Program and has been employed in the Gastón Institute for years. She has worked on youth immigration rights; the well-being of women immigrants from the Middle East, North Africa, and Central and South America; enrolled Latinos and other vulnerable groups in the Affordable Care Act; and studied protections for domestic workers through collaborations on research projects and nonprofit organizations. Daniela, as a student and an activist, exemplifies UMass Boston’s historic mission as a beacon of hope and inclusion for all who yearn for higher education. Her personal determination to overcome barriers also defines Daniela as a fine exemplar of the Sally Goss Prize.
Ruth Butler Scholarship
(Art Department)

This scholarship has been established in honor of Ruth Butler, Professor Emerita of Art at UMass Boston and a distinguished scholar in the history of sculpture. While a student, Professor Butler won a Fulbright Fellowship that allowed her to pursue research in France. Recognizing that her trip abroad was a life-changing event, she would like art majors at UMass Boston to have such an opportunity for contact with individuals and institutions in another country.

The scholarship provides an art major with money for travel outside the United States for the purpose of studying art. Preference is given to projects which promote the student’s understanding of a culture other than the student’s own.

Professor Emerita Ruth Butler established this Travel Award to offer an art student the opportunity to experience a meaningful immersion in a foreign culture through art historical research or studio work.

Sylvain Malfroy-Camine

Sylvain Malfroy-Camine born in Burlingame, California, is a first generation American from a French family, one of 5 children. His family moved to Arlington when he was 3 years old and he recalls since his early childhood being obsessed with the color blue. When he first came to UMass Boston as a transfer student, he was an established pianist with a love of jazz music, especially improvisational jazz. His love of drawing led him to take courses in the visual arts. His first inspirations came from courses in art history with Professors Victoria Weston and David Areford, who encouraged him to explore both painting and the graphic arts. Under the tutelage of Professors Christopher Schade and Elizabeth Marran he was introduced to the work of German artist Jorg Immendorf, and this was the critical moment for Sylvain. He then decided to pursue his passion for art as his major. Sylvain's Honors project, "Sense and Space," revolved around the notion of light as a conceptual tool of space and abstraction, a subject he will elaborate upon in his future scholarly endeavors. Thanks to the Butler scholarship, Sylvain will be traveling to Europe to continue his research.

Li Wang

Li Wang was born in Northern China in the city of Shanxi. He lives with his wife Kandice Zimbleman and their 14-year-old daughter Heidi Kandice Wang, who will begin a vocational art school program this fall in Weymouth. Prior to starting at UMass Boston in 2014, Li studied Chinese temple paintings from the Yuan Dynasty on location due to a special privilege through his former government. He has a broad range of experience in the arts, from working in fresco, to painting portraits in New York City parks, to opening up art businesses in South Shore malls. In the early 2000s, Li received awards in mixed media and watercolor in Long Island and Bellport. During his time at UMass Boston he has focused on both painting and prints and studied elementary Japanese. This summer, the Ruth Butler Scholarship will bring Li to Japan to observe 14th century paintings of the Kamakura and Muromachi period located in the Nara National Museum collection. He looks forward to studying the color and line work of these paintings, which will inspire his new series of artwork using Japanese brushes on rice paper.
Michael Lafargue Award for Excellence in Asian Studies
(Asian Studies Department)

This award, named after the first director of Asian studies, is given to an exceptional graduating major for outstanding academic achievement in the field of Asian studies and great promise in his or her future pursuits, whether academic, nonprofit, public sector, or entrepreneurial.

Heather N. Black

The Michael Lafargue Award for Excellence in Asian Studies, which is given to the most outstanding graduating senior major, is being shared this year by two exceptional students, here introduced in alphabetical order. For Heather Black, clearly an overachiever, this will be her second BA from UMass Boston. She was a recipient of the Ruth Butler Scholarship from the Art Department, which she used to travel to Japan to further her study of ghosts and other supernatural beings in ukiyo-e woodblock prints. She has held an internship at the Peabody Essex Museum, and plans to pursue a career in Japanese art after graduation.

Samantha J. Ciaraldi

Samantha Ciaraldi impressed all of our department faculty with her perfectionism, including a high GPA on her transcript; her imaginativeness and creativity in everything she does; and with her gift for analytical depth. She finished her final semester with an independent study on a Hollywood remake of a Japanese anime; the topic aptly represents her career interest in Asian media.
Outstanding Achievement in Classical Languages  
(Classics Department)

The Outstanding Achievement in Classical Languages and Classical Studies majors are given each year to honor graduating students for exceptional and distinguished performance in study of the ancient Greek and Roman classics. The awards recognize academic excellence respectively in classical language and philology and in broad-based interdisciplinary study of classical literature, history and culture.

Timothy Brady

What initially drew Tim to the study of ancient history was time spent in Kirkuk and Erbil, Iraq, where he saw how cultures and histories have been piling up on top of one another for millennia. This has resulted in a volatile mix in Iraq, but for a historian it is an unparalleled treasure chest. To prepare himself to delve into it all, Tim has learned Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Kurdish. As if that were not enough, he will add to his language skills next year by learning to read ancient Akkadian, which was written on cuneiform tablets. He will do so while studying at the University of Durham in the UK, where his studies, we are especially pleased to note, will be supported by a Fulbright Research/Study Fellowship.

Outstanding Achievement in Classical Studies  
(Classics Department)

Leonard J. Kirsch was a member of the Department of Economics at UMass Boston from its first years until his early death in 1977. He held a PhD in economics from Harvard University and was the author of Soviet Wages: Changes in Structure and Administration since 1956 and the editor of the English-language edition of The Developing Countries: Employment and Capital Investment, by S. A. Kuzmin. Lenny’s devotion to his students, his brilliant classroom performances, and his distinguished contributions to the field of labor economics made him a fine representative of the university’s mission. During good times and hard times, as the university grew and as it had its share of troubles, Lenny always found a way to keep us moving forward—and he kept us laughing along the way. Upon his death, the department decided to give its annual prize in his name, both to honor his memory and to honor the students who receive the award.

Matthew Hardy

Matthew Hardy has been the top of every course he has taken in the Classics Department. In fact one of his professors wishes the university had A+’s so he could award them to Matt. Faculty members who have had him as a student have unanimously remarked on the high quality of his writing. His capstone paper, in particular, was a model: he combed through the tangled ancient sources about the Battle of Pharsalus, when Julius Caesar defeated Pompey the Great, and was able to tease out the biases of the different writers. Alternative facts were already proliferating in the first century BCE but Matt, with his mastery of research skills, was able to separate out truth from fake news, and pointed out where the different sides were cherry-picking events for self-serving purposes. Matt’s rigor and critical acumen on the written page have been matched by his humility and kindness in class. He has been an ideal colleague and has earned the respect of his fellow students.
Robert Risse Prize in Communication Studies
(Communication Department)

The Robert Risse Prize honors a graduating senior for superior performance in communication in the College of Liberal Arts. The award commemorates Professor Robert Risse, one of the founders of UMass Boston’s original Communication Studies Program. Professor Risse conceived and designed courses; developed and taught curricula in television fundamentals and production; and, early on, employed computer technology to enhance the study of imagery and sound. He directed the program for most of its first 15 years, prior to establishment of the Communication Department in 2013. He personally advised hundreds of students about their options in the field of communication.

Jens Peterson

Jens Peterson is an exemplary student worthy of the highest award granted by the Communication Department. He completed his degree in December 2016. Throughout his undergraduate career, Jens impressed his teachers and classmates alike. He consistently produced high quality coursework that demonstrated his ability to think critically about the science of human communication. Beyond the classroom, Jens served as an undergraduate teaching assistant for Comm200: The New Media Society. In addition to helping students with coursework and writing, Jens developed and delivered dynamic and informative lectures about the ways media shape the political process. His ability to engage with and teach his fellow students is emblematic of Jens’ academic and leadership contributions to the Communication Department. Further, he has worked as a media production technician for several years, writing and editing digital video and audio features for a number of organizations in Boston. During his final semester, Jens completed a competitive internship with WCVB-TV. He noted that this experience allowed him to take the theories and practices he learned in the classroom and apply them in the field of communication. Upon completion of the internship, Jens was hired as a writer for WCVB-TV.
Leonard J. Kirsch Memorial Prize
(Economics Department)

Leonard J. Kirsch was a member of the Department of Economics at UMass Boston from its first years until his early death in 1977. He held a PhD in economics from Harvard University and was the author of Soviet Wages: Changes in Structure and Administration since 1956 and the editor of the English-language edition of The Developing Countries: Employment and Capital Investment, by S. A. Kuzmin. Lenny’s devotion to his students, his brilliant classroom performances, and his distinguished contributions to the field of labor economics made him a fine representative of the university’s mission. During good times and hard times, as the university grew and as it had its share of troubles, Lenny always found a way to keep us moving forward—and he kept us laughing along the way. Upon his death, the department decided to give its annual prize in his name, both to honor his memory and to honor the students who receive the award.

