UMass Boston Tops Off Integrated Sciences Complex

Less than nine months after the official groundbreaking, students, faculty, staff, and visitors looked skyward on February 16 as a steel beam bearing their signatures was hoisted to the top of the Integrated Sciences Complex (ISC) as part of the building’s topping-off ceremony, marking the end of steel construction by putting into place a final, signed beam.

University of Massachusetts Boston Chancellor J. Keith Motley was joined by Commissioner Carole Cornelison of the Division of Capital Asset Management, state representatives Marty Walsh and Linda Dorcena Forry, Boston City Councilor Frank Baker, and Richard Walsh, president of Walsh Brothers, among other community leaders to mark this construction milestone.

"We’re celebrating the future of this building," Chancellor Motley told the crowd. "We’re celebrating what it means for us as a university. This is a tremendous gift to the future."

The six-story building is scheduled to open in fall 2013 near the Morrissey Boulevard entrance of the Columbia Point campus and will house state-of-the-art research, teaching, and training laboratories.

"This is the moment when you can finally see the product of a long journey," said Commissioner Cornelison. "This is a very important, significant milestone for this particular building."

Before the topping-off ceremony, more than 500 faculty, students, staff, and guests autographed the steel beam that was hoisted into place to represent the last of 2,000 tons of structural steel used in the 220,000-square-foot building’s frame. UMass President Robert Caret was among those who stopped by the campus to sign the beam, writing, “The future looks bright!”

This spring concrete will continue to be poured for the floors. Through the summer mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems will be installed to support the

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The Big Picture at UMass Boston

Since the first shovels hit the ground last April at the groundbreaking of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate, the University of Massachusetts Boston has muddied hundreds of boots as construction progresses all over our campus.

From the site of the Integrated Sciences Complex (ISC) – which a student told me “looks more like a building every day” – to the new facility between Healey Library and McCormack Hall that houses our electrical utilities, to the studios of Wilson Architects, where plans for the General Academic Building No. 1 are being finalized, the transformation of our campus is well underway.

Our communications, master-planning, and facilities teams have worked hard to reach out to UMass Boston’s internal and external communities to let you know when construction might disrupt your daily routine – and to try to minimize any inconvenience. This new publication, Building Connections, is intended to further enhance our communications with our campus and external communities. We hope this occasional newsletter will provide readers with the big picture: an overview of all of the changes we’ve made and are planning to make that add up to truly exciting times for our university.

For every time you couldn’t park close enough to the Campus Center, for every clang of the pile driver at the ISC site last summer, and for every time you got mud on your boots on our campus, I hope you’ll remember that there are nearly 16,000 reasons for us to create some upheaval: our students. They deserve what we’re building: a greener, smarter university with state-of-the-art research and teaching facilities.

In this publication, you’ll read about the topping-off and beam-signing ceremony we hosted to commemorate the completion of an important phase in the construction of the ISC. You’ll get an update on our plans for the next academic building on campus: the General Academic Building No. 1. You’ll see the improvements we’ve made – such as installing our first solar energy system – and others we are planning, such as completing the HarborWalk and redeveloping the former Bayside property. I hope Building Connections makes you as excited as I am in seeing our gift to the future taking shape.

I’m grateful for the support of UMass Boston students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders; Governor Deval Patrick; our city and state elected leaders; our partners at the Division of Capital Asset Management and UMass Building Authority; and members from our surrounding communities who have helped to make these changes possible. I look forward to reporting even greater progress in the future.

– J. Keith Motley

Construction Updates

Construction updates are posted on the UMass Boston website, available on the homepage at www.umb.edu. To view the construction webcam or sign up for updates to be delivered to your email box, go to www.umb.edu/construction. If you have questions or concerns, contact UMass Boston Customer Service at 617.287.4000 or construction@umb.edu.
One day in January when Victoria Tanis arrived at a meeting she was told to attend, she had a surprise waiting for her: Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Chancellor J. Keith Motley with news that Tanis automatically qualifies for a $1,000 scholarship if she enrolls at the University of Massachusetts Boston in the fall. Even better, the scholarship is renewable for another three years if she keeps her grades up.

