

To the Board:

At the midpoint of the spring term, I continue to be heartened by our progress in building UMass Boston 2.0 around the university’s signature strengths: our dedication to advancing knowledge in service of Boston and the commonwealth, our devotion to holistic student success, and our resolute commitment to impactful education and research.

Our cover story highlights a historic new partnership with Boston Public Schools to create the first-ever university-assisted community school in Massachusetts at the BCLA-McCormack School on Columbia Point. This partnership extends our ongoing work with BCLA-McCormack and is modeled after a similar pioneering university-assisted community school network developed at UCLA, when I served as dean there.

Also in this report:

- We announced a transformational \$10 million gift from New Balance Athletics to establish the New Balance Institute for Innovative Leadership in Sport, which will complement our New Balance Sport Leadership and Administration program by providing new faculty and bolstering scholarship funding to increase enrollment.
- The university continues to attract major federal funding to support research on key priorities in our strategic plan, *For the Times*. A recent \$1 million National Science Foundation grant, for example, will support faculty members working on *ADVANCE Adaptation: UMass Boston CARES: Communities, Acknowledgment, Recognition, and Equity through a Culture of Sponsorship*, aimed at increasing gender and racial equity among science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) faculty.
- Our campus earned a silver Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. The STARS system is a framework for colleges and universities to measure sustainability performance against a range of environmental, social, and economic metrics.

I am pleased that UMass Boston 2.0 continues to evolve and build on our academic excellence.

I trust you will appreciate this report on our progress.

– Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco



Mayor Michelle Wu speaks at the State of the City 2024 event.

Boston Public Schools, UMass Boston Partner to Establish First University-Assisted Community Hub School

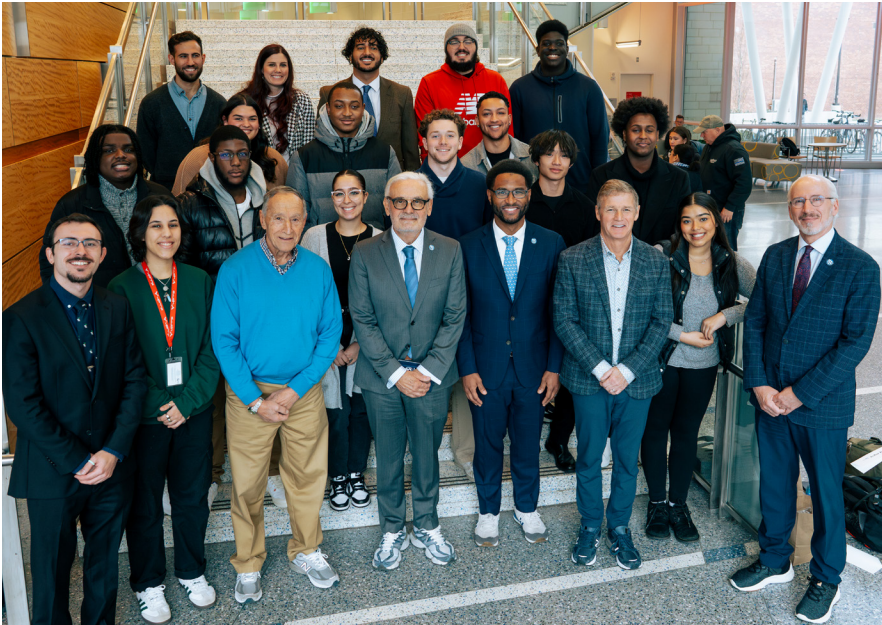
Boston Mayor Michelle Wu announced during her annual state of the city address in late January a new partnership between Boston Public Schools (BPS) and UMass Boston to transform the McCormack School on Columbia Point into the city’s first university-assisted community school.

“Tonight, I’m also excited to announce that UMass Boston has signed an agreement with BPS to make the BCLA-McCormack High School our district’s first University-Assisted Community Hub School,” Mayor Wu said in her address. “Together, we’ll give our high school students direct access to college coursework and resources, partner educators from both institutions, and create a seamless pathway into UMass Boston for our graduates as we renovate a state-of-the-art high school campus embedded in the Columbia Point community.”

