To the Board:

In this time of unprecedented change, our universities have had to rapidly adapt to keep our campus communities safe and to continue our priority of providing our students with high-quality education, now in a remote teaching modality. At the same time, however, UMass Boston has not taken its sites off the multiple academic and research endeavors on our campus, and our drive to support our students more broadly.

For example, our new Professional Apprenticeship and Career Experience (PACE) program (right) provides a new source of financial support and career advancement for students through on-campus apprenticeships and off-campus career opportunities. The primary aim of the program is to provide a pathway for our students to connect with Boston business for career success.

Other highlights in this report include:

• The College of Nursing and Health Sciences has a new and expanded Center for Clinical Education and Research, providing three times the space and greatly expanded patient simulation stations for nursing students to get hands-on experience (page 2).

• A new Boston Higher Education Consortium, led by UMass Boston, provides students across seven Boston higher ed campuses with expanded opportunities to pursue accelerated master’s degree programs (page 4).

• New media reports once again affirm UMass Boston as a national leader in diversity and a university that is home to some of the best graduate programs (page 5).

• Our faculty continue to perform impressive research in areas that range from using voice assisted systems to help to detect cognitive impairment to using new technology to advance the study of tiny particles (page 7).

I hope you find these and other stories in the report as compelling as I do. And I thank you for your continued support of UMass Boston.

—Katherine S. Newman, Interim Chancellor

UMass Boston is establishing a new professional apprenticeship program to provide students with paying, on-campus work experience that enables them to develop increasingly complex skills and project-management experience. After two years, the student apprentices will be able to participate in off-campus opportunities with “industry clusters,” UMass Boston-sponsored networks of private-sector firms that are advising faculty and deans on the rapidly changing needs of their professions. The Professional Apprenticeship and Career Experience (PACE) program is being underwritten by a $2.25 million philanthropic gift from Ralph and Janice James.

The program will provide students with paying, career-related positions in fields like information technology, lab-based scientific research, logistics, communications/public relations, or accounting during their first two years. Faculty and staff mentors will be responsible for guiding apprentices through the skill-building process, creating portfolios of projects they can present to future employers as evidence of their capabilities.

The university intends to ramp up the program over the first five years, with 50, 200, 400, 575, and 775 students participating, respectively.
College of Liberal Arts Launches Humanities Hub

UMass Boston has a new dedicated space for the humanities on campus. Located on the 8th floor of Healey Library, the Humanities Hub is a flexible space that can serve as a classroom, meeting space, or workspace for students and faculty engaged in humanities-based events and activities.

The launch of the hub marks another milestone in the implementation of the university’s High-Impact Humanities (HIH) Initiative, funded by a $515,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The signature element of the program is 24 new humanities courses that incorporate experiential learning, providing students with opportunities to integrate coursework with visits to community-based organizations and cultural institutions. The hub will become a destination for humanities faculty and students to work on and display projects, listen to guest speakers, and host activities like poetry readings. The hub will also serve as a home for the Mellon HIH Student Advisory Board, which advises faculty on program development and organizes humanities-focused student events.

Women Beacons of Business Program Launches

The Women Beacons of Business Program—a collaboration of the College of Management and University Advancement—will offer career and personal development opportunities to female business students. The program aims to add more women to the business workforce and prepare them for promotions to management levels.

The program’s benefits include matching undergrad and graduate students with alumni and business leaders to improve leadership skills and confidence; holding discussions about books relevant to women in business that include both female students and executives; accessing leadership workshops, conferences, and seminars; developing internships, fellowships, mentorships, and networking opportunities; developing scholarships for future leaders in business who may not be able to afford college without financial support; and holding roundtable discussions and a speaker series that includes students and experts alike.

Center for Italian Cultural Studies Opens

The Catherine Frisone Scott Center for Italian Cultural Studies will serve as a site of engagement for faculty, students, and the local and global community to reflect on the Italian language, literature, history, and culture. It will facilitate research and create an interdisciplinary resource for faculty scholars and students on campus and beyond to promote Italian studies and generate high-quality scholarship. The center will also offer grants to help students and faculty travel to Italy. Initial grants will support participation in UMass Boston study abroad programs as well as students who are planning to spend a semester in Italy.

