The FY19 goal for UMass Boston as set by One Beacon Street was $10.5m – across the campus, total commitments topped $23.79m which represents the largest amount in total achievement in our history. In fact, we topped the previous record of $17.6m by 35%. Gifts and pledges across the campus included our two largest commitments: $5m from New Balance to establish the Keith Motley Professorship in Sports Leadership coupled with a scholarship endowment (thanks to Charlie Titus) equaled only by Arthur Eisencraft’s $5m pledge from Wipro Technologies. Not included in our $23.79m total is a new $3.2m signed pledge that Chancellor Katherine Newman, Joe Berger, Linda Thompson, Charlie Titus and Adam Wise secured from an alumna; this historic pledge, UMB’s largest from a graduate, will be formally announced in September. In the field of advancement, one often tests year-end numbers by removing an institution’s largest gift or pledge and seeing how that deduction impacts total achievement. If we remove one of these $5m pledges, total achievement would have been $18.73m which is still a record-setting year.

Thirteen newly endowed professorships or scholarships were established—endowments are a critical component to our development strategy as professorships both attract and retain our faculty and, like scholarships, grow in perpetuity and are budget relieving. Looking across UA, a complete revamping of our Research team prompted a major change in the discovery of new prospects and rediscovery and re-rating of many others whom we haven’t focused on in years. Over the past twelve months, Katherine Newman has traveled with Adam Wise or AVC Ryan McDonald to key cities across the country to meet one-on-one with our lead prospects including visiting 73% of our “Top 50.” While some of these meetings were rekindling ongoing relationships, some of the visits were first-ever meetings, while others were with individuals not seen in more than a decade. “Where have you been for the past ten (or 20!) years” was a common refrain from some of these more prominent alumni.

UA also undertook an office-wide reorganization in February which allowed the hiring of two senior-level fundraisers who will give us greater bandwidth to engage more alumni, parents and friends. We also made substantive changes in our Annual Fund and Telefund operation as we have been spending more money to run the program than we raised in gifts.

Finally, in Alumni Engagement (previously called Alumni Relations and now helmed by AVC Ali Duffy), we had one of our most successful years ever including hosting our largest Celebration of Philanthropy with 200 donors attending this seminal event in October while in April our Celebration of Support attracted 195 donors and students which also was a high-water mark. Equally noteworthy were two on campus gatherings celebrating seven-figure pledges to the Gastón Institute and to Student Success, while we saw strong attendance at two reunions as we held our first-ever 50th for UMB’s inaugural Class of 1969 as well as Boston State’s 50th. Over the last year nearly 550 alumni attended receptions across the country and many of these alums came out for the first time under our flag. While we won’t set records every year, FY19 was a solid year for Advancement on our campus.