Tanis, of Hyde Park, and eight other seniors at the John D. O’Bryant School of Mathematics and Science found out during a news conference at the school that they are eligible for the Boston City Scholarship, the result of a partnership between UMass Boston, the City of Boston, and the Boston Water and Sewer Commission.

“I’m happy,” said Tanis, who is interested in a pre-med program. “It feels good.”

Under the Boston City Scholarship program, Boston Public Schools seniors with a 3.0 grade point average or higher who enroll at UMass Boston the semester after their graduation will receive a $1,000 scholarship. For each year that students stay enrolled full time and maintain a 3.0 grade point average or higher, they will receive an additional $1,000, up to a maximum of $4,000. The funds can be applied to tuition, fees, or other school-related costs.

“I know firsthand the value of a UMass Boston education because of the important role the university has played in my life and my future,” said Mayor Menino, a 1988 alumnus of the school. “I want to make sure other students have the chance to succeed. As a father, I know the burden of funding a college education.”

The Boston City Scholarship program was developed as part of an agreement with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission to transfer ownership of the commission’s Calf Pasture Pumping Station on Columbia Point to UMass Boston. In 2010, the Boston Water and Sewer Commission completed its move out of the property to a new facility located in Charlestown.

Since acquiring the property, UMass Boston has worked toward securing the building, cleaning up around it, and installing fencing. Long-range plans for the property have not been determined yet.

“An agreement with the Water and Sewer Commission doesn’t sound so glamorous, but consider this: We expect this scholarship will help 70 BPS graduates this fall alone,” Chancellor Motley told the assembled juniors and seniors at the O’Bryant.

UMass Boston has committed more than $2 million to fund the Boston City Scholarship program. The program will continue for approximately 15 years. During this timeframe, it is estimated that 1,000 students will receive scholarships.

“The property given to UMass Boston will enable it to continue its goal of providing the best higher education in the United States,” said Vincent Mannering, executive director of the Boston Water and Sewer Commission and a Boston State College alumnus. “The second goal is to help students of BPS. We’re very happy to be a part of that.”

“We know our students can get a great education at UMass Boston,” said Superintendent Carol Johnson. “We’re hoping our students will take advantage of this.”

Victoria Tanis said she was at the beginning of her college search, and that this scholarship opportunity is a great way to kick it off.

“This will put me at a safe, secure place, knowing I will have help paying off college bills,” she said.
Second New Academic Building Takes Shape

Now that the steel structure of the Integrated Sciences Complex (ISC) rises above the decorative fencing at the university’s main entrance, campus planners are formulating the design for a second new academic building, which will contain state-of-the-art classrooms and other facilities.

The second building to be constructed as part of the university’s 25-year master plan, known as General Academic Building No. 1 (GAB No. 1), has moved from concept to drawing board now that designers and planners have completed space programming and are moving forward with schematic design.

“We’ve achieved a significant milestone in the planning for our second academic building,” Chancellor J. Keith Motley said. “This general academic building will bring to our campus a host of new and interactive classrooms that will help further enhance the learning experience of our students.”

To meet the university’s academic needs and promote interactive teaching, GAB No. 1 will feature more than 20 general-purpose classrooms, ranging from small seminar rooms to larger lecture halls, and numerous specialized instructional spaces in three academic departments, including Department of Art studios, Department of Chemistry teaching labs, and Department of Performing Arts spaces, with a theater, a recital hall, and dance studio.

The building will also house faculty and staff offices, a café, a student lounge, and study spaces. All spaces will have state-of-the-art amenities, including contemporary lighting, furnishings, and technology.

“Energized by programs and activities that will serve all university students, this lively classroom building will be a leap forward for our teaching and learning environment,” said Peter Langer, associate provost. A strong and inclusive process including academic leadership, faculty, staff, and students is being used in planning and designing the new academic facility, he added.

Funded by the UMass Building Authority, the project is estimated to cost $110 million. The new building will be located on what is now the North Parking Lot, adjacent to the Campus Center (Master Plan Site B). Groundbreaking for the new building is expected later this year.