Catherine Frisone Scott ’38 ’39, who provided the financial support for the center, earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education from Teachers College of Boston, one of UMass Boston’s legacy schools.

Tripled in Size, New Center for Clinical Education and Research Gives Nursing Students Extra Edge

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences’ Center for Clinical Education and Research (CCER) has long given UMass Boston nursing students an advantage as they embark on clinicals and paid nursing jobs. With its move to the first floor of the Quinn Administration Building this semester, the CCER has gone from about 3,000 square feet to just over 10,000, with even more amenities that prepare students for the workforce.

When the CCER was in the Science Center, the largest room consisted of mannequins in exam beds on two walls, surrounding a classroom of desks. Now there are two skills labs, north and south, meaning more simulations can be run at once, and there are more opportunities for open labs. Also new, six outpatient exam rooms and the skills labs are equipped to handle standardized patients, actors portraying patients. Students will benefit from interviewing and performing physical assessments on a variety of patients.
DEVELOP A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Mayor Appoints Professor to Human Rights Commission

Boston Mayor Marty Walsh has appointed Professor of Latin American and Iberian Studies Reyes Coll-Tellechea and six others to the city’s reactivated Human Rights Commission, which has a special focus on the needs of Boston’s immigrant communities.

The author and editor of several books, Coll-Tellechea’s research reflects on the experience of marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination as represented in literature, as well as on some of the strategies used by the powerful to exclude others from their privileges. She served on the mayor’s Transition Task Force (Human Services) and the City of Boston’s Diversity Task Force, and she frequently volunteers as a translator and interpreter for Massachusetts nonprofits working with immigrants and refugees.

MA Office of Public Collaboration Launches Resolution Massachusetts

The start of 2020 marks the launch of a new statewide initiative called Resolution Massachusetts, announced at a State House briefing for legislators in January. Resolution Massachusetts brings together a network of state-sponsored community mediation centers and the state dispute resolution agency, the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration at UMass Boston’s McCormack Graduate School, under one umbrella for the purposes of outreach and public education. The initiative is modeled on similar ones in Virginia and Washington and aims to let people know that help is available in their local communities for conflict in all its forms and how to access that help.

In addition to information about conflict resolution in general and services available to members of the public, the Resolution Massachusetts website aims to inform potential sponsors and funders about the impact of the community mediation system and to connect anyone wishing to contribute or be involved in some other way, such as volunteering as a mediator, board member, or intern.

RENEW THE FACULTY

Assistant Professor of Political Science Named a Kluge Fellow at Library of Congress

Assistant Professor of Political Science Michelle Jurkovich has recently been named one of the twelve Kluge Fellows at the Library of Congress. She will begin her five-month term in April 2020, focusing on her latest project, “Good Enough? The Politics of Constructing the Refugee Ration.”

This fellowship will help Jurkovich continue her work around food security, economic and social rights, and ethics, specifically engaging in scholarship about how the U.S. government decides what kinds of rations are “good enough” for different groups of refugees, how racism and stereotyping play into those decisions, who gets “better” rations in times of scarcity, and whether or not society agrees that these rations are “good enough.”

Quito Swan Declared New Director of Trotter Institute

At the beginning of Black History Month, Quito Swan was appointed as the director of the William Monroe Trotter Institute for the Study of African American Culture and History, following former director Barbara Lewis’s retirement. At the end of February, Swan hosted The Trotter Institute Presents: New Directions in the African Diaspora, a meet and greet during which he discussed possible new directions for the institute.

Swan’s plans for the Trotter Institute include reintroducing both the UMass Boston community and the Boston community to the institute, examining Boston as a city of the African diaspora, connecting local communities with black internationalist ideas, and establishing the Trotter Institute as an event space and informational hub for UMass Boston and beyond.
INCREASE ENDOVEMENT

Goddard House Pledges $500,000 to Support Mid-Career Nursing Students

Goddard House, the oldest nonprofit elder care organization in Massachusetts, recently pledged a $500,000 gift over five years to the Goddard House – Doane Scholarship program at UMass Boston, which was established in 2015.

Financial support will be available for UMass Boston nursing students pursuing any degree or certification program, and who have previously worked for at least 10 years as a registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, or certified nursing assistant in the city of Boston.

