NIH $3.9M Funds Carter’s Ongoing Research on Early Autism Spectrum Disorders Identification and Treatment

Despite increased public awareness, many children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), particularly those from underserved populations, experience delays in diagnosis and receipt of ASD-specific care, making it essential to accurately appraise the early signs of ASD.

Addressing such diagnostic needs is the life-long passion and pursuit of Professor of Psychology Alice Carter, a research pioneer in developing tools for identifying ASD in young children. Now, thanks to a $3.9M grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, Carter’s work will be funded for five more years.

“Decades of research document a continuum of ASD symptoms,” says Carter. “At best, learning the signs accurately places children (estimates indicate 1 in 88) along this continuum of risk. Acting early requires parents, pediatricians, and early intervention providers to decide whether a child is at a high enough risk to justify further assessment or treatment, or whether to forego immediate action, for example, by taking a wait-and-see approach.” (cont’d on p. 9)

Bawa Receives the 2014 MIDORI Prize in Biodiversity

The AEON Environmental Foundation in Japan has awarded Distinguished Professor of Biology Kamal Bawa the 2014 MIDORI Prize in Biodiversity, adding to Bawa’s fast-growing list of international accolades for his many and ongoing contributions to the discipline of environmental sustainability.

He will be awarded the prize in October 2014 in Pyeongchang, South Korea, for his contributions to research in ecology of tropical forests, sustainable use of tropical forests, climate change in the Himalayas; for promoting engagement of civil society in conservation efforts; and for his leadership roles in setting up and serving as president of ATREE, a research institute that promotes socially just environmental conservation and sustainable development.

“I am very pleased,” said Bawa. “The prize underscores the importance of biodiversity to humanity and an inclusive and multidimensional approach to biodiversity conservation that my own research program at UMass Boston and ATREE in India have advocated during the past few decades,” he said.

In 2012, Bawa received international recognition as the recipient of the first Gunnerus Award in Sustainability Science, a major international prize. (cont’d on p. 9)
Researchers at UMass Boston and George Washington University (GWU) will collaborate on a research study designed to use social media to help some 450 students on both campuses lose weight. The study, Translation of Social Media Obesity Treatment into Two College Campus Communities, is funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIH).

Associate Professor of Exercise and Health Sciences Jessica Whiteley, UMass Boston, and Associate Professor of Prevention and Community Health Melissa A. Napolitano, GWU, are the lead investigators. The NIH has awarded a total of $3,132,000 to support the five-year study, with $826,000 of the award going to Whiteley and her UMass Boston colleague Professor of Nursing Laura L. Hayman.

“Obesity is a public health problem of critical importance, especially among young adults as they transition to adulthood,” says Whiteley. “The college years (ages 18-26) mirror public health risk periods for weight gain and metabolic risk, intersecting with a nearly twofold increase in overweight and obesity.”

Whiteley and her research team believe this project has significant public health impact as successful translation could reach as many as 6.2 million overweight/obese college students each year, and change the current standard of practice within college campus communities.

Among the 50% of adolescents who attend college, weight gain averages 1.7 kg in females and 4.2 kg in males from matriculation to graduation. These increases are compounded by the fact that about one-third of college students are already overweight or obese. The health consequences of overweight and obesity are well established. However, metabolic risks are largely unstudied in this population, with undiagnosed metabolic dysfunction of concern because 26-40% of college students already have one abnormal component of the Metabolic Syndrome.

Whiteley believes college campuses make ideal locations from which to launch obesity treatment programs. As of 2009, 70.1% of recent high school completers, including GED recipients, enrolled in college. Additionally, 50% of all adolescents ages 18-19 years old are in college.
Although Richard Fleming (pictured below standing on the far right) joined UMass Boston in the summer of 2013, he is no stranger to the University of Massachusetts. In 1983, he earned his MEd in school psychology from the UMass Amherst School of Education, and in 1987 and 1990 respectively, his MS and PhD degrees in educational psychology from the UMass Amherst Department of Psychology.

Fleming’s research addresses the application of psychological principles and interventions to problems of social importance. Specializing in behavioral psychology applied to intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders, he is involved in research that addresses prevention and treatment of child and adolescent obesity and other health-related challenges, promotes physical activity and exercise, and educates and trains parents and personnel.

Parallel to his research interests, Fleming develops programs to bring about behavior change in families of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. His efforts include developing online education and training programs, teaching courses, and giving workshops and presentations on the following topics: behavioral intervention in autism; parent education and support in developmental disabilities; and health and fitness promotion through lifestyle change.

Last fall, new external support for his work came in the form of a four-year $1,722,000 grant awarded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

In a recent UMass Boston Minute, Fleming discussed his team’s research: “Adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities are at [increased] risk for obesity. It’s difficult to read a food label or interpret all the choices you have at a grocery store, or to be able to assert yourself and say, ‘No, I’d rather not go out to eat tonight.’ In the study we did, we compared two different types of interventions. What we found is that weight loss was better in the group where parents were involved [in supporting the dietary and physical activity intervention]. I’m really interested in health [promotion], especially in children and adolescents.” He went on to discuss how important it is for children and families to get off on the “right start” early in life to prevent obesity and promote good health.