General Academic Building No. 1 will be located on Master Plan Site B, where the North Parking Lot is today.
Utility Corridor and Roadway Relocation

As part of the university’s master plan, the UMass Building Authority, in conjunction with University of Massachusetts Boston planners, is moving forward on developing schematics for a new roadway system on the campus and a coinciding utility corridor.

Currently, the university’s utilities are contained in the closed parking garages beneath the campus’s central plaza, which, according to the university’s master plan, will be removed to create a green central campus quad. The university’s utilities will need to be relocated to a corridor along the new campus roadway.

Starting later this year, the existing utility plant will be upgraded as part of this project. The campus roadway will be reconfigured to accommodate two-way traffic around the campus and encourage alternate means of transportation with improved sidewalks and bike lanes.

The design team is currently phasing the project and studying options for designing the improved roadway system in relation to other needs, such as the location of the first new parking facility.

The master plan calls for eliminating surface parking lots and eventually building two parking facilities. Currently about 45 percent of students, faculty, and staff use public transportation and take advantage of the free shuttle service offered by the university. A goal of the master plan is to encourage greater use of alternative means of transportation such as walking, biking, and public transit to reduce the university’s carbon footprint.

Bond Brothers was recently named the construction manager for this project. BVH Integrated Services is the project designer.

HarborWalk Improvements and Shoreline Stabilization

The UMass Building Authority recently awarded a contract for designing the HarborWalk Improvements and Shoreline Stabilization project to Bourne Engineering. The company is working on a conceptual design and obtaining permits for construction of an 800-foot stretch of the HarborWalk on the northern side of the University of Massachusetts Boston campus, between the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum and the Harbor Point Apartments.

The primary work consists of restoring and stabilizing the shoreline and replacing the existing earthen pathway with a permanent, hard-surfaced trail. The project also includes installing upgraded lighting to improve safety and security in the area and enhanced landscaping to augment the recreational nature of the HarborWalk.

This spring soil testing in the area will help determine how design will proceed. Construction is scheduled to start this fall.

Public Address System Installation

Keeping the public and our campus community safe is a critical concern of the University of Massachusetts Boston. In an effort to enhance the university’s ability to issue timely warnings in response to various emergency situations, the university is in the process of installing an external public address system. The new system will augment the emergency notification system already in place that alerts campus community members via emails, phone calls, and text messages, depending on the situation.

The new outdoor public address system will deliver a tone alert followed by a spoken message describing the emergency and recommending a course of action. The system is designed to be heard across the entire campus, with limited drift into adjacent neighborhoods. Installation is expected to be completed this spring, followed by testing of the system.

The university will alert surrounding neighbors of the testing in advance and will gather information to guide adjustments to the system to ensure the least possible disruption beyond the campus.
Bayside Charrette Generates Ideas

Last year the University of Massachusetts Boston led a months-long intensive charrette process to gather input and ideas for the redevelopment of the former Bayside Exposition Center property. A recently completed report on the effort summarizes the planning process, catalogues development ideas, and sets out a list of possible criteria for evaluating development scenarios. The findings from the Bayside planning process will be forward-ed to the university’s master planning task force for review and inclusion in the campus master planning process.

The goal of last year’s planning exercise was to solicit feedback and guidance from the university community, neighbors, and key stakeholders in crafting a framework for the development of the site. The planning process included brainstorming charrettes last May and November, along with a series of smaller meetings with key stakeholder groups. In all, the process involved nearly a dozen meetings and presentations and over 250 participants. (Even Boston Globe editorial writer Lawrence Harmon offered his suggestions in a column published on December 17.)

The UMass Building Authority, in collaboration with UMass Boston, acquired the 20-acre former Bayside site in 2010 primarily to support the university’s construction plans by providing contractor space and parking while projects are underway on the campus. While the Bayside will see increased use for parking in the near term as construction projects take up space in on-campus lots, the long-term goal is to redevelop the property in a way that furthers the university’s mission and key objectives.

For more information about the Bayside planning process, or to read the report, visit www.umb.edu/bayside.

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The look of things to come: The Clark Center gymnasium is undergoing a transformation. While it is closed through the summer, a new maple hardwood floor will be installed, new bleachers put in place, and lighting and entryways improved. When it reopens in the fall, the gym will provide UMass Boston students, faculty, staff, and visitors with a modernized 3,000-person facility for athletic and other events. The remainder of the Clark Center will be open, including the rink and the pool facility, both of which will be used for activities during the spring and summer.