Since partnering with UMass Boston in 2015, the Goddard House has provided 50 awards totaling $340,000 to 39 experienced nurses in UMass Boston's undergraduate, master's, and doctoral nursing degree programs. Goddard House Doane Scholars can receive between $2,500 and $10,000 annually for the next five years, based on need and other factors.

Campus Quickly Applies Match Money from Legislature

When the Massachusetts State Legislature announced the return of the Public Higher Education Endowment Incentive Program this summer—a program that encourages philanthropic gifts to state university endowments with a 50 percent match from the state—it unleashed a flood of philanthropic support from savvy UMass Boston donors who recognized the rare instant return on their investment. The Boston campus secured 15 endowment commitments from alumni and friends that topped the state matching total of $825,000.

$9.75M Raised from Four Donors

Since July 1, 2019, UMass Boston secured four different seven-figure commitments, totaling $9.75 million, all from individuals. This generosity has created a visiting professorship in mathematics, enhanced work in our College of Education and Human Development, established an on-campus paid internship program for our students, and created a scholarship for talented computer science students. This seven-figure fundraising total is a high-water mark for UMass Boston.

Anonymous Donor, Alumni Association Partner to Support Students

The Beacon Student Success Fellowship program benefited from a $225,000 gift made by an anonymous donor through the Philanthropic Initiative Foundation. The program enables UMass Boston students to receive paid summer experiential learning opportunities, including internships, volunteer roles, study abroad experiences, sponsored research, and service learning. The Alumni Association provided a 1:1 match of this donation, adding another $225,000 that is available for student awards.

MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESS

New Boston Higher Ed Consortium Aims to Expand Student Options

Seven Boston-area liberal arts and specialty colleges and universities have begun offering a pathway to affordable, accelerated master's degrees at UMass Boston. The newly formed Boston Advanced Academic Consortium (BAAC) will enable undergraduate students from partner colleges to enroll in graduate courses during their senior year and then complete their master's degree on a rapid time line. UMass Boston students will also have the opportunity to enroll in specialized master's programs across the partnership.

In addition to UMass Boston, the consortium members include Bentley University, Boston Architectural College, Boston Baptist College, Curry College, Lasell University, and Longy School of Music of Bard College. Other colleges and universities have indicated an interest in joining BAAC in the future. The colleges and universities are also making arrangements for students to take specialized advanced undergraduate courses that complement the offerings in smaller liberal arts colleges.
POSITION UNIVERSITY IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION MARKETPLACE

UMass Boston students pose at the newest gateway to campus, the sign outside the residence halls.

UMass Boston Is Third Most Diverse College in United States, Report Finds

The financial news site 24/7 Wall St. reviewed U.S. Department of Education data and determined that UMass Boston is the third most diverse four-year college in the United States. The authors of the report, published in USA Today, note that UMass Boston also costs far less than most other schools on the list.

To make this list, 24/7 Wall St. analyzed data from the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for the fall 2018 school semester. The rankings are based on the chance that two randomly selected students would have a different racial or ethnic background, or different U.S. citizenship status. Across all undergraduates nationwide, such a likelihood is about 69.6 percent. The report authors note that UMass Boston is the only large four-year public school in America in which there is a greater than 80 percent chance that two randomly selected students would have a different race, ethnicity, or U.S. citizenship status.

The authors also note that at an average cost of $21,777, it costs far less to attend UMass Boston than most other schools on this list.

UMass Boston’s Graduate Programs in Top 100

UMass Boston's graduate programs in clinical psychology, education, nursing, and public affairs are ranked as top 100 programs on U.S. News & World Report's 2021 Best Graduate Schools list. The biggest jumper is UMass Boston's Master of Nursing, up 17 spots from the 2020 list.

Five UMass Boston programs have new top 100 rankings: clinical psychology at No. 56, graduate programs in education at No. 62 (up from No. 66), the Master of Nursing Program at No. 66 (up from No. 83), the master's programs in public affairs at No. 72 (up from No. 74), and the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program at No. 74. UMass Boston's part-time MBA program also made the rankings, at No. 124.