Prior to last fall, his recent NIH-funded research projects included an investigation of the effects of family-based behavioral intervention to promote weight loss and weight maintenance in adolescents with Down Syndrome (DS), a community-based participatory research study to increase moderate-to-vigorous physical activity in adolescents with autism spectrum disorders, and, with co-principal investigator and fellow faculty member Dr. Heidi Stanish, a comprehensive YMCA-based exercise program to increase fitness in adolescents with DS.

In addition to his rigorous research program, Fleming is the first director of the new PhD and MS in Exercise and Health Sciences programs, which in September 2014 welcomed its first cohort of PhD students and second cohort of MS students. These programs address certain (cont’d on page 10)
Because he believes a peer-reviewed paper is a primary way to report a scientist’s work, Veraksa encourages undergraduate students to participate in publishing papers. In fact, four undergraduates in the Veraksa Lab have published papers as coauthors.

To date, he has trained 40 undergraduate students in his lab, and more than one third are underrepresented minority students. Some of those students participated in the various undergraduate research programs at UMass Boston. For example, the NSF-funded Research Experiences for Undergraduates, the NIH-funded Initiative for Maximizing Student Development, the NIH-funded Bridges to the Baccalaureate, and the US Department of Education-funded Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement program.

"Academic mentors make an indelible impact on a scientist's future career, and knowing this I try to be a scientific role model for my students," says Veraksa. "I have trained nine graduate students in my lab, five of whom have completed their programs and obtained their degrees."

One of these students, Marla Tipping, received her PhD in 2011 and has continued her career as a postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of Dr. Norbert Perrimon of the Harvard Medical School. Tipping is currently an assistant professor of molecular and cell biology at Providence College.

"I strongly encourage my graduate students to think how their work can contribute to a scientific paper," says Veraksa. "I tell them they can do many experiments in the lab, but unless their work is written up and ultimately published as a peer-reviewed paper, it does not really make a tangible contribution to scientific progress."

All of the undergraduate and graduate students in his lab participate in weekly lab meetings.
Faculty Profile: Rosalyn Negrón, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

The highest expectation I have of myself as a teacher is that my students leave my classroom with their curiosities piqued, richer in knowledge and wonder, and more appreciative of the diversity of human thought and behavior.

“I believe in paying forward the mentorship I was fortunate to receive as a graduate student. It helped me imagine myself as a creative researcher who blends multiple methods and approaches,” says Rosalyn Negrón, a cultural/urban anthropologist who joined UMass Boston as an assistant professor of anthropology in 2008.

“My fascination with the diversity of human behavior and meaning-making goes back to my high school years. As a teenager, I relished watching people in the mundane to deduce what they might be thinking and feeling. I enjoyed books with vignettes and photos of people doing everyday things across cultures – eating breakfast, going to school, celebrating. I was sixteen when I decided that it made perfect sense for me to become an anthropologist. Today I continue my wide-eyed fascination with human diversity, equipped with new analytical lenses and methods from my anthropological training.”

Negrón’s work focuses on social interaction and the performance of ethnicity in everyday life, especially on the development of ethnic flexibility among urban U.S. Latinos. With applications to health, communication, and immigration policy, her research interests are varied.

“I enjoy crossing disciplinary boundaries and merging epistemological approaches. All in the service of deepening my empathy and promoting empathetic practice,” says Negrón.


“I show how in people’s daily interactions, as in socio-demographic questionnaires, multiple ethnic identifications are necessary and used to navigate New York City’s complex and diverse ethnic landscape. The diverse ethnic repertoires that I describe in my work constitute ways of seeing and doing multiple ethnicities – what I call ethnic flexibility – which enable people to adapt to multiple cultural spaces and social networks in super-diverse urban environments.”

As Negrón has evolved as a teacher, she has come to exercise a participatory, interactive teaching/learning style with an emphasis on building research skills and empathetic practice. She takes her role as a teacher of career skills seriously, and she does not think that career-oriented instruction and traditional liberal arts education are somehow mutually exclusive.

“While I encourage my students to develop humanistic sensibilities and skills grounded in empathetic practice,” explains Negrón, “I work dutifully to help them develop skills that can open up possibilities after graduation.”

Extending her scholarly interest in research methods, she works purposefully to incorporate hands-on mixed-methods research training into her teaching as a way of developing versatile researchers. She explains that she de-mystifies research and helps students identify skills they already possess that can be leveraged for success in research.

“I am strongly committed to supporting students historically underrepresented in research professions” (cont’d on p. 10)
Potential Effects of Mind-Body Exercise on Multisite Pain and Brain Functions in Older Adults

Assistant Professor of Exercise and Health Sciences Tongjian You, and Professor of Nursing Suzanne Leveille, have been awarded a two-year $402,575 R21 grant by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) for their proposed research study “Helping Elders Living with Pain.”

The randomized controlled trial will assess the feasibility and acceptability of a 12-week mind-body exercise program for older adults with chronic multisite pain and a history of falling. In this instance, mind-body exercise is considered a potential non-invasive behavioral intervention. The main purpose of the study is to compare the effects of two different types of exercise, body exercise and mind-body exercise.

“Mind-body exercise holistically integrates physical and cognitive functions,” says You. “So it offers the possibility of alleviating pain and also improving attention and mobility in many older adults.”