Nicole Erin Corcoran

Nicole joined the Air Force at the age of nineteen and specialized in meteorology and battlefield weather forecasting, which introduced her to an analytical approach to solving a multitude of problems. Then she started taking economics and math-related courses at UMass Boston, which inspired her interest in exploring data-driven, empirically sound policy solutions to healthcare issues. Over the course of her undergraduate studies at UMass Boston, she discovered that taking a quantitative approach to solving qualitative problems is the work that she wants to pursue as a career.

While serving in the Air Force, she received two achievement medals and one Air Force Commendation Medal. She was recognized for her service and several volunteer activities and was eventually promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. She also worked and lived in Germany for two years, where she began to develop an appreciation for how social programs and healthcare can enhance quality of life.

Moving forward, Nicole will enroll in the Boston University’s MS in Health Services and Systems Research in Fall 2017, and then she plans to do research at a nonprofit here in Boston before eventually applying to a PhD program in healthcare policy.

Arjun Harish Grama

Arjun Grama graduated summa cum laude from the University of Massachusetts Boston in December 2016, with a BA degree in Economics. He had a thoroughly enjoyable learning experience at the university. Prior to college, Arjun attended Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science, where he was the only graduate of his class not to pursue a degree in a STEM field. However, technology has always been one of his passions, and Arjun now works for the IBM Digital Business Group in New York City, where in addition to aiding in internal business enablement and strategy planning, he fosters relationships with the entrepreneurial community to see how IBM can best empower and learn from startups and burgeoning businesses. Arjun takes great pleasure and pride in being a part of a team from whom he is constantly learning as well as supporting. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with family and friends, learning about history, science, and politics, and exploring his new home.
Joann P. Stewart Prize  
(Economics Department)

Professor Emerita Joann P. Stewart retired from UMass Boston in 1993, after spending most of her academic career at Boston State College. In 1969, she earned the first PhD awarded to a woman by the Economics Department of Boston University. Her scholarly interests have focused on the roles of women in economics and of unions in public life. In recognition of her contributions to the university and her encouragement of students, this prize is awarded each year to an outstanding female economics major.

Marilyn Pineda

Marilyn Pineda was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. She is Hispanic and first generation in her family to attend and graduate from college. Marilyn found a passion in the application of mathematics and theory, which resulted in her decision to major in economics. Along with majoring in economics, Marilyn was also a part of the Honors College. She enjoyed learning about the economy both locally and globally as well having the skill sets to be able to understand the world today. Her professors noted that Marilyn was really organized and attentive to detail. Marilyn was interested in learning how to work with data and analytically quick to be able to grasp and apply concepts. Currently, Marilyn works at State Street Bank and Trust Company as an intern in the Global Services Unit under compliance. Upon graduation, Marilyn will be working full-time at State Street Bank through the Future Focus Program.

Rachael Roberts-Toler

Rachael initially became interested in economics when she took a joint environmental science and economics course that used an economics framework to explore sustainable development. She became fascinated with economics and took more economics courses that have intellectually and empirically empowered her research goals. She gives credit to her professors, advisors, and mentors who have consistently encouraged and challenged her to become the student she is today. She especially appreciates the support she has received from the faculty in the Department of Economics.

Her research interests are on aspects of the human and economic dimensions of climate change, globalization, and sustainability, as well as social and environmental aspects of structural adjustment and market liberalization. Currently, she is working on projects focused on motivating rural farmers to adopt conservation agriculture technologies, public attitudes towards renewable energy, and social vulnerability to natural disasters. After graduation, she plans to continue her studies in economics by applying to a doctoral program with an ecological and economic focus.
Alice E. Trost Memorial Prize  
*(Economics Department)*

Each year the department chooses an outstanding economics graduate to receive this prize, established in honor and in memory of our colleague Alice E. Trost, who died in 2001. In Professor Trost’s short time at UMass Boston, she made an indelible impression on all who worked with her. She was a wonderful teacher and was particularly successful in engaging students with her wit and intelligence. Confronted with terminal cancer from the time she arrived here, Professor Trost never let that diminish her teaching and scholarly efforts. Her courage and dignity in the face of a tragic disease were a lesson to all who knew her. Significant factors in awarding the prize are the student’s GPA in economics and overall GPA.

**Shandalee Colon**

Shandalee Colon started off as a computer science major at Wentworth Institute of Technology and transferred to UMass Boston in her sophomore year. Not knowing what to major in, she remembered her fondness for economics after taking a course in principles of economics at W.I.T. She has made a good decision, since her transfer to UMass Boston, Shandalee has made it on the Dean’s List every semester.

Currently, Shandalee is a management trainee intern at Enterprise Holdings and works closely with the Risk Management Department. After graduation, Shandalee will be working at Bank of America as a relationships manager and eventually hopes to become a financial advisor. Shandalee would like to thank her family and all her amazing professors for her success at UMass Boston.

**Thomas Kraemer**

Thomas Kraemer started off at UMass Boston in fall 2012 as a Chancellors Scholarship recipient. He enrolled in the Honors College, studying biology but with a passion for economics. Two and a half years later he turned that passion into a double major in economics and biology. While working two jobs as an accounting intern for State Street Bank and a bartender at a local country club, Thomas found time not only to be a member of the Undergraduate Student Government, but also to make it to the Dean’s List. Thomas’ passion for economics at UMass Boston culminated in a thesis examining Major League Baseball for evidence of wage discrimination against minorities and international players.

He was tireless in manually coding over 100 thousand variables in pursuit of his answer. Thomas graduates as an honors student with a double major in economics and biology, an expected but well deserved reward for his hard work.

After graduation, Thomas will continue to work as an accountant for State Street Bank and plans to eventually go to a graduate school to further his education. Thomas would like to thank his family, especially his hardworking mother, his friends, and his great professors for his success at UMass Boston.
Eleanor Marie Fay and James William Fay Memorial Prize  
(English Department)  

*In memory of an avid reader, a perfectionist whose love and study of architecture were motivated by his lifelong appreciation of style and design balanced by the creative spirit, this prize will be awarded for the best capstone essay in English and Anglophone literature. Faculty nominate essays that demonstrate the breadth and imagination of the project, intellectual facility in blending abstract concepts with research, graceful articulation, and an appreciation of artistic achievement.*

**Eileen Cullen**

The English Department awards the Fay Prize to Eileen Cullen for her highly accomplished Senior Honors thesis, “Gawain the Destroyer: Knighthood, Kinship, and Sovereignty in Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*.” Eileen traces the conflicting source material on which Sir Thomas Malory drew for the creation of the complex figure of Sir Gawain. She finds that despite differences in his sources, Malory successfully created a character who exposed the contradictions inherent in King Arthur’s concept of monarchical sovereignty.

Eileen impressed the prize committee with the coherence of her argument, the seriousness of her scholarship, and the clarity of her writing. She has demonstrated that she is not only an outstanding close reader of medieval English texts, but also a rigorous thinker who puts literary materials in the contexts of history and political theory. Eileen’s thesis brings her superb undergraduate coursework in English literature to a conclusion.