U.S. News Says Online Graduate Education, Bachelor's Programs Among Nation’s Best

UMass Boston's online graduate education programs jumped 19 spots in U.S. News & World Report's 2020 Best Online Programs rankings. The online graduate education programs are ranked No. 35, up from No. 54 in 2019. UMass Boston has four online undergraduate programs. Collectively, those are ranked No. 93 on the list of Best Online Bachelor's Programs.

Schools on the Best Online Bachelor’s and Master’s Education Programs lists were scored on engagement, services and technologies, a survey of academic leaders, faculty credentials and training, and student excellence. U.S. News & World Report gave UMass Boston a score of 75 (out of 100) for its online bachelor's programs and a score of 84 for its online graduate education programs.

Boston’s LGBTQ+ Community Archives Names Inaugural Executive Director

The History Project, Boston's LGBTQ+ community archives, has named Joan Ilacqua as their first executive director. She is a former co-chair of their board of directors, a member of the New England Archivists’ Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and a graduate of UMass Boston's public history master's program. This position was made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Ilacqua has a background in public history, acquiring and archiving material from diverse communities, oral history, and outreach. In her new role, she will focus on strategic planning, fundraising, and collaborating with other nonprofits and community organizations.

DEVELOP FIRST-RATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Completion of REAB and Starting of SDQD

As the last two major pieces of the first phase of the 25-year campus master plan, the Renovations to Existing Academic Buildings (REAB) project is winding down while the Substructure, Science Center, and Pool Building Demolition and Quadrangle Development (SDQD) project is about to ramp up.

The SDQD project will bring tremendous transformation to the campus. In addition to the critical structural repairs to McCormack and Wheatley Halls to ensure their future, the demolition of the Science Center and the development of the new quad and plaza will bring UMass Boston a stunning inner core. This transformation changes the fabric of the middle of campus from a hard brick and concrete place to a softer, greener space for all to enjoy.
CONTINUE A POSITIVE FOCUS ON DIVERSITY AND POSITIVE CLIMATE

Hack.Diversity Selects 17 UMass Boston Students for Fellowship

Hack.Diversity, the New England Venture Capital Association’s initiative to help diversify the ranks of Boston’s fastest-growing tech companies, has selected 17 fellows from UMass Boston this year.

Fellows participate in an eight-month career development program with mentorship, connections, and internships at venture-capital-backed tech companies. Hack.Diversity’s growing reputation is attracting talented, ambitious students ready for the big stage.

UMass Boston and Bunker Hill Community College were the initial talent partners for Hack.Diversity and helped to shape the program. They still contribute almost half of the fellows.

Inaugural Becoming Liberated & Knowledgeable Conference Inspires Young People of Color

The inaugural Becoming Liberated & Knowledgeable Conference (BLK@UMB) was held on February 29 with more than 200 attendees. It was a joint venture between the Office of Student Leadership and Community Engagement and the UMass Boston Chapter of the NAACP.

The conference was dedicated to exploring issues relating to ethnicity and race in the black community. Each program was designed to inspire young people of color to embrace their process of becoming who they want to be and empowering them to become the next generation of leaders within society. Topics included resiliency and perseverance, art as a social justice medium, how being black in America informs one’s experience within academia, a survey of dance from the African diaspora and its power in the black community, and a panel conversation addressing policies that stigmatize and target African American communities in the criminal justice system.

Student Presented With Kingston-Mann Award for Excellence and Diversity

Dani English, a UMass Boston student in the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department, received the Kingston-Mann Student Achievement Award for Excellence and Diversity. This award acknowledges student work that makes a valuable contribution to diversity and inclusion scholarship by expanding our understanding of ideas and experiences that have not always been acknowledged or recognized by traditional disciplines, especially involving the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, social class, age, disability, and sexual orientation. English’s winning topic was “Lesbians, Radicals, and Heroines: The Underdocumentation of Martha Shelley.”

Two Students Selected for the NASPA Undergraduate Fellowship Program

Clifford Smith ‘20 and Janrey Javier ‘21 were selected for the prestigious undergraduate fellowship program through NASPA, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. This semi-structured program offers mentoring for students from traditionally underrepresented and historically disenfranchised populations with the aim of diversifying and broadening the access to careers in student affairs and higher education. Acceptance into the program provides opportunities for scholarships, on-campus mentorship, and professional development events.
NSF Grant-Funded Microscope to Aid Students in Researching Tiny Materials

Assistant Professor of Chemistry Niya Sa is the lead principal investigator on a $426,000 grant from the National Science Foundation-Major Research Instrumentation (NSF-MRI) Program. Sa and her co-investigator, Associate Professor of Chemistry Michelle Foster, have used the award to purchase a field emissions scanning electron microscope, which will allow researchers to see things a million times smaller than our hair.