The trial is a direct extension of Leveille’s current study, also funded by the NIA, examining attentional demands of chronic pain in the population of those people 65 years and older.

“Accumulating evidence supports that more pain, whether measured by a number of pain sites or pain severity, is associated with poorer cognitive function and mobility, and fall risk in older persons,” says Leveille. “The attentional burden of pain may be a factor in the high rate of falls among older persons who have chronic multisite pain.”

This two-year study will serve as a pilot study for a larger grant to further investigate the biological mechanisms through which exercise alleviates chronic pain, improves physical/cognitive functions, and lowers fall risk in older adults. The study has just started subject recruitment and baseline testing, and free exercise classes are being held at Newton Center.

The team also includes researchers from the UMass Medical School, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and additional researchers, as well as a group of graduate and undergraduate research assistants from the UMass Boston College of Nursing and Health Sciences.
Researching and Analyzing the Unequal Burden of Financial Debt and Its Impact on Health

“Average household debt in America has tripled in the past 30 years, and much of this burden is borne by racial/ethnic minorities and those with lower incomes,” says UMass Boston Assistant Professor of Anthropology Elizabeth Sweet. To make matters worse, these same minority groups frequently face discrimination in obtaining loans and must devote more household resources to pay off debts.

Sweet, a biocultural anthropologist, explains that being indebted is a strong predictor of suicide, depressions, and other adverse mental health outcomes. However, its impact on physical health remains underexplored.

As a Robert Wood Johnson Health & Society Scholar (2008-2010), Sweet developed innovative applications of mixed-methods biocultural approaches. She focused on political economic dimensions of health disparities and how material consumption and status influence patterns of income inequality and health.

Now, thanks to a five-year $1,859,397 grant from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, she hopes to elucidate debt as a socio-economic determinant of health, with emphasis on elucidating mechanisms of embodiment and pinpointing specific categories of risk and disparity.

“We [the multidisciplinary team] will use a mixed-methods approach, utilizing primary and secondary data sources and a layered study design that incorporates epidemiologic, qualitative, and mechanistic approaches, to provide both breadth and depth in our investigation,” explains Sweet. “Findings from this study are intended to shed light on the nature and patterns of debt’s impact on health and lay groundwork for the development of targeted future intervention strategies.”

Study has Four Specific Aims

1) Use national, longitudinal data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) to document the association of basic dimensions of debt (absolute debt, debt-to-income ratio, secured and unsecured debt) with health and social disparities in health over time. Specifically, they will use marginal structural models to account for complex time-varying factors, and will test whether debt mediates key health inequalities and whether race/ethnicity or SES moderate associations of debt with health.

2) Conduct a qualitative study to elaborate salient dimensions of debt in greater depth and examine their role as psychosocial stressors. They will qualitatively elaborate salient dimensions of debt among diverse adults in Chicago and use structured ethnographic methods to clarify the structure of those dimensions. Their findings will inform interpretation of quantitative analyses and guide measurement of debt exposure in Aim 3.

3) Conduct an intensive community-based biomarker study to examine the associations of debt dimensions with key stress biomarkers that are indicators of disease susceptibility. We will identify the type of debt exposure that are most predictive of stress-related disease biomarkers and health in a diverse community sample and test whether subjective stress mediates associations between debt and health outcomes.

4) Synthesize all three studies with an integrated mixed-methods approach. In addition to drawing on qualitative findings to inform other aspects of the study, they will refine the biomarker study approach based on insights from initial PSID findings and synthesize data from all three studies to identify debt-related disease risk profiles.
Researchers’ Article Recognized as Best by Public Administration Journal

The American Review of Public Administration, one of the premier academic journals in the field of public affairs and public administration, has chosen the article “Some Ceilings Have More Cracks: Representative Bureaucracy in Federal Regulatory Agencies,” written by Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Public Affairs Amy E. Smith and doctoral student Karen Monaghan, as its best published article.

Chosen from 30 articles, the editors praised its under-researched theme of representative bureaucracy and gender, clear structure, effective derivation of hypotheses from existing literature, and defensible operationalization of concept variables, among other accolades, and also recognized the article's "clear potential concerning wider political and societal implications."

Smith and Monaghan constructed a new data set examining the distribution of women in leadership in 118 U.S. federal regulatory agencies. They found that women remain underrepresented in the leadership of these organizations but not in the same magnitude as in political representation or in the private sector.

They write, "Women are expected to get into leadership positions in organizations working in ‘feminine’ policy areas and where a woman holds the top level of leadership. In addition, the proportion of women in upper-level leadership positions is expected to increase in agencies with a higher likelihood of failure when such agencies are less visible."

Smith's areas of expertise are in conducting research on public management, social networks and their impact on regulatory settings, and organizational behavior and theory. Monaghan is completing her dissertation research on how federally qualified health centers in Boston are trying to address disparities between prevalence of mental illness and provision of mental health care. In March 2014, the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools awarded Smith its Graduate Teaching Award for excellence and creativity in the teaching of master's students.