**Alfred R. Ferguson Award for Distinguished Work in American Literature**  
(English Department)  

*This award honors Alfred R. Ferguson, who taught at UMass Boston from 1966 until his death in 1972. Professor Ferguson was a distinguished scholar who edited fourteen volumes of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s writing, and was involved in the editing of Emerson’s journals at the time of his death. He also authored books on Emerson and Edward Rowland Sill, and wrote on other American poets, including Robert Frost. Coming to UMass Boston from Ohio Wesleyan University in UMass Boston’s second year, Professor Ferguson was the first Chair of the Humanities Division, and was instrumental in the development of both the English Department and the University. The award is presented to the junior or senior English major who has written the best paper on any subject in American literature.*

**Victoria McCandless**

The English Department awards Tori McCandless the Ferguson Prize for American Literature on the basis of her dazzling thesis, “A Queer Sense of Place: Elizabeth Bishop’s Poetic Cartography and the Resignification of Environments.” McCandless argues that Bishop’s decades of writing about topography and landscape express forms of dissent from the culturally dominant institutions of the nuclear family and heterosexual marriage. Bishop’s sexual orientation thus entails a different spatial orientation, as her poems explore forms of home and belonging that do not replicate normative definitions of the natural. The Prize Committee found that Tori’s work is “impeccably researched, gorgeously written, and hearteningly original.” She has established herself as a keen close reader of poetry, as an engaged student of critical theory, and—most of all—as a brilliant writer. The English Department lauds Tori for her elegant, socially engaged scholarship.
Francis Russell Hart Prize
(English Department)

The Francis Russell Hart Prize honors a scholar of English and Scottish literature who set a standard for committed teaching and effective learning in his department, his university, and his profession at large. As co-founder of UMass Boston’s Center for the Improvement of Teaching and author of Beyond the Books: Reflections on Learning and Teaching, Russ Hart devoted much of his career to enhancing the quality of the work done by many individual teachers and to enriching the teaching culture of the campus. He taught in the English Department from 1971 until his retirement in 1991 and he died in 2001.

The recipient of the Francis Russell Hart Prize is a senior English major who has demonstrated excellence in English studies and made significant contributions to the university community. The English Department recognizes with gratitude the support of its alumni whose contributions underwrite this award.

Nathan Goudreault

On the basis of his commitment to his fellow students’ writing, The English Department recognizes Nathan Goudreault with the Francis Russell Hart Prize. As a research assistant to Professor Matthew Davis, Nate designed new approaches to assessing student work in English 203 (“Writing: Craft, Context, Design”), and earned Senior Honors for his rigorously theorized thesis, “Self-in-Text: A Cross-Examination of Identity and Transfer.” Nate disseminated his scholarly findings about undergraduate writing at major conferences hosted by UMass Amherst and by the Naylor Workshop for Undergraduate Research in Writing Students at York College in Pennsylvania. He also presented his scholarship at two conferences on the UMass Boston campus. Finally, Nate distinguished himself as a tutor in the Composition Program for four semesters; in this capacity, Nate conducted outreach to students in English 101 and 102, and educated entering students about campus, academic, and technological resources available to them.
Marcia Keach Memorial Poetry Prize  
*(English Department, Creative Writing)*

This prize is given by her family in honor of Marcia Keach, an English major in the creative writing program who died in 1988, in the spring semester of her senior year. People who knew her spoke of the energy, determination, indomitable good cheer, and unsentimental sense of reality with which she handled her life, her work, her three children, and her education. Many of those qualities are evident in her poems, some of which have been published in small literary magazines. In presenting this award recognizing the best poem by a graduating senior, Marcia’s family hopes to share with other students her interest in poetry.

Anna Xie

Anna Xie describes her poems as “a round-trip ticket to both the past and the present.” The poems in her Creative Writing Honors thesis, “twenty-something,” are, she says, her “acknowledgement of being an Asian American twenty-something year old girl, in all its sunny days and gray skies and in betweens,” in which “there will be bouts of yearning and running face-first into doors of past times.” Her Marcia Keach Prize-winning poem “Kaiping” takes us back to China, where Anna’s mother was a young girl living in poverty and having to count each grain of rice. In Anna’s elegant, understated, but vivid style, we’re given one surprising image after another. In summers, when “the velcro sun liked to stick / onto the sky and blink slowly,” “Winters / were loud exclamation points of rain.” And “Fog pedaled on a bicycle across the city.” Beneath this enchanting surface is an undercurrent of sadness, of empathy for someone living a hard life. But there is nothing sentimental about that image. Every feeling has been earned. Anna Xie, only a “twenty-something,” has already become a true poet.

Chet Frederick Fiction Prize  
*(English Department, Creative Writing)*

The Chet Frederick Fiction Prize is awarded annually by the Creative Writing faculty in recognition of the best work of fiction written by a graduating senior. Professor Kenneth “Chet” Frederick taught in the English Department at UMass Boston from 1968 until his retirement in 2001. He is the author of numerous short stories and novels; his novel Inland (2006) won the PEN/L.L. Winship Award for Fiction. The oldest of eight children growing up in Detroit, Michigan, Professor Frederick was the first in his family to attend college. The Creative Writing Program honors Professor Frederick and thanks him for funding this award.

Bailey “Edym” McKelvey

“Audrey” by Edym McKelvey is one of those rare stories that can still shock us while making us laugh. While fiction has taken on just about every possible taboo, one doesn’t often read about necrophilia. Rarely does this subject matter warm the heart and turn the stomach as it does in these pages where Daisy, the aptly named young protagonist, discovers her predilection with as much surprise as we experience in reading about it. But what is so unexpected here are the innocence and humor McKelvey uses to make this otherwise gruesome subject cast light on our humanity. While you may not fall in love with Audrey, whom Daisy first meets on a cold winter’s day swinging lifelessly from a tree, you will come to understand what it means to live with secrets even as you yearn to share them with the world. Indeed, how does one tell one’s mother, one’s closest friends? How can one be oneself when one has fallen in love with Audrey? This young author crosses Edgar Allan Poe with Donald Barthelme, George Saunders, and a good dose of Edym McKelvey to come up with a vital story not quite like anything you’ve read before.
Paul F. Boller Prize  
*(History Department)*

The Paul F. Boller Prize is named for a distinguished former member of UMass Boston’s history faculty who taught here from 1966 to 1976 before leaving to take an endowed teaching position in Texas. Professor Boller’s specialty was the history of ideas in American history. In the last 20 years he has published a number of books on American politics; the most successful is Presidential Anecdotes. It was largely money from the sale of his popular histories that provided the fund that forms the endowment of the Boller Prize.

Paul Boller loved teaching and scholarship equally because he loved to teach the things that he learned. He wanted above all to recognize excellence. The prize named in his honor is given each year for the best history essay written by a graduating senior.

Po-Yu Huang

In a meticulously researched thesis, Po-Yu Huang traces the fluctuations of Taiwanese metropolitanism from 1895 to 1945, weighing evidence of Sinocentrism alongside the obvious and profound influence of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan. Mr. Huang’s thesis is based on archival research in the archives of the National University of Taiwan. He identified memoirs and Japanese-era newspapers that gave voice to Taiwanese expectations of Japan and China. Mr. Huang’s writing and research are distinguished by his intellectual curiosity, discipline and drive, and his ability to work with sources in multiple languages.

Mr. Huang was born in Taiwan and has studied in Singapore, New Zealand, and the United States. He will continue with his international academic career at the University of Cambridge in Fall 2017, reading for an MPhil in United States history. We commend him on his achievements at UMass Boston and in the history major.

Outstanding Achievement in History  
*(History Department)*

The award for Outstanding Achievement in History is given each year to a graduating history major for exceptional and distinguished performance in history courses. The Department of History established this fund in 1999 in order to recognize the hard work and discipline that are the key ingredients in the achievement of academic excellence.

Cecilia Paquette

Cecilia Paquette is described by her professors as “truly outstanding” and “a classroom leader and an aspiring scholar whose research and compositional skills demonstrate a high level of sophistication.” She gives attention to a wide variety of sources in her writing and has an artful way of playing off one against the other, reaching brilliant and unpredictable conclusions and showcasing her methodologically- and analytically-balanced approach. Her instructors agree that she brought depth and perspective to her work and was often a “vital force” in the classroom. Ms. Paquette has also served as a tutor in undergraduate history classes.