The new partnership developed over a year of research and strategizing, including a fact-finding mission to California, where UMass Boston Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco in his previous position as dean of the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA led the development of a new model of high school aimed at enhancing college success.

“I thank Mayor Wu, Superintendent Mary Skipper, and BCLA/McCormack Head of School Ondrea Johnston for their partnership in what will be the first university-assisted community school in Massachusetts,” Chancellor Suárez-Orozco said. “As Boston’s premiere public research university, we are committed to providing BPS students with an equitable pathway to and through UMass Boston.”

Develop a Leadership Role in Public Service



New Balance CEO Joe Preston, New Balance Chairman Jim Davis, Chancellor Suárez-Orozco, Motley Endowed Chair Joseph N. Cooper, and Provost Joseph Berger pose with students.

\$10M New Balance Donation Establishes the Institute for Innovative Leadership in Sport

UMass Boston recently announced a commitment of \$10 million from Boston-based New Balance Athletics, Inc. to establish the New Balance Institute for Innovative Leadership in Sport. The gift will provide operational funds to launch the institute and endow it in perpetuity at the UMass Boston campus. The new commitment and institute build on the New Balance Sport Leadership and Administration program founded at UMass Boston with a \$5 million gift in 2018.

“This is a brilliant partnership,” said UMass Boston Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco. “UMass Boston is the natural academic home for the New Balance Sport Leadership and Administration program and this new institute. Innovative and interdisciplinary, the program prepares students for exemplary careers in sports management while offering a robust social justice platform to advance excellence, equity, diversity, and human rights in sports. This aligns with our foundational idea that a UMass Boston education is designed to have impact and serve the greater good.”

The New Balance Institute for Innovative Leadership in Sport will provide new faculty and academic support and bolster scholarship funding to increase student enrollment in the academic program to 200–300 students annually. In addition, the institute will focus on conducting and publishing research on the sport industry and cultivating external partnerships, expanding funding sources, and gaining support within and across the sport industry.

Enhance the Learning Experience



College of Management students speak at a BEST Boston event.

Businesses Encouraged to Submit Projects for BEST Boston 2024 Summer Session

BEST (Business Engagement for Students) Boston, a pioneering initiative at UMass Boston's College of Management, is extending a special invitation to Boston-area businesses and organizations to participate in its upcoming summer session.

The program offers College of Management business students 10-week consulting opportunities, allowing them to tackle real-world challenges. By engaging with the program, businesses can harness the expertise of student consultants studying marketing, accounting, supply chain management, and more, without incurring any expenses.

“We are excited to launch another session of BEST Boston, offering an exceptional opportunity for businesses to collaborate with our talented students,” said Venky Venkatachalam, dean of the College of Management. “Through this program, businesses can access cost-effective solutions while making a meaningful impact on education. We look forward to seeing the innovative projects that emerge from this partnership.”

Maintain and Improve Affordability and Access

UMass Boston Signs MOU with Hudson Valley Community College

In an effort to increase transfer enrollment at UMass Boston and to expand access to the Honors College, UMass Boston recently executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC). The agreement, initiated this fall, guarantees acceptance to HVCC associate degree graduates with at least a 3.5 GPA who apply to UMass Boston's Honors College.

Additionally, accepted students will be awarded a \$2,000 scholarship in recognition of their academic achievements. The new partnership provides a pipeline for high-achieving transfer students to enroll directly into the university's Honors College.

The UMass Boston Honors College, which provides a dynamic and collaborative environment for high-achieving students, welcomes new students who aspire academically, thrive on intellectual challenge, and are eager to study complex local and global issues. Students enrolled in the Honors College can have the opportunity to take courses that provide enrichment-based and cross-disciplinary learning opportunities.

UMass Boston Joins the ZeeMee Community

UMass Boston recently joined the ZeeMee community. Established in 2014, ZeeMee is a student-centric social media platform designed to foster authentic peer-to-peer communication and engagement.