UMass President Announces 2014 Science & Technology Awards and 2014 Creative Economy Awards

Distinguished Professor of Science and Mathematics Jill Macoska received a $150,000 Science & Technology award for her proposal “Next Generation Biomarker Development Pipeline Program” to expand the scope of the UMass Boston Center for Personalized Cancer Therapy (CPCT). The CPCT is joint effort with Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center to create a first-of-its-kind "RNA-based" biomarker test platform for faster tumor-identification and disease diagnosis and prognosis.

Professor of Gerontology Jan Mutchler and Research Fellow Bernard A. Steinman, Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging, received a $30,000 Creative Economy award for their proposal “Mapping community assets to improve livability for older adults in Massachusetts.”

Professor of Exercise and Health Sciences Ronald J. Iannotti received a $39,842 Creative Economy award for his proposal “Family Gym: a novel initiative to prevent obesity among families with young children.” Iannotti and a team from UMass Boston and Northeastern University will link GoKids to a City of Boston family gym site in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

Professor of Sociology Stephanie Hartwell, UMass Boston, and Associate Professor of Psychiatry Carl Fulwiler, UMass Medical School, received a $25,715 Creative Economy award for their proposal “Developing a culturally appropriate mindfulness intervention for inner city survivors of violence through community engagement.” They will work in collaboration with the highly respected Peace Institute of Dorchester, Massachusetts.
Carter and her research team will conduct their study within the context of the federally-funded Circle of Promise, which is a collaboration among UMass Boston, the City of Boston, and early intervention providers to improve child health. The intervention (i.e. study) builds on an ongoing project in three early intervention programs that service the Circle of Promise, as well the state-wide screening initiative that requires screening at every pediatric visit.

Dr. R. Christopher Sheldrick, Department of Pediatrics, Tufts Medical Center; and Dr. James Benneyan, Healthcare Systems Engineering Institute, Northeastern University.

Consisting of experts in psychology, developmental-behavioral pediatrics, and healthcare systems, the interdisciplinary team will test three hypotheses.

1) Children with ASD who are exposed to intervention will be more likely to be identified, to be referred, and to receive treatment, regardless of either race or ethnicity.

2) Pediatricians and early intervention providers exposed to intervention will display greater ability to identify children with ASDs, and lower thresholds for referral.

3) Parents of children with ASD exposed to intervention will report greater agreement with ASD referrals and be more likely to complete referrals and to engage in subsequent, ASD-specific services.

Since 2001, the American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended ASD screening as part of standard routine care during well-child visits at 18 and 24 months of age. Carter and Sheldrick have contributed to screening efforts by helping to develop a brief autism-specific screening instrument known as Parents’ Observations of Social Interactions. Carter has also developed the BITSEA, a widely-used and well-validated measure whose 17 ASD items also serve as a screener for ASD.

Carter is also a visiting research scientist in the Department of Psychology and Child Study Center at Yale University, and a research associate in anatomy and neurobiology at the Boston University School of Medicine.

Bawa Receives the 2014 MIDORI Prize in Biodiversity (cont’d from page 1)

The MIDORI Prize is co-hosted by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the AEON Environmental Foundation and is regarded as a major element at the service of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Established in 2010 by the AEON Environmental Foundation, the MIDORI is a biennial international prize to honour individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at global, regional or local levels. The Prize’s aims are to extend the developmental influence of the individual’s efforts to various projects relating to biodiversity throughout the world, and to raise awareness about biodiversity. In principle, the MIDORI Prize is awarded to three individuals. Each prize winner is awarded a wooden plaque, a commemorative gift, and a monetary prize of 100,000 US dollars.

Dr. Ganesan Balachander, director of ATREE, says, “Through his research in the tropics, teaching, mentoring scores of students from the global south; scientific papers exceeding a double century; and two magnificent coffee table books on the Western Ghats and the Himalayas, Dr. Bawa has woken up local and global audiences to the perils of the loss of our natural wealth and its associated cultural wealth.”

Bawa has published more than 200 scientific papers and written or edited 10 books and monographs. Among the many awards he has received are the Giorgio Ruffolo Fellowship at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, Charles Bullard (twice) and Maria Moor Cabot Fellowships at Harvard Forest, Guggenheim Fellowship, and a Pew Scholar in Conservation and the Environment.

The Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation, and Society for Conservation Biology have bestowed on him their highest awards. The Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation elected him as its president and then as an honorary fellow; he has received the Distinguished Service Award from the Society for Conservation Biology.

UMass Boston has twice honored him with the Chancellor’s Award for distinction in scholarship as well as the Chancellor’s Award for distinction in professional service. In 2014, the University of Alberta honoured him by conferring an honorary Doctor of Science degree. Bawa is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Royal Norwegian Society of Letters and Sciences.
Additionally, 50% of all adolescents ages 18-19 years old are in college. Students will be randomly assigned to one of two social media weight loss treatments (Tailored or Targeted) or a contact control. The social media treatments consist of Facebook groups to provide social support, connectedness and intervention content, as well as daily text messages.

The proposed study is based on promising pilot data of a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of 57 college students which demonstrated the initial efficacy of a social media delivered weight loss treatment.

Whiteley believes that the use of a social media as an intervention tool will appeal to this age group who are accustomed to technology use. Assessments will be conducted at baseline, and then 6, 12, and 18 months post baseline, with the primary outcome being weight loss at 18 months. The secondary aim is to evaluate changes in metabolic risk factors among those participants who have maintained at least 5% weight loss at 18 months.