We strongly commend Ms. Paquette on her achievements in the history major.
Human Services Award for Academic Excellence
(Human Services Department)

This excellence award is given each year to the undergraduate student who has achieved exceptional performance in human services courses and has earned the highest overall grade point average of all graduating human services majors.

Alannah Brennan

Alannah Brennan earned the academic excellence award with the unanimous approval of Human Services faculty members. She showed dedication and perseverance in achieving her degree and a deep commitment to the field of human services, especially in improving the lives of children. She has a rich background in teaching including her work to provide quality care and education to children between the ages of four weeks and five years. As a mentor teacher she hired and trained new staff. Most recently she has interned at Horizons for Homeless Children in Boston, where she manages their database system and conducts community outreach activities via social media platforms. Alannah’s rich and varied experiences and her deep appreciation for the education she has earned at UMass Boston, ensure that she will continue to make many more contributions to the field of human services.
Ann S. Blum Memorial Fund Award
(Latin American and Iberian Studies Department)

This award, funded by the generous donations of family, colleagues, students and friends, honors the extraordinary legacy of Professor Ann S. Blum (1950-2015) a historian of Mexico and a professor of Latin American Studies. She was an exemplary colleague, generous with her time and ideas, and a model of supportive and critical engagement with the work of peers, students, and administrators. At UMass Boston she was widely known and respected as a firm defender of faculty governance, and of students’ and workers’ rights. One of her major contributions was the reconceptualization of what today is the Department of Latin American and Iberian Studies.

Hella Dijsselbloem-Girón

A summa cum laude, Hella is the first member of her family to receive an undergraduate degree. The level of community engagement she witnessed both on and off campus, have led her to become a teaching assistant for the business communications team at Year Up, a nonprofit that strives to close the opportunity divide for disadvantaged urban youth. “My goal,” she writes, “is to give back the wonderful support and encouragement I received from many great professors at UMass Boston to Year Up students.”

Nathalie Pacas

Nathalie Pacas moved from El Salvador with her family in 2010. At UMass Boston she has felt “safe and proud to be a Latina.” Learning about human rights in Latin America has made her want to become a teacher and have an opportunity to teach a course on Salvadorian history. As she graduates, she will miss her Don Quijote class: “it was an amazing experience that confused me; and taught me how to think about reality and fantasy.”

Esteban Tula

Esteban Tula came to the United States when he was seventeen years old, after finishing his secondary education in Bogotá, Colombia. Having first obtained an associate degree in fine arts, science, and visual communications, Esteban decided to pursue his love for the Spanish language at UMass Boston. He is currently completing his practicum at North Quincy High School, and plans to obtain a master’s in education and Latin American studies in the near future.
Outstanding Achievement Award in Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
(Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Department)

The Outstanding Achievement Award in Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures is given each year to honor a graduating student for exceptional performance in the study of one or multiple languages, literatures, and cultures offered by the MLLC department. The award recognizes excellence in languages as well as in the broad interdisciplinary study of global literatures, cinema, and/or cultures.

Marie Shubow

Marie Shubow has demonstrated exceptional performance throughout her studies in the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. She has worked conscientiously towards her major in French, setting an exemplary model for her peers through her always insightful and sharp academic contributions and her astute observations in the classroom. Her dedication to her intellectual pursuits has reverberated outside the classroom and has impressed the MLLC French faculty.

Marie’s dedication to cross-cultural dialogue and genuine attentiveness to cultural heterogeneity place her at the forefront of our graduating students. She took her work in literary analysis and critical thinking seriously, repeatedly demonstrating the value of humanistic inquiry by always asking questions and then providing thoughtful and careful reflection on those questions. She represents what the department as a whole encourages in its students—thorough inquiry, deep reflection, and seriousness of purpose.

John J. Conlon Prize in Theatre Arts
(Performing Arts Department)

The John J. Conlon Prize recognizes outstanding service to the Theatre Arts Program in honor of Professor John Conlon, distinguished scholar, theatrical director/performer, and dedicated educator of UMass Boston theatre arts students. Throughout his long career at UMass Boston, Professor Conlon inspired and mentored both faculty and students alike while always encouraging active participation in the lively arts and setting an inspirational example with his tireless service to the department, university, and community. The John J. Conlon Prize recognizes a graduating senior who best exemplifies this spirit of dedication and service to the theatre arts, fellow students, and the community.

Erin Reilly

Erin Reilly exhibits a spirit of dedication to theatre arts equal to her pursuit of excellence in her artistic and academic endeavors. She is a dedicated student who impressed her professors with her work ethic and intelligence. Her writing exhibited clarity and maturity. She has performed on campus in departmental productions such as Twelfth Night; Urinetown: The Musical; New Voices, New Stories; You Can’t Take It with You; and The Musical Theatre Cabaret, and served as Assistant Director for Polaroid Stories. She is an actor of great depth and expression, skilled at creating varied, bold characters onstage. An accomplished soprano, she also combined her musical and acting talents to create unforgettable musical theatre. While at UMass Boston, she has been a part of every university theatre production in some way: acting, singing, working backstage, assisting the director, and mentoring underclassmen. A dependable and trusted ensemble member, she has earned praise and respect from all who worked with her. A multiple-year nominee to attend the The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, she placed as a semi-finalist in 2015 and 2016 in the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship auditions and as a finalist in the 2015 Maltby Musical Theatre Award Showcase.
Louis E. Roberts Prize in Theatre Arts
(Performing Arts Department)

The Louis E. Roberts Prize is named for the founder and mainstay of the Theatre Arts Program, who is presently professor emeritus of theatre arts. An accomplished actor, a versatile director, a prolific playwright, and, above all, an inspirational teacher, Lou Roberts led the Theatre Program for three decades and made it a place where the lively art of theatre in all of its aspects thrives.

In recognizing the Louis E. Roberts Prize recipient, the theatre arts faculty honors and celebrates the graduating senior who has best combined academic excellence with artistic excellence in theatre.

Patrick McCarthy

Patrick (Pat) exemplifies academic and artistic excellence in theatre arts. An outstanding student, Pat always arrived to class having thought deeply about the reading assigned. His writing demonstrated intelligence and a dedication to scholarly research. His short play, *Title*, was nominated by the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) for regional excellence in playwriting and performed at the 2016 festival. A true “renaissance man,” he also excelled at acting, singing, stage management, and design-tech. He served as an acting partner to the 2017 Regional Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship winner and received an award to travel to the National Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship Finals taking place onstage at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in April 2017. He has performed on campus in department productions such as *Twelfth Night; Urinetown: The Musical; New Voices, New Stories; The Musical Theatre Cabaret; Bat Boy: The Musical; and Comedy of Errors*, and in many local Boston theatres. He has been an integral part of every UMass Boston theatre production during his tenure, whether performing or painting, and proven to be a valued, dependable ensemble member. His leadership, tireless work ethic, and positive outlook has earned him the highest respect of students and faculty alike. Pat received Senior Honors in Theatre Arts for an excellent Senior Honors Thesis, “Acting—Shakespeare in Performance,” and was accepted to the prestigious Commonwealth Shakespeare Company Apprenticeship program in Boston this summer.
The Susan Cunningham Campbell Endowed Scholarship (Performing Arts Department)

The Susan Cunningham Campbell Scholarship is a bequest to both the Boston and Amherst campuses of the University of Massachusetts. The endowment was set up in 2003 by the estate of Susan Cunningham Campbell, who had expressed wishes prior to her death to support music at the University of Massachusetts in perpetuity. The purpose of the award is to promote and reward academic and musical excellence at UMass Boston and, in the case of music education recipients, to continue the development and implementation of arts education in the K–12 school system.

John Nilsson

John Nilsson is an accomplished musician, student, and pre-service teacher. Over the course of his time at UMass Boston, John worked hard to develop his craft as a pianist and a vocalist, while finding a niche for himself as a music educator. He is deeply invested in bringing his love of music to the hearts and minds of young children. As a pre-service music educator, John pushed himself to develop his knowledge, skills, and pedagogical understanding about students, music, and school climate. Furthermore, John embraced the opportunity to push boundaries and challenge his biases, so he can work towards becoming an educator who is committed to culturally relevant teaching pedagogies.