The microscope will arrive in the Integrated Sciences Complex this spring. Sa, whose expertise is in designing rechargeable battery materials, said the high-resolution electronic microscope will help her in her research. Other professors and students will also use the new tool, providing students experience with advanced instruments that many big companies have.

Professor’s Environmental Think Tank Wins $100,000 UNESCO Prize

Distinguished Professor of Biology Kamal Bawa has received the UNESCO Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Conservation on behalf of the research institute he founded in India 20 years ago. The Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) is located in Bangalore and is now ranked among the world’s top 20 environmental think tanks.

The $100,000 Qaboos Prize, awarded at the World Science Forum in Budapest, Hungary, recognized ATREE for its socially just environmental-conservation and sustainable-development activities. The prize also recognizes significant contributions toward the discovery of new species in the Western Ghats and exceptional outreach to raise awareness of India’s biodiversity and to train environmental leaders.

Chemistry Professor Using $435,001 NSF Grant to Build Materials from the Ground Up

Associate Professor of Chemistry Jason Green and his research group are working to understand how to use chemical reactions that cause molecules to assemble themselves into dynamic and responsive materials. Green says there are many reasons why you’d want to do this. Green explains that dynamic or “active” materials have a number of potential applications, from sensors for biological molecules to drug delivery systems. These materials can modulate their structure in response to their environment’s temperature or pH and can even heal themselves if damaged.

Green is in the first year of a three-year $435,001 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant. By the time the grant ends in May 2022, he’s hoping to have developed mathematical equations and computational methods that, together with computer code, will predict the pathways a system will take in order to assemble a particular structure.

Professor Using Voice Assistant System to Detect Cognitive Impairment

Assistant Professor of Computer Science Xiaohui Liang is leading a four-year $1.18 million National Institute on Aging (NIA)-funded research project to use voice assistant systems, such as Amazon’s Alexa and Google Home, to detect early cognitive impairment. Early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias in older adults living alone is essential for developing, planning, and ensuring adequate support at home for patients and their families.

The core team will conduct an 18-month laboratory evaluation and a 28-month home evaluation that will focus on whether a voice assistant system’s tasks and features can measure and predict an individual’s cognitive decline in the home over time. The team will use machine and deep learning techniques and collect data on patient participants to provide feedback to patients, caregivers, and clinicians. If it’s a success, the team will do widespread testing.
STRENGTHEN THE UNIVERSITY’S RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE (CONT.)

UMass Boston Partners with SeaAhead to Boost Bluetech Innovation

The University of Massachusetts Boston and SeaAhead, Inc. have formed a partnership to improve research and commercial ventures promoting ocean sustainability. Together, they plan to catalyze a New England bluetech cluster by fostering venture-based innovation.

UMass Boston scientists, with their extensive ocean-related research, will work with SeaAhead’s innovation community to create opportunities for new research, job opportunities for students, and a higher utilization of UMass Boston assets. Ocean start-ups will benefit through streamlined access to the mentorship, specialized labs, equipment, tools, and space necessary to build transformative companies. Through this relationship, bluetech start-ups can more easily leverage the Massachusetts Innovation Voucher Program to support external validation of their technology. SeaAhead will also work with UMass Boston to facilitate partnerships with willing researchers from other UMass campuses, which could open access to over 90 collections of advanced instruments across the five-campus system to support bluetech innovation.

Professor Wins Inaugural Wilczenski Faculty Development Grant

Assistant Professor of International Development Meghan Kallman is the first recipient of the new Wilczenski Faculty Development Grant, supported by the Louis and Genevieve Wilczenski Faculty Development Endowment. This grant supports research, scholarship, and curriculum development that lead directly to the applicant’s own professional development. Kallman’s proposal, “LadyBrass: Gender, Decision-making and Prefiguration in Women’s Street Bands,” was selected from a competitive pool.