“To our knowledge, our RCT was the first to examine social media weight loss treatments for college students,” says Whiteley. “The next step in this research is to examine whether this type of program can be translated to other college campus communities.”

Fleming (cont’d from p. 3)

areas of kinesiology (the study of physical activity and its impact on health, society, and the quality of life), as well as a broad range of health, dietary, and lifestyle interventions. With their focus on the health of culturally diverse and urban populations, the programs are unique to the UMass system and one of only a handful of universities to offer programs of this nature.

“We are well positioned,” says Fleming, “because we offer two of the very few kinesiology-related programs in Boston and New England that provide first-hand experience with urban health issues and disparities.”

Veraksa (cont’d from p. 4)

one person reports the progress to date to the lab members as a group. Students then have the opportunity to show off their successes, as well as receive their labmates’ feedback.

Veraksa also involves graduate students in the grant-writing process by asking them to evaluate his grant proposals and by encouraging them to apply for graduate fellowships.

“Graduate students from my lab regularly present their work at professional meetings, such as the Annual Drosophila Research Conference. I also often discuss career options with my students, helping them make informed decisions about their future plans.”

Negrón (cont’d from p. 5)

because many of them are initially intimidated by research and think that it is beyond their capabilities.”

As an undergraduate she trained to be a high school social studies teacher, and was even briefly employed as one before she entered graduate school. Then, like now, she was thrilled by the experience of being in front of the classroom and entering into a flow.

Negrón recalls, “I was thrilled by the challenge of engaging students’ interest, of communicating clearly and vividly so that the stories of history and society could capture students’ imagination. Then and now, I enjoy thinking of creative ways to deliver course content such that students can fall in love with the material and retain what they have learned.

For me, teaching is first and foremost about the relationship I enter into with students in the classroom. The highest expectation I have of myself as a teacher is that my students leave my classroom with their curiosities piqued, richer in knowledge and wonder, and more appreciative of the diversity of human thought and behavior.”
New Sponsored Awards

**Kamaljit Bawa** (Distinguished Professor of Biology) was awarded a $151,526 grant by the National Science Foundation for the project “Tropical Forests Today: Reproduction and Conservation in the Face of Global Change.”

**Joan Becker** (Vice Provost for Academic Support Services and Undergraduate Studies) was awarded a $50,000 grant by The Philanthropic Initiative as instructional support for the Urban Scholars Program, an after-school program for committed Boston Public middle- and high-school students to ensure their success in college.

**Jennifer Bowen** (Assistant Professor of Biology) was awarded a five-year $875,181 CAREER grant by the National Science Foundation for the project “Salt Marsh Restorations: A Structured Experiment for Learning and Teaching about Salt Marshes, Microbial Diversity, and Ecosystem Function.”

**Jennifer Bowen** was awarded a three-year $220,177 grant by the National Science Foundation for her project “Collaborative Research: Ecosystem Evolution and Sustainability of Nutrient Enriched Coastal Saltmarshes.”

**Walter Buchwald** (Associate Professor of Physics) was awarded a $10,917 grant by Optoelectronic Nanodevices to provide technical expertise in support of the project “Broad-Spectrum PV Devices Based on Charged Quantum Dots.” The prime sponsor is the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory.

**Edward Carberry** (Assistant Professor of Management) was awarded a $25,000 Fellowship by the Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations for the “study of employee ownership, profit sharing, and broad-based stock options in the corporation and in society in the United States.”

**Francoise Carre** (Research Director, Center for Social Policy) was awarded a three-year $60,000 grant by the Bowery Residents’ Committee to analyze data on the housing situation of Moving Home Program participants.

**Alice Carter** (Professor of Psychology) was awarded a five-year $3,887,081 grant by the National Institute of Mental Health to support her ongoing research on “Addressing Systemic Health Disparities in Early Autism Spectrum Disorders Identification and Treatment.”

**Alice Carter** was awarded a $20,000 grant by the Wallace Foundation for the project “A Systematic Review of the Evidence on Sensory Processing.”

**Alan Christian** (Associate Professor of Biology) was awarded a $20,485 grant by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for the project “Freshwater Mussels Survey in the Connecticut River.”

**Alan Christian** and **Robyn Hannigan** (Dean, School for the Environment) have been awarded a three-year $358,992 grant by the National Science Foundation for “Research Experiences for Undergraduates in Coastal Research in Environmental Science and Technology.”

**Mary Ellen Colten** (Senior Research Fellow, Center for Survey Research) and **Philip Brenner** (Assistant Professor of Sociology) were awarded a $11,230 grant by Yale University for the project “Using Social Networks to Understand and Improve Health.” Specifically, the Center for Survey Research will be responsible for direct-mail recruitment of Boston Flu Study participants. The National Institute on Aging is the prime sponsor.

**Mary Ellen Colten** was awarded a $10,678 grant by the University of Massachusetts Medical School to develop a mail and telephone questionnaire and associated materials for the project "Health Needs and Barriers to Prenatal Care for Women with Mobility Disabilities."