John is an integral member of the Performing Arts Department as a peer, student, and a friend to all. His warm disposition and strong work ethic inspire all of those who have the opportunity to interact with him.

Angelica Rodriguez

Angelica Rodriguez soared through her undergraduate days but not without obstacles to overcome. After graduating from Chelsea High School, she entered UMass Boston as the first college bound member of her family. She declared music as her major but with no saxophone, her primary instrument, in hand. Thrust into the music theory program, she gave it her all and, after two years of demanding study in an area new to her, succeeded in establishing a high grade point average. In her second semester, she was able to acquire an alto saxophone she so dearly missed. With dedication and a principled work ethic, she practiced, advancing dramatically over the ensuing semesters. Throughout her undergraduate days, she continued working to pay her way through school as well as helping out with the bills at her parents’ home. Continuing with her volunteer work in the high school from which she graduated, she also regularly offered her musical talent at their local church. Her remarkable academic and musical achievement in addition to her unwavering commitment to family and community are worthy of recognition.
Martin Andic Prize for Distinction in Philosophy

(Philosophy Department)

This prize is given in memory of Professor Martin Andic, a member of the Philosophy Department between 1971 and 2001. Much loved as a classroom teacher, Professor Andic was renowned for the range and breadth of his courses. He taught ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy, in addition to nineteenth-century philosophy, the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of religion, metaphysics, and the philosophy of science. His interest in literature allowed him to include thinkers such as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Iris Murdoch on his syllabi. Professor Andic’s research was equally far-ranging. He published on Greek philosophy, medieval philosophy, moral psychology, and religion as well as on particular thinkers such as Kierkegaard and the twentieth-century French philosopher Simone Weil.

Juan P. Blanco

Juan P. Blanco is an outstanding student genuinely committed to academic excellence and social justice. A standard philosophy major having taken 12 philosophy courses, half at the upper level, Juan expects to graduate with a high GPA. His instructors unanimously praise his sophisticated analytical skills, insightful engagement with scholarly materials, remarkably thoughtful contributions to class discussion, and respectful interactions with his classmates. He has applied to graduate programs where he will “continue pushing theoretical investigation and complement that learning with empirical research and analysis, getting closer to becoming a well-rounded and trans-disciplinary scholar.”

Shay Henckel

Shay Henckel is expecting to graduate with a high GPA. An outstanding student double majoring in philosophy and sociology, they will have taken fourteen philosophy courses, half at the upper level, by graduation. Shay’s instructors effusively praise their rigorous critical interrogation of arguments, impactful contributions to class, and imaginative scholarly interventions. In addition to their contributions as a tutor and peer mentor, their involvement with the Philosophy Club, including serving as president, vice-president, and treasurer, deserve special mention. They will be entering Brandeis’ MA philosophy program this fall.
Roger Feinstein Award for Distinction in Public Policy
(Political Science Department)

This award honors the memory of Roger Feinstein, a political science faculty member at UMass Boston (and, before then, at Boston State College) who inspired deep affection and respect among his many students and colleagues. With the help of Roger’s family and friends, the Political Science Department established the award in 2005 to recognize a graduating senior who has demonstrated particular academic excellence in the field of state and local government and exemplified the personal qualities that made Roger so beloved a human being. His voluminous knowledge of public administration and state and local government was based not only on book smarts but also on his depth of experience working in civic and town associations that focused on environmental and international justice. Roger extended the classroom experience to the civic realm by taking his students to the meetings and events of myriad nonprofit and governmental groups—literally opening students’ eyes to the fruits and frustrations of engaged citizenship. Accordingly, the Feinstein Award salutes a graduating senior whose activities inside and outside the classroom have reflected the same unwavering commitment to fostering a more empathic, respectful, and humane society that Roger’s life’s work did.

Ashley Pierre-Louis

The Department of Political Science is proud to award the 2017 Roger Feinstein Award for Public Policy to Ashley Pierre-Louis. From her initial semester on campus, Ashley has distinguished herself as a serious and highly motivated scholar. She has tackled challenging and rigorous classes with majors in political science and in the Honors College, and in the public policy minor. She has maintained a superb academic record by matching effort to talent, always being the most prepared student in the classroom.

Ashley has also been an active and engaged university citizen. She has been a student leader in mentoring freshman students as they orient to campus and college life. As an urban campus with many students who are first in their families to attend college, it is important to have student leaders like Ashley to whom freshmen can look for guidance. Her leadership at UMass Boston displays her devotion and promise as a community leader.

Ashley will be pursuing graduate work in urban planning, following her passion to help build the vibrant and diverse communities of the future. Building livable communities was also the passion of Roger Feinstein, making Ashley Pierre-Louis the ideal recipient of this award.
The Richard J. Landry Award for Distinction in Political Theory
(Political Science Department)

The Richard J. Landry Award is given to the graduating senior whose work in the field of political theory exemplifies the scholarly standards and humane ideals of Richard Landry, who taught political theory in the Political Science Department until his death in 1973. Professor Landry, who received his education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the University of Chicago, and Cornell University, was a brilliant scholar and teacher, familiar with both Western and Chinese political theory. In the memorial for Professor Landry, Professor Glenn Tinder of the Political Science Department wrote, “In the classroom he brought together two qualities that do not always readily go together: thorough scholarly rectitude and great popular appeal. His demands on his classes were as uncompromising as his demands as a scholar on himself, yet his courses were always filled with admiring and appreciative students.” The recipient of the Landry Award must be a student whose work is distinguished by high intellectual quality and breadth. It is not necessarily awarded each year.

Jasmine Taylor

Jasmine Taylor is the recipient of the Landry Award, given to a distinguished senior in political science for excellence in political theory. Her strong academic record, love of political theory, and intense devotion to critical, liberatory political inquiry distinguish Jasmine's trajectory as a student at UMass Boston. Jasmine continually sought out academic challenge by taking increasingly difficult courses in political theory, while demanding that course content be responsive to the demands of social justice. As well, Jasmine undertook extensive independent work in political theory, seeking mentorship from a number of faculty on everything from black feminism to decolonial theory to international politics. Jasmine's academic seriousness and political rigor are rare indeed, and ever keeps faculty on their toes. It is with great pleasure that we recognize Jasmine's outstanding merit today.

Maurizio Vannicelli Award
(Political Science Department)

In 1992, the Political Science Department established this award, to be given to the graduating senior who best exemplifies the spirit of Maurizio Vannicelli, one of the finest students ever to graduate from the department. Like many other UMass Boston students, Maurizio came to this campus at age 26 with an uncertain sense of himself. Helped by many dedicated teachers here, he soon found a creative and stimulating channel for his energies. He went on to graduate training at Harvard University on a full fellowship and became a dedicated teacher and scholar himself, touching hundreds of students in his decade of energetic work as a teacher. Maurizio's career exemplifies what is best at UMass Boston. In memorializing his name with this book award, we hope that his passionate dedication to learning, to teaching, and to social justice will continue to inspire others for years to come.

Phillip Early

Phillip Early came to UMass Boston after serving in the US Marine Corps for four years, including time as a squad leader in Iraq. He developed a lively interest in international relations and, after enrolling at the university, pursued a political science degree with a focus on international security and global governance. In the summer of 2016, he was an intern for Geoffrey Van Orden, a member of the European Parliament, for whom he drafted briefs, wrote speeches, and assisted with research on European defense and security. Subsequently, he became the director of internships for GR8, an organization based in Baku, Azerbaijan, that places interns in the European Parliament. Phillip was recently selected as a Tomodachi Kakehashi Inouye Scholar and as a Tau Sigma Society honoree. After completing his BA, he has now moved to Baku, Azerbaijan. In the future, he plans to pursue a master’s degree in international relations and to pursue work as a consultant and policy analyst.
Adrian Jill Barnett Memorial Prize for Academic Excellence
(Psychology Department)

Through the generosity of the Barnett family, each year the Department of Psychology awards the Adrian Jill Barnett Memorial Prize in honor of Adrian Jill Barnett, a psychology major, who was killed while riding her bicycle in Cambridge shortly after graduating with distinction from UMass Boston in 1977. Adrian was a research assistant in the Psychology Department and intended to carry her studies on to graduate school. The Barnett Prize is awarded to a psychology major each year on the basis of academic excellence as represented by the quality of a paper submitted for this competition. Interested students must be nominated by a faculty member in the Department of Psychology and submit a 10- to 30-page paper to the prize committee for evaluation. The paper may be a theoretical paper, a literature review, or a research study. Papers are judged with regard to organization, thoroughness, clarity, and originality. In addition to the award, the prize includes the inscription of the winner’s name on a plaque displayed permanently in the department office.

