18th Annual Retired Faculty Luncheon Honors Two Award Recipients

A student jazz trio greeted more than 75 guests as they arrived for the start of the 18th Annual Retired Faculty Luncheon on October 2, 2015. Event emcee Jack Looney, professor emeritus of environmental, earth, and ocean science, provided welcoming remarks and introduced Chancellor J. Keith Motley, who addressed the gathering and introduced an inspiring video for UMass Boston’s Just Imagine campaign.

Provost Winston Langley welcomed newly retired faculty and discussed academic affairs highlights from the past year. The speaking program also included Professor Pam Annas, OLLI Director Wichian Rojanawon, and the 2014 recipient of the Faculty Career Development Award, Assistant Professor Amy Cook.

The 2015 call for applications for the Faculty Career Development Award resulted in the greatest number of applicants in the history of the award—29. Due to an increase in matching funds from Chancellor Motley and Provost Langley, the selection committee was able to choose two recipients: Keren Mertens Horn, assistant professor of economics, and Douglas Woodhams, assistant professor of biology. Provost Langley graciously acknowledged committee members Professor Emerita Louise Smith, Professor Steve Schwartz, and Professor Mark Schlesinger.

Professor Horn presented her proposal, “Are We Punishing Our Poorest Neighborhoods? Evaluating the Consequences of No Child Left Behind.” Her project will evaluate how the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act has affected housing markets in New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Tucson, where residence governs school assignments.

Professor Woodhams discussed his project, “Controlling Amphibian Disease with Skin Microbiota.” His research will continue development of a new conservation tool using antifungal microbes to prevent disease of amphibian species globally, over 200 of which are declining or already extinct.

Message from the Provost

There have been some new developments at the University of Massachusetts Boston since the last time I communicated with you. Below are items that cover the categories of physical infrastructure; growth in student population, including international students; increase in the number of faculty and academic programs; recruitment of new leaders; addition of new sites for delivery of academic programs; and completion of the reaccreditation process.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

This area of university life, as you know so well, is of utmost importance. Not only is an adequate physical infrastructure an important precondition for effective learning, teaching, and research, it is also central to the creation of the cultural environment that invites new students, faculty, and staff to a university and to the inspiration of prospective benefactors. We are pleased to inform you that...
In the last issue of this newsletter, we informed you about the then ongoing reaccreditation review by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), the six-state New England regional body that accredits academic institutions at all levels. In January 2016, we received notice of our reaccreditation for 10 years (2015–2025). The review was most favorable, constituting an important external recognition and endorsement of our efforts to transform our campus. We are not perfect (we were asked, for example, to ensure that departmental and administrative services do not fall disproportionately on some segments of the faculty and to enhance support for graduate students), but we are proud to have been commended for the candor of our self-study, and for our compliance with NEASC standards of accreditation. Equally satisfying is NEASC’s “congratulating the University of Massachusetts Boston on the quality of its faculty, staff and students, and leadership on their collective dedication to and enthusiasm for the institution’s mission as an urban-serving public university.”
James Green, professor emeritus of history at UMass Boston, was honored with a proclamation from Mayor Marty Walsh declaring November 5 “James Green Day” in the city of Boston. Green’s many accomplishments include founding the Labor Studies Program at UMass Boston, founding the Labor Resource Center, and being named a Fulbright Scholar. Green was also recognized for his academic work, his many published books and scholarly articles, as well as his commitment to Boston’s labor communities.

“Green has greatly exceeded traditional academic success, actively dedicating his life to on-the-ground social justice. Whether it was bringing attention to striking coal miners in West Virginia as a young journalist, or leading workshops for workers seeking to better organize, he is always a champion for fairness and equality,” reads the proclamation.

“It’s an extraordinary honor, and quite unexpected,” said Green, who was amazed by all the praise for his work. The proclamation was presented at the relaunch of the Labor Studies Program and the Labor Resource Center at UMass Boston. The center provides education and information to advance the interests of workers and their organizations.

An interdisciplinary bachelor’s degree in labor studies will soon be offered by the College of Liberal Arts.

“What is a more important theme in human history than work?” said Green.

Faculty Retirements 2014-2015

Terry Bontrager, College of Education and Human Development
Lawrence Blum, College of Liberal Arts
Wilfredo Chiesa, College of Liberal Arts
Lal Chugh, College of Management
Carol Ellenbecker, College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Donna Friedman, McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies
Glenn Jacobs, College of Liberal Arts
Margaret McAllister, College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Michael Milburn, College of Liberal Arts
Jon Mitchell, College of Liberal Arts
Amy Rex Smith, College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Maximiliane Szinovacz, McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies

To learn more about what’s happening in the Provost’s Office, visit us at: umb.edu/academics/provost

Or phone the office at: 617.287.5600
Location: Quinn Administration Building, 3rd Floor, Room 61A
For Retired Faculty Newsletter story ideas, please contact Cindy Gullicksen or Aimee Ladner.

Upcoming Events
April 25 – May 3, 2016: Spring Enrichment and Engagement Days
May 26, 2016: Graduate Commencement Ceremony, Clark Athletic Center
May 27, 2016: Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony, TD Garden
June 21, 2016: UMass Boston Liberty Mutual Insurance Alumni Cup Golf Tournament, Pinehills Golf Club, Plymouth, MA
October 2016: 19th Annual Retired Faculty Luncheon

Teaching Opportunities
If you are interested in teaching a course or doing a guest lecture for the Honors College, please contact Rajini Srikanth at 617.287.5521.