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sophisticated laboratories, and exterior work will take place.

The Integrated Sciences Complex will be UMass Boston’s first new academic building since the campus was completed in 1974. The ISC will include wet and dry research laboratories and support space, undergraduate biology teaching labs, an infant cognition lab, and two new research centers—the Developmental Sciences Research Center and the Center for Personalized Cancer Therapy.

The construction is regulated by a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) signed by DCAM and the UMass Building Authority. The PLA requires an all-union workforce and includes workforce goals of 50 percent Boston residents, 25 percent minority, and 10 percent women. An Access and Opportunity Committee comprised of senior union leaders, state and local officials, and residents monitors progress and compliance on the construction project, which is meeting its goals.

Designed by the Boston-based architectural firm Goody Clancy, the ISC is funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the UMass Building Authority, and MassDevelopment. The project is managed by DCAM and is being constructed by Walsh Brothers.
The sunlight that shines onto the fourth-floor roof of Wheatley Hall is now providing clean, renewable energy to the building, saving the University of Massachusetts Boston an anticipated $10,000 each year.

Last fall, 350 photovoltaic panels were installed on the Wheatley roof and wired into UMass Boston’s power grid, capturing and transforming the energy in sunlight to provide power to the campus.

The state’s Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) and Department of Energy Resources received federal funding for this project from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as part of a statewide initiative to install solar panels on public buildings.

In the lobby of Wheatley Hall, students, faculty, staff, and visitors are now able to see how much energy the panels are generating through a readout device resembling an LCD touchscreen that monitors the installation.

About thirty students in Assistant Professor of Economics David Timmons’s undergraduate Economics 345: Natural Resources and Sustainable Development course monitored the screen over the last semester. Timmons was teaching a unit on renewable energy in the class – wind, hydro, solar, and biomass – and incorporated UMass Boston’s recent installation into the lesson.

“Real-world examples are good for the class,” he said. “And we had great access to project data: the cost of the installation, how much energy it’s expected to produce, how much electricity costs the university overall.”

Timmons’s office in Wheatley Hall overlooks the photovoltaic panels; his students crowded in on one occasion to view them.

Timmons says that he hopes his class takes away a sense of the social and educational benefits of using solar power, in addition to the cost savings.

“The more installations like this get built, the more acceptable it becomes, and the costs [to install them] come down. Projects like these are funded so that solar becomes more viable for the average person, and the average business,” he explains.

Timmons says that he aims to show his students that the economics of renewable energy are more than financial benefits.

“You can’t put a dollar value on it, but it’s still important,” he says.

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**Child Development Unit**

Space near the Venture Development Center in Wheatley Hall was recently renovated for the Child Development Unit, a research program developed by Professor Edward Tronick in the Department of Psychology. Tronick is a world-class researcher and teacher recognized by his peers for his work on the neurobehavioral and social-emotional development of infants and young children, parenting in the United States and other cultures, and infant-parent mental health.

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**Center for Evidence Based Mentoring**

A former lounge on the fourth floor of Wheatley Hall has been renovated to suit the program requirements of the Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, which is a partnership between MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership and UMass Boston. Professor of Psychology Jean Rhodes, who is research director of the center, is a leading expert on youth mentoring research, and the depth, breadth, and rigor of her academic accomplishments have made important contributions to policies affecting children and youth.

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**Roof and Waterproofing Projects**

A large roofing and waterproofing project in Wheatley Hall is nearly complete. Windows, masonry, skylights, and the sixth-floor roof were replaced and properly waterproofed to address water intrusion problems.
Another active construction site on the UMass Boston campus is adjacent to the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, where foundation work is underway for the future Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate. When completed, it will house classrooms, interactive educational exhibits, and a replica of the U.S. Senate chamber. Workers will begin placing steel this summer, with a scheduled opening in late 2013 or early 2014. The UMass Building Authority is overseeing construction of the 40,000-square-foot facility, which was designed by renowned architect Rafael Viñoly and is being built by Lee Kennedy Company Inc.