Mariana Lacolla

Mariana Lacolla is this year’s winner of the Barnett Prize for her paper entitled The Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma: Parental Behaviors, Mental Health Outcomes, and Protective Factors. This paper was written under the supervision of Prof. Abbey Eisenhower to fulfill her thesis requirement of honors within the Honors College.

Mariana is a psychology major. She transferred to UMass Boston in her sophomore year after attending Providence College. While at UMass Boston she worked as a research assistant for the ABCD research project in the Psychology Department. Following graduation Mariana is going to work in a clinical setting with the longer term goal of becoming a physician’s assistant. She would eventually like to specialize in oncology.

Ina Samuels Memorial Prize
(Psychology Department)

The Ina Samuels Memorial Prize is in memory of Professor Ina Samuels, who was a member of the Psychology Department for over twenty-five years until she passed away in 1998. This award is made possible by an endowment established through Dr. Samuels’s estate and faculty, student, and alumni contributions. Professor Samuels taught a broad range of courses, specializing in physiological psychology and neuropsychology. She was an extraordinarily effective and inspiring teacher and a superb research mentor dedicated to fostering the personal and professional development of her students.

This award honors a student whose research proposal or research report is judged to be of such high quality as to have met Ina’s criteria of scholarly evidence.

Zara Khan

Zara Khan has won this year’s Samuels Prize for her paper entitled Steroid Independent Aggression in B6D2F1 Hybrid Male Mice. This paper provided the background for research that she has carried out in the research lab of Prof. Jin Ho Park of the Psychology Department for the fulfillment of her honors thesis.

Zara is a member of the Honors College. She has been a member of Prof. Park’s lab since the spring of 2015. Zara has assisted other students while at UMass Boston by being a tutor for general and organic chemistry. She has also volunteered at Brigham and Women’s Hospital since the fall of 2014. Following graduation, Zara hopes to continue working in research at Dana Farber/Harvard Cancer Center.
The T. Scott Miyakawa Memorial Prize provides recognition for the lifetime work and career of Scott Miyakawa, a distinguished scholar and leader. During his time at UMass Boston, Professor Miyakawa served as chair of the Sociology Department for six years. He also served countless students as teacher and mentor. Although he was taken from us too early, he is remembered most often as simply a wonderful person. The Miyakawa Memorial Prize is presented annually to a student who embodies the ideals of Professor Miyakawa—excellence in academics and social service.

Lydia Grasso

Lydia has been an exemplary student at UMass Boston. In addition, she has been extremely active in a wide variety of community service projects. These include volunteer work at a Cambodian hospital and in Pennsylvania and Alaska with AmeriCorps, as well as more local volunteer work at Rosie’s Place (a shelter for abused women in Boston), Y2Y (a homeless shelter in Cambridge), and Community Conversations: Sister to Sister (a community-based organization assisting minority women in accessing healthcare). In addition, Lydia has also been active in community-based research, assisting Professor Chris Bobel (Department of Women and Gender Studies) with her Cambodia and Uganda-based research on menstrual health management. Based on these many and varied achievements, the Department of Sociology is proud to award Lydia Grasso the T. Scott Miyakawa Memorial Prize in Sociology.
Founders’ Award for Excellence in Women’s Studies and Social Activism  
(Women’s and Gender Studies Department)

This award is given annually to a women’s and gender studies graduate who has achieved academic excellence in all course work and contributed to the improvement of the status of women at UMass Boston or in the wider community. Students are invited to apply for the award by submitting a personal statement or letter of recommendation from someone who has thorough knowledge of the applicant’s record of social activism. Social activism is defined broadly in determining eligibility for the award. Examples of social activism include working with school-children to promote understanding of gender differences or enhance girls’ self-esteem, advocacy on behalf of women who are victims of violence, or organizing public educational campaigns in support of women’s rights or particular policy reforms which will benefit women and families.

Initiated in 1990 by Mary Anne Ferguson, professor emerita of English and women’s studies, the Founders’ Award fund is supported by contributions from faculty, alumnae, and friends of women’s studies. The Department of Women’s and Gender Studies is proud to announce July Suarez and Stepha Geheran as co-recipients of this year’s Founders’ Award.

Arusa Zama

Arusa Zama melds an impressive combination of an excellent academic record as student, teaching assistant, tutor, and researcher with an unflagging dedication to community service. Both her academic work and community engagement are fueled by her unwavering enthusiasm for feminist and interdisciplinary education. In these interlinked spheres, she consistently demonstrates a powerful intellectual curiosity and spirit of generosity.

As a women’s, gender and sexuality studies and business management double major, Ms. Zama’s brilliance shines through her critical, well-researched, and balanced writing. In the classroom, she thoughtfully and skillfully elevates the discussion and challenges her peers to delve more deeply into the issues at hand.

As an activist, her service experiences are diverse and animated by her deep ethics of care for humans and animals alike. For example, in two separate Beacon Voyages for Service trips, she served the Washington, D.C., homeless population with the Youth Services Opportunities Project, and provided compassionate care and treatment of farm animals at Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Ms. Zama also volunteered in the UMass Boston Urban Scholars Program where she designed a media literacy workshop for high school students on the representations of gender, race, and religion in the media.
Graduate Awards
American Studies Department

James Simons
Recipient of the American Studies Book Prize

James Simons has earned The American Studies Book Prize for his outstanding academic performance in the graduate program. In addition to having a near perfect GPA, he has produced a fine piece of original scholarship that examines constructions of civility and savagery in the minstrel shows of the 1890s. His incisive analysis challenges the notion that coon songs were merely instruments of racist stereotyping; instead, he demonstrates the complex ways that these songs both empowered and debased black men and white women. Through creative readings of coon song lyrics and cover art, he shows how the minstrel genre layered both cultural and economic meanings into representations of black male bodies. He finds that by playing roles in blackface, white female performers of this period were able to transgress Victorian-era codes of sexual expression and respectability, offering a venue for female liberation. His project helps to explain the illicit connection between black men and white women that heightened white male anxieties and fostered a culture of lynching and discriminatory legislation. The American Studies Graduate Program congratulates Simons for his high level of achievement in the program and for producing a final project of the highest quality.

Graduate program director:
Professor Bonnie Miller

Anthropology Department

Katherine Wagner
Recipient of the Barbara E. Leudtke Book Award for Academic Excellence in Historical Archaeology

The Department of Anthropology is pleased to present Katherine Wagner the 2017 Barbara E. Leudtke Book Award for Academic Excellence in Historical Archaeology. Katie came to UMass Boston from the College of William and Mary, where she earned a BS in biology, a BA in anthropology, and High Honors in anthropology for her undergraduate thesis research.

At UMass Boston Katie excelled in her course work and became a valued collaborator on a series of field and laboratory research projects. This includes the NEH funded project in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and the NSF funded project in Iceland, where she worked for two summers on the excavation of early Christian cemeteries.

Katie’s master’s thesis, “Systems of Sheep Husbandry at Stora-Seyla in Northern Iceland,” grew out of her field research experiences. Her thesis uses detailed laboratory analysis of archaeological sheep teeth to interpret past sheep husbandry practices, and investigates how these practices evolved through time as a result of cultural and environmental changes. For her outstanding thesis and many other accomplishments in our program we are pleased to recognize Katherine Wagner for academic excellence.