**Carol Cosenza** (Project Manager, Center for Survey Research) was awarded a $50,000 contract by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) to analyze surveys administered by the DOR to its stakeholders, as well as develop and administer new surveys.

**Wei Ding** (Assistant Professor of Computer Science) was awarded a two-year $305,268 Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Science grant for the project "Analysis of the Wet Chemistry from the Phoenix Lander Mission Aided by Machine Learning."
Patricia Domeniconi (Interim Station Manager, WUMB Radio) was awarded two-year $105,879 Community Service grant by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Anamarija Frankic (Research Fellow, School for the Environment) was awarded a $100,000 grant by the Schmidt Family Foundation for the “Establishment of LivingLabs in Savin Hill Cove, Dorchester, Massachusetts.”

Steven Gray (Assistant Professor of Environmental, Earth and Ocean Sciences) was awarded a three-year $59,996 grant by Rutgers University for the project “Sustaining Ecological Community through Citizen Science and Online Collaboration.” Specifically, Gray, in collaboration with a project team, will focus on providing the theoretical support for developing the modeling tool and overseeing software development. The prime sponsor is the National Science Foundation.

Jason Green (Assistant Professor of Chemistry) was awarded a five-year $824,525 grant by the U.S. Department of Defense for the research study “New Theoretical and Experimental methods for Predicting Fundamental Mechanisms of Complex Chemical Processes.” The lead institution is the University of Missouri and also includes the University of California State System and Northwestern University. In total the award is for $6,250,000.

Andrew Grosovsky (Dean) and William Hagar (Associate Dean) of the College of Science and Mathematics) were awarded a five-year $1,322,956 grant by the U.S. Department of Education to support the “Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program.”

Donna Haig-Friedman (Research Professor and Director, Center for Social Policy) was awarded a $125,005 grant by the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley to continue its evaluation of the Boston Thrive in 5 Program. Thomas M. Menino (then mayor of Boston) and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley launched Thrive in 5 in 2008 with the goal of ensuring universal school readiness for all of Boston’s children.

Donna Haig-Friedman was awarded a $37,025 grant by the Oak Foundation to produce a “Family Stability White Paper” on the current state of families in Massachusetts.

Allen Gontz (Associate Professor of Environmental, Earth and Ocean Sciences) was awarded a $20,841 grant by the Boston Harbor Island Alliance for the project “Geophysical Investigations on Georges and Gallops Islands, Boston Harbor National Park Area.”

Lee Hargraves (Executive Director, Center for Survey Research) was awarded a three-year $308,225 grant by the National Science Foundation to carry out the study “Characterizing Nonresponse Error across General Population Survey Data Collection Modes.”

Stephanie Hartwell (Professor of Sociology) was awarded a three-year $75,000 grant by Span, Inc. to conduct a multi-faceted impact evaluation of SPAN intervention. The prime sponsor is the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Stephanie Hartwell was awarded a two-year $40,196 grant by the University of Massachusetts Medical School for the project “MISSION 1-RAPS: Integrated Re-entry And Peer Support” for 100 higher-risk female and male offenders with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders being released to the greater Boston area. The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health is the prime sponsor.

Laura Hayman (Professor of Nursing) and Jessica Whiteley (Associate Professor of Exercise and Health Sciences) were awarded a five-year $826,000 grant by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for the project “Translation of Social Media Obesity Treatment into Two College Campus Communities. George Washington University is the lead institution.

Linda Huang (Associate Professor of Biology) has been awarded a three-year $347,700 grant by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for the project “SP071 Function in the Morphogenesis during Spore Development.”

Maria Ivanova (Assistant Professor of Conflict Resolution, Human Security and Global Governance) was awarded $12,650 grant by the Yale University School of Forestry & Environmental Studies for the project “Legality Verification in Brazil.” Specifically, Ivanova will provide her expertise and technical assistance to the project “Legality and Amazon Deforestation” being carried out by Yale University. The prime sponsor is the Climate and Land Use Alliance.

Susan Jeghelian (Executive Director, Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration) was awarded a $138,264 grant by the Massachusetts Child Support Enforcement
Division to mediate cases referred through the court for never-married, divorced, or separated non-custodial and custodial parents in order to create conditions suitable for the increase of parenting time and resolution of child access and violation issues.

**Zsuzsa Kaldy (Associate Professor of Psychology)** was awarded a $119,405 Seed Grant by the Simons Foundation for the project “The Early Development of Attentional Mechanisms in Autism Spectrum Disorder.” Kaldy’s co-principal investigator is Nancy Kanwisher, professor of psychology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

**Jacob Kariuki (PhD Student in Nursing)** was awarded a two-year $46,000 predoctoral fellowship by the American Heart Association. Mr. Kariuki’s faculty adviser is Professor of Nursing Suzanne Leveille.

**Marlene Kim (Professor of Economics)** was awarded a two-year $45,777 grant by the Institute for New Economic Thinking for her project “Inequalities by Race and Gender in the Earnings of Women of Color.”

**Schuyler Korban (Vice Provost, Office of Global Programs)** was awarded a $120,000 grant by the U.S. Department of State to support the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program for Iraq at UMass Boston.