Graduate program director:
Professor Stephen Silliman
Gazi Joki Uddin
Recipient of the Award for Academic Excellence in Applied Economics

Gazi Joki Uddin is graduating from the Master’s in Applied Economics program. His passion for public policy, development, environment, social justice and economics as a whole comes from the experiences he had growing up in Bangladesh. Gazi received his BSci and MSci in economics from Jahangirnagar University in Bangladesh. There he worked at the Center for Policy Dialogue, a prominent civil society think tank. He is the co-author of the published paper titled "Attaining the MDGs: How Successful are the LDCs?" and the working paper "Massachusetts Biochar Economics Study." Gazi arrived in the Boston area in 2014 and started his journey at UMass Boston in fall 2015 where he has further pursued his passion for economics, acquiring techniques to work with large economic data sets. His master’s research project examines the effect of changes in federal, state, or local minimum wage laws on inequality in metropolitan areas. He finds increases in the minimum wage lifts earnings for the bottom portion of wage earners compared to the middle, making it an effective policy in reducing urban wage inequality. In the future, Gazi hopes to pursue a PhD in economics after working in an economic research job.

Aimée Bell-Pasht
Recipient of the Arthur MacEwan Award for Excellence in Political Economy

Aimée Bell-Pasht is a graduating student in the Master’s of Applied Economics. She is originally from Toronto, Canada, and first developed an interest in interdisciplinary approaches to economics during her undergraduate degree at McGill University. After working in the corporate sector in Montreal, she decided to pursue further training in economics with a focus in political economy and feminist analysis. Alongside her degree, she has also interned for the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, where she had the opportunity to use her applied analysis skills in a professional environment. Aimée’s master’s research project explores the rise of precarious and alternative work arrangements in the U.S. workforce using a feminist political economy framework. She finds a sharp rise in alternative work arrangements with different types of this work distributed unevenly across different demographic groups, which could be of concern for future policy. Aimée plans to continue developing her expertise in applied economics in the workforce and will eventually return to academia to complete her PhD.
Kristen Schlapp entered the applied linguistics master’s program in fall 2013. She has graduated with a distinguished master’s thesis. Her thesis titled “Languaging at Work: The Language Socialization of Support Staff in the Health Care Workforce” is an ethnographic study that examines languaging and discourse practices of adult English learners in a large metropolitan hospital. Kristen explores how language practices of hospital support staff affect their socialization into the workplace discourse, their identity formation, and shape a kind of human agency. Her work exemplifies the combination of theory and practice as it has important ramifications for adult ESL education in the workplace. It also has significant economic, political, and social implications because it raises salient questions about the immigrant workforce, access to labor, and immigrant professional development.

Kristen has presented her ongoing research at the Journal of Language and Literacy Education’s Conference (2017) and at the Language and the Sustainable Development Goals Symposium in the United Nations (2016).

Through her work as an adult ESL educator and trainer, Kristen is a strong advocate for adult literacy in the workplace and I have no doubt that she will be extremely successful and one of those individuals who truly makes a difference in our world.
Applied Sociology Department

Lucia Fox
Recipient of the Award for Academic Excellence in Applied Sociology

Graduate program director: Professor Andrea Leverentz

Lucy Fox is an excellent student. Throughout her time here, she balanced her academic work with full-time employment as a clinical implementation specialist. For her internship, she studied program implementation for projects focused on mental illness among the chronically homeless. Lucy views her professional and academic work through a sociological lens, and applies her theoretical and methodological skills to her work. She has developed her interests and knowledge in gender, medical sociology, and the role of social media in social movements. Lucy has been an asset to the applied sociology program, and embodies the goals of applied sociology.

Applied Sociology Department

Carian Diaz Rivera
Recipient of the James E. Blackwell Prize in Applied Sociology

Graduate program director: Professor Andrea Leverentz

Carian Diaz Rivera is an outstanding student, teacher, and aspiring young leader who has made a variety of valuable contributions to the UMass Boston community. As a sociology master's student, Carian has dedicated herself to better understanding the experiences of Latinx students in higher education. In the broader campus community, through organizing conferences, trainings, and in her various student service positions, Carian has spent the past five years applying her passion for social justice to establish more pathways to access and opportunity in higher education. Carian exemplifies UMass Boston's mission and pledge to intellectual inquiry, public engagement, and diversity and inclusion.
We’ve been lucky to have poet Robert Sykora as a student and colleague over the last three years. During that time, he’s worn many hats, all of them stylish. Thoroughly professional in his role as editor of Breakwater, the graduate student-run online journal, he oversaw fiction and poetry contests which brought in hundreds of submissions from across the country. He has also proved himself a generous and accomplished teacher, successfully running his own Introduction to Creative Writing class. While working on his thesis, Sykora became intrigued by the history of utopian communities. Out of this fascination emerged the poems that form the core of his thesis, about which his advisor Professor Jill McDonough had this to say: Sykora’s inventive and ambitious collection, displaying the writer’s proficiency across a variety of forms—sonnets, almost-sonnets, sestinas—gives us much to admire. The voice in the poems is funny, direct, and accessible, as Sykora’s narrator takes us on a privileged tour of different utopias across time. The poems engage our senses as we listen to “the endless saw of invisible bugs” at Brook Farm, the short-lived 19th century utopian community in West Roxbury, whose founders included Nathaniel Hawthorne, and to which Sykora gives new life.
English Department
Melanie Doyle
Recipient of the English Program Award for Outstanding Achievement

The English MA Program is delighted to award the 2017 Dean’s Book Award to Melanie Doyle for her exemplary scholarship in the program and service to the university. Melanie’s distinguished academic work at UMass Boston culminated in her outstanding MA thesis: “Towards a Unified Reading-Writing Curriculum,” which used cutting-edge work in the field of composition, particularly transfer theory, to illuminate her tutoring work with students in the College of Nursing. In turn, Melanie’s research suggests new and promising ways to develop transfer theory through practice.

English Department
Abigail Thibodeau
Recipient of the Ann E. Berthoff Award for Excellence in Composition Studies

It is the pleasure of the English Department’s Graduate Committee to award this year’s Ann E. Berthoff prize for the Outstanding Final Exercise in Composition Studies to Abigail Thibodeau for her essay, “What Genre Does: An Integrative Approach to Genre Theory in Memoir.” Bridging the divide between rhetorical and literary approaches to genre theory, Abigail provides a cogent argument that marshals a rhetorical functionalist genre approach to the non-functionalist world of literature. Focusing on literary memoir, she unpacks how the construction of the “I” in Tobias Wolff’s This Boy’s Life and Mary Karr’s The Liars’ Club functions in terms of identity and selfhood, and ultimately offers compelling evidence for further study that works through the complicated, but compelling, coupling of rhetorical and literary genre analyses.
Recipient of the David A. Kennedy Prize for Outstanding Work in the Field of Poetry

Theresa Dietrich

Recipient of the David A. Kennedy prize for exceptional work in the field of poetry, Theresa Dietrich’s final project, a curriculum unit for twelfth-grade language arts, “Feminist Critique and Revisionary Curriculum in Response to the Common Core State Standards Initiative,” is equal parts praxis and polemic. Through clear and innovative approaches to teaching poetry and other literary forms, Dietrich’s curriculum mounts critical resistance to state-sponsored initiatives that attempt to depoliticize and depersonalize language arts teaching, revealing such initiatives for what they are: impoverishing and impossible.

The English Department's Graduate Program Committee is pleased to honor Amanda Miller's final project, “Warning, Graphic Contents: Depicting Trauma in Becoming Unbecoming,” with the Alvan S. Ryan Award for the best literature final exercise. In this essay, Miller persuasively argues that Una’s 2016 graphic novel provides an optimal literary form for depicting the trauma of sexual assault and the Yorkshire Ripper attacks. Through this analysis, Miller provocatively suggests that the visual features of the graphic novel (as opposed to text-based literary texts) are particularly well suited for representing the often abstract experiences of trauma victims.

Recipient of the Robert T. Crossley Award for Most Innovative Final Project

Jay Brewer

Jay Brewer’s MA Final Exercise, “When I Can Take Your Hand/ On Any Crowded Street/ And Hold You Close To Me/With No Hesitiating’: Creating Space in Derek Jarman’s Edward II,” convincingly fulfills the high expectations of the Robert T. Crossley Award. It is at once, “innovative, interdisciplinary, and risk-taking” in its study of “space/place” in Derek Jarman’s film and its establishment of the relation of “spatial aesthetics” to New Queer Cinema.
Alexandra Borkowski

Recipient of the Award for Academic Excellence in History

From her arrival in the UMass Boston History Department, Alex impressed her fellow students and professors with her intellect, warmth and commitment to history. She excelled in her classes as she continually demonstrated her deep engagement with both primary and secondary sources. Alex graduated in December 2016 with a high GPA. In her time at UMass Boston, she has worked tirelessly as both a teaching assistant and a tutor in the writing center to help undergraduates improve their prose and develop the quality of their arguments. As co-president of the History Graduate Student Association, she helped take an organization still in its early stages and through hard work turn it into an important intellectual and social focus for our graduate students.