**David Landon (Associate Director and Senior Scientist, Fiske Center for Archaeological Research)** was awarded a $58,190 grant by The Museum of African American History to carry out the “Boston-Higginbottom Archaeological Study” to identify the material remains that span the late-18th and -19th centuries, and connect us to the lives of a series of prominent members of Nantucket’s African American community.

**ZhongPing Lee (Professor of Environmental, Earth and Ocean Sciences)** was awarded a three-year $724,714 grant by NASA for the “Development of New Solar Radiation and Primary Production Products from MODIS Ocean-Color Measurements.”

**Barbara Lewis (Director, Trotter Institute for the Study of Black Culture)** was awarded a $15,000 public service grant by Arts Midwest for the Trotter Institute’s Big Read programming activities. The National Endowment for the Arts is the prime sponsor.

**Suzanne Leveille (Professor of Nursing)** was awarded a two-year $10,000 grant by the Jonas Center for Nursing and Veterans Healthcare to support one PhD Jonas Nurse Leader Scholar.

**Mary Lu Love (Director of Early Literacy Programs, Institute for Community Inclusion)** was awarded a $66,080 grant by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to assist in the development of professionals who provide school age child care. Specifically, the project will develop online courses and a plan for the on-going presentation of such courses to educators and providers working with school age children in multiple formats leading to professional development hours, continuing education units, and college credit.

**Robert McCulley (Program Manager, Northeast Regional Center for Vision Education, Institute for Community Inclusion)** was awarded a three-year $500,000 grant by the Boston Public School System. These funds will support the collaboration between UMass Boston with each of the New England State Departments of Education to proceed with the development of a New England Regional Center for Distance Education of Low Incidence Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments.

**Robert McCulley** was awarded a $35,000 grant by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop and conduct the “Summer Institute — Teaching Students with Cortical/Cerebral Impairment.”

**Robert McCulley** was awarded a $35,000 grant by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop and conduct the “Summer Institute—Understanding and Implementing the Unified English Braille Code.”

**Susan Moir (Director, Labor Resource Center) Carolyn Arcand (PhD Student in Public Policy)** were awarded a $10,000 grant by IMPAQ International for the project “An Exploration of the Career Ladders for Women within the Construction Industry and the Impact of the Workforce Investment Act on Their Status.” Specifically, Moir and Arcand will administer, coordinate, facilitate, and monitor the activities of the Research Papers Program of the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor, which is the prime sponsor.

(cont’d on page 14)
Edward Miller (Associate Professor of Gerontology) was awarded a $36,825 by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to serve as research mentor to a PhD gerontology student at UMass Boston currently employed by the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

Maxim Olchanyi (Associate Professor of Physics) was awarded a three-year $210,000 grant by the National Science Foundation for his project “Rare and Exotic Nonlinear Effects in Cold Atomic Gases.”

Padraig O’Malley (John Joseph Moakley Distinguished Professor of Peace and Reconciliation) was awarded a $15,000 grant by the Ireland Fund to support the work of delegates from Northern Ireland who participated in the recent Forum for Cities in Transition conference held in Kaduna, Nigeria.

Helen Poynton (Assistant Professor of Environmental, Earth and Ocean Sciences) was awarded a two-year $150,000 grant by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for the “Development and Validation of the Coastal Biosensors for Endocrine Disruption.” Endocrine disrupting compounds enter coastal environments primarily through waste-water-treatment-facility effluent and have become ubiquitous in marine surface waters, sediments, and biota. Poynton’s departmental colleagues Professors Robert Chen and William Robinson are co-principal investigators.

Liam Revell (Assistant Professor of Biology) was awarded a five-year $852,556 CAREER grant by the National Science Foundation for his proposal “Phylogenetic Tools for Studying Phenotypic Diversification in the Tree of Life.”

Myra Rosen Reynoso (Research Associate, Institute for Community Inclusion) was awarded a five-year $900,000 grant by Langston University to provide capacity-building expertise to the Langston Rehabilitation Research and Training Center. The prime sponsor is the National Institute on Rehabilitation Research.

Wichian Rojanawon (Director, Osher Life Long Learning Institute) was awarded a $10,000 grant by the Boston Foundation to “Expand Programming and Engagement of LGBT Students Age 50 and Above at the OLLI.”

Anthony Roman (Senior Research Fellow, Center for Survey Research) was awarded a $100,000 grant by the University Of Pennsylvania Center for Bioethics to provide survey design expertise for examining the rationing of health care.

Crystal Schaaf (Professor of Remote Sensing) was awarded a three-year $135,000 NASA Harriet G. Jenkins Graduate Fellowship to support the work of graduate student Edward Saenz on “Multiangle Optical-Lidar Approach to Canopy Structure Measurements.”

Crystal Schaaf (Professor of Remote Sensing) was awarded a four-year $455,000 grant by NASA for the research project “Albedo, Nadir Reflectance, and Reflectance Anisotropy for the Modis Era.”

Crystal Schaaf (Professor of Remote Sensing) was awarded a three-year $78,000 grant by NASA for the research project “Land Product Validation Surface Radiation Activities.”

Gary Siperstein (Director, Center for Social Development and Education) was awarded a $15,000 grant by the Bank of Boston Foundation in support of Camp Shriver 2014, an annual inclusive summer program for children with and without intellectual disabilities held at UMass Boston.