While Alex is catholic in her interests, her special area of focus is medieval history. She was one of the first students in Professor Alex Mueller’s palaeography program in Bologna and since then has worked hard to develop her skills in Latin and Romance languages. Alex wrote a deeply researched, complex, and erudite thesis on the 12th century female polymath, Hildegard of Bingen, and she plans to continue her study of the religious life of nuns in the history PhD program at the University of Connecticut. We will all miss her!

Tasnin Chowdhury

Recipient of the History Program Book Award for Best Final Project

Taz Chowdhury’s thesis, “For the Benefit of Mankind: Franklin Roosevelt’s Development of Trusteeship for the Postwar World,” examines a less-well known aspect of the FDR’s foreign policy. In thinking about the postwar world and the new United Nations, FDR advocated for a policy of trusteeship for former colonies and occupied territories. Taz traces the evolution of Roosevelt’s thinking on decolonization from the 1920s down to the 1940s and explains the difficult policymaking and compromises that would eventually lead to a modified version of trusteeship in the United Nations charter. Taz’s thesis is a sophisticated and deeply researched paper that tackles a relatively neglected area of research and sheds new light on how FDR and the Allied powers thought about decolonization in the waning days of World War Two.

In addition to his strong thesis, Taz also excelled in the classroom, graduating with a perfect GPA. He impressed his instructors with his consistent and thoughtful engagement with class readings. As one his professors wrote: “What I loved about having Taz in class was the depth of his engagement in topics that were so far from his interests and professional life. Plus, he was always so kind to and appreciative of his classmates.” Taz accomplished this record of achievement while also working full-time as a lawyer for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We congratulate him on his achievement.
Carol Dumas has the distinction of earning a perfect GPA in the MS in human services program. Carol has applied her considerable abilities to many human service problems over her career and she is well-known as an advocate extraordinaire! Carol is an expert in disability/education rights and she has applied these skills especially in the development of educational programs and supports for students with disabilities. Carol is the founder and president of the Avalanche Advocacy Agency, Inc. that offers facilitated parent support groups and workshops on advocacy for children with special needs. As a graduate assistant for Professor Joan Arches in the UMass Boston Partnership with the 3 Point Foundation and the Attorney General's office, Carol served as a site supervisor. Carol has also served as a member of the Eliot Community Human Services Children's Behavioral Health Initiative wraparound team, supporting parents in developing their own advocacy skills. Carol's commitment to academic excellence, her activism within human services and education, and her very high energy level ensure that many more children and parents will benefit from her considerable skills.
Natalie Arbid

Recipient of the Clinical Psychology Book Award

Natalie Arbid graduated with a BA in psychology from Loyola Marymount University. She worked at UCLA in several research laboratories on projects focused on the treatment of anxiety disorders, specifically looking at the mechanisms of change within cognitive behavior therapies (CBTs). She has continued this line of research during her studies in the clinical psychology doctoral program at UMass Boston. For her master’s thesis, Natalie conducted an experimental study to investigate the ways that emotional acceptance and suppression (potential mechanisms of treatment effectiveness) may impact participant’s mood and attention. She conducted this study with a sample of participants who were experiencing anxiety and stress, to better understand why and how these mechanisms might alleviate the distress of individuals suffering with anxiety disorders. Natalie’s research has the potential to help streamline and focus existing evidence-based psychotherapies which would make them more easily implemented and disseminated across diverse contexts.

Julie Neuspiel

Recipient of the Maxwell J. Schleifer Memorial Prize

Julie Neuspiel is committed to research and psychological interventions that help families to support their children’s healthy social and emotional development. Julie’s master’s thesis focused on patterns of parent–teacher disagreement on behavior problems of young children with autism spectrum disorder. She sought to understand the child and context characteristics associated with different levels of parent–teacher disagreement, and found that higher ASD symptom severity and smaller classroom size were associated with lower disagreement. Julie explored reciprocal relations between informant disagreement and parent-school involvement over time. Her results illustrated that lower informant disagreement in the fall predicted higher parent-school involvement in the spring. These findings highlight our understanding of parent and teacher reports of behavior problems for children with ASD, and help to inform potential interventions to promote parent-school collaboration. Julie has received funding to present her findings at a national conference and is in the process of submitting the manuscript based on her thesis for publication. Her research is informed by clinical training in therapy and assessment serving children and families at Martha Eliot Health Center and Columbia University Medical Center. Julie earned her BA in psychology at Wesleyan University in 2009.
Marcia Keach Prize-Winning Poem

“Kaiping”
by Anna Xie

When my mother was young, afternoons multiplied in the shape of rice grains.

In the summer the velcro sun liked to stick onto the sky and blink slowly. One grain of rice is one drop of sweat, my mother once told me during suppertime. So eat up, clean your bowl.

It never snowed in Kaiping. Winters were loud exclamation points of rain. Fog pedaled on a bicycle across the city until springtime.

It took my mother twenty minutes to walk to school every morning. That’s where she met my father and his proportional handwriting.

In Kaiping, rice rations divided and dwindled. To ease her stomach tantrums, my mother would take a few grains of salt out of a satchel and lick them, whispering.

there, there. there will be food soon.
Chet Frederick Prize-Winning Story

Excerpt from “Audrey”
by Bailey “Edym” McKelvey

It was snowing, I remember, when I first met Audrey about a month ago. Just barely into the month of November, and the ground was covered in a constant layer of frost. The whole forest appeared translucent as I walked, the crunch of the leaves underneath my feet muffled by the snow all around me. It was a lovely day.

I had taken to walking in the woods more and more often. My apartment complex was right on the outskirts of a dense woodland. More and more, I was drawn to it, blending in with the fallen logs and standing evergreens. I would watch the grass and the flowers sway in the wind all summer, gaze down at the trunks rotting. Usually, my walks took place when I felt like one of those decaying trunks. Questions would litter my mind—what was I going to do? How long would I be in this town? Where was my life going? Would I ever settle down, have a family, give my mother the grandkids she’s been pestering me about for years?

As I felt the leaves beneath my sneakers, as I stumbled over the stones and listened to the soft crackle of the snow crumbling beneath my feet, I took a moment to look up, to watch the snow drift through the cracks in the branches up above. That’s when I saw her, in the old oak tree, up high where the branches begin to brush against the sky.

I blinked, rubbed my eyes, thought I was seeing things. The tree was about as tall as a four-story building. There was no way someone would be climbing a tree that big in the middle of winter. But through the bare and blackened branches, I saw her, watched her stare vacantly out at the woods beyond. I couldn’t tell what she was looking at, or why she was up there.

On impulse, I called up to her, “How’s the view up there?”

She didn’t respond.

It took a good deal of coaxing, and I had to help her half the way down. It became clear to me that the same tools she used to get up the tree, she couldn’t use to get down. Furthermore, she didn’t want to go back down to the ground, I could tell. Whatever made her get up to the highest branch she could reach in the tree was keeping her from coming down willingly. Despite that, I managed to untangle her, cut her loose, and guide her down.

As we leaned against the tree together, I finally got a good look at her. She was freezing, too cold to even offer a “thank you,” her pink lips tinted blue.

““There,” I remarked, a little breathless. For some reason, I couldn’t pry my eyes off her lips, and it was making my heart pound. “Isn’t that better?”

Even if she had wanted to respond, I didn’t give her the time to. As the frigid winter air froze the sweat to my brow and as my heart hammered in my chest, I leaned in close and kissed her. Her lips were freezing, but I didn’t care.

For a few moments, even over the gust of wind blowing through the trees, I could’ve sworn I heard her heart pounding, too.