Gary Siperstein (Director, Center for Social Development and Education) was awarded a $5,000 grant by the Boston Bruins Foundation in support of Camp Shriver 2014.

Gary Siperstein (Director, Center for Social Development and Education) was awarded a $15,000 grant by the Liberty Mutual Foundation in support of Camp Shriver 2014.

Gary Siperstein (Director, Center for Social Development and Education) was awarded a three-year $100,000 grant by the Cummings Foundation in support of Camp Shriver.

Rachel Skvirsky (Associate Professor of Biology) was awarded a three-year $325,000 grant by the NSF for “Research Experiences for Undergraduates in Coastal Research in Integrative and Evolutionary Biology.”

Heidi Stanish (Associate Professor of Exercise and Health Sciences) was awarded a $12,595 grant by the UMass Medical School for the project “University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service.” The prime sponsor is the federal Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.
Angela Stone-McDonald (Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction) was awarded a $40,000 grant by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to provide training to special education directors and early childhood coordinators on the elements of the process of measuring preschool outcomes and on developing high-quality functional individual education plan goals.

Greg Sun (Professor of Engineering) was awarded a three-year $247,003 grant by the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research for the project “SiGeSn Heterostructure Photonics Technology for Ultrafast Communications in the 2-um Infrared Region.”

Greg Sun (Professor of Engineering) was awarded a $59,869 grant by the Asian Office of Aerospace Research and Development for the project “Silicon Based Mid Infrared SiGeSn Heterostructure Emitters and Detectors.”

Elizabeth Sweet (Assistant Professor of Anthropology) was awarded a five-year $1,473,147 grant by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities for her project “The Price of Debt: The Unequal Burden of Financial Debt and Its Impact on Health.”

Cynthia Thomas (Coordinator of Employment Services, Training, and Technical Assistance, Institute for Community Inclusion) was awarded a two-year $2,375,777 grant by the U.S. Department of Education for “Think College Transition: Developing an Evidence-based Model of Inclusive Dual Enrollment Transition Services for Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism.”

Michael Ward (Director of Municipal Services, Collins Center for Public Management) was awarded a $385,000 grant by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Administration and Finance for the Collins Center to expand its performance management system into additional Massachusetts municipalities.

Mark Warren (Associate Professor of Public Policy and Public Affairs) was awarded a $12,500 grant by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation to support a conference entitled “Collaborative Research: Building the Capacity of Community Based Organizations and Researchers to Produce Knowledge to Support Community Action.”

Jack Wiggin (Director, Urban Harbors Institute) was awarded a $20,000 contract by the Massachusetts Port Authority to prepare an inventory, estimate, and characterization of emissions from commercial cargo vessels and cruise vessels and related cost information in the Port of Boston.

Jack Wiggin (Director, Urban Harbors Institute) was awarded a $69,998 grant by the City of Gloucester, Massachusetts for “Port Recovery and Revitalization Plan.”

Marion Winfrey (Associate Professor of Nursing) was awarded a two-year $165,000 grant by Partners HealthCare to support the clinical leadership development of up to 6 socioeconomically disadvantaged undergraduate nursing students (cohort seven) to make a smooth transition into clinical practice upon graduation.

Tongjian You (Assistant Professor of Exercise and Health Sciences) and Suzanne Leveille (Professor of Nursing) have been awarded a two-year $402,575 grant by the National Institute on Aging for the project “The Effects of Mind-Body Exercise on Multisite Pain and Brain Functions in Older Adults.”
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Prepares New Website for Launch

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) will soon launch a new website for providing the policies, procedures, forms, and tools needed to submit research proposals and manage sponsored accounts throughout the life of external funds awarded to faculty, staff, and students.

“One of my recent priorities was to assess the effectiveness of the ORSP website,” says Matthew Meyer, ORSP director and associate vice provost for research. “There was a lot of useful information. But the site was incomplete and in need of reorganization.”

From the start, when speaking with faculty, staff, or students Meyer made it a point to ask them about their experiences using the website. He also asked the ORSP staff to solicit feedback and suggestions.

“It became obvious to us that we needed a new site; one that would provide better access to forms and information regarding research and sponsored projects.”

Thanks to the leadership and work of Shemetra Owens, manager of research compliance, and Kimberlee Roselando, research compliance specialist, the new site will go live on or around October 20, providing information in the 13 categories listed to the right.

“The impetus behind redesigning the website is improving upon the organization and accessibility of information provided by the ORSP so that it is a user-focused site, not a provider-focused one,” explains Owens.

The “All Forms” webpage is a one-stop shop for all ORSP forms and has been organized into three categories: proposal development; award management; and compliance.

The “Find Funding” webpage contains wide-ranging links to federal, state, and local sponsors. It also includes new search modules that allow users to search keywords and be directed to funding opportunities posted on grants.gov, PIVOT, and SPIN.

The “PI Toolkit” is a new webpage that will serve as a resource for PIs and research staff to access links to information related to the administration of sponsored projects. It provides information on proposal and budget development, eligibility, UMass Foundation documentation, and shared resources.

The “Training and Education” webpage links to the CITI training website, informational presentations, and sample NIH-funded proposals.