The app features college search tools for students, the ability to register for campus events, the chance to make new friends or find roommates, and the opportunity to speak with current students and staff members—all of which can be done before a student sets foot on campus. ZeeMee has partnered with colleges from across the country, and currently more than 150 U.S. universities are a part of the community. Hundreds of thousands of students from the prospect stage onward are on the app.

The February launch was so successful that UMass Boston was ranked #1 in the platform's top 10 engaged communities list in its first week.

UHS Brings More Smiles to Campus with New Dental Clinic

University Health Services (UHS) continues its work to expand the scope of health services on campus. Recently, UHS's General Medicine partnered with FlossTime to bring two dental clinics to campus. Sixty student patients received x-rays, exams, and cleanings.

More than half were diagnosed with cavities and other conditions, 10 had never been to a dentist before, and several reported longstanding pain and/or bleeding that they had ignored. Additional dental clinics will be offered in the future along with mobile optometry clinics. Both dental and vision services are critical to UHS's ongoing health promotion work to reduce health care financial barriers, promote health care routines, and further destigmatize health care needs.

Enhance the Learning Experience (cont.)



John Green, bestselling author of Paper Towns and The Fault in Our Stars, poses for a photo with students from The Mass Media and Student Arts and Events Council during a Welcome Week event.

Student Belonging Efforts Continue with Strong Start to the Spring Semester

Student Affairs kicked off a robust spring semester Welcome Week, with several events reporting hundreds of attendees. Over the first three weeks of the semester, resident assistants held over 50 "Kickstarter" programs to welcome residents back and support the transition for a small number of new residents joining at the mid-year point.

Off-Campus Living hosted several outreach sessions to support students seeking off-campus housing opportunities and promote their upcoming housing fairs. Moreover, New Student and Family Programs helped roll out the blue carpet to more than 450 undergraduate and nearly 200 graduate students during winter orientation programming.

Strengthen the University's Research and Development Enterprise



Jonathan Celli and Shakir Khan work in the lab.

Physics Professor Receives \$608K in NCI Funding to Develop Medical Device for Screening and Treating Oral Cancers

In his efforts to advance the development of a low-cost, compact medical device for screening and treating oral cancers, Professor of Physics Jonathan Celli has been awarded \$608,000 from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The award is part of a five-year \$2.87 million multi-PI NCI cooperative agreement in collaboration with Tayyaba Hasan, professor of dermatology at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, and Rongguang Liang, professor of optical sciences at the University of Arizona.

“This project aims to create an affordable, user-friendly handheld device for photodynamic therapy (PDT). The device’s purpose is to screen for early signs of oral cancer, identify lesion locations, and provide immediate treatment at the point of care,” explained Celli.

Both a diagnostic and treatment tool for cancerous oral lesions, the device eradicates malignant cells through PDT, which involves using a light source in combination with light-activated medication. It is a method that has already shown great promise in treating oral cancers.

In rural India and other parts of South Asia, the high incidence of oral cancers is a major health concern. In these areas, even when early-stage cancers are detected, treatment may not be accessible to patients. When available, current care options often require patients travel long distances to receive care such as radiation or chemotherapy, which involve multiple rounds of costly medical treatments and may come with debilitating side effects.



Assistant Professor of Physics Mohamed Amine Gharbi

Physics Professor Receives NSF CAREER Award

Assistant Professor of Physics Mohamed Amine Gharbi has been honored with a Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) award by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to advance the understanding of how interfaces impact the mobility of living microorganisms.

This research carries promising technological prospects as it opens avenues for the development of new functional systems applicable across various fields, such as biosensing, bioremediation, and disease treatment. This also marks a historic achievement for the UMass Boston Physics Department, as it is the first time a faculty member from the department has received this prestigious award.

“I am deeply honored to have received this prestigious NSF CAREER award. This recognition highlights the potential of our research and reflects the dedication and commitment of my exceptional research team at UMass Boston,” Gharbi said.

Gharbi is set to receive \$601,481 over a period of five years, starting in June 2024, for his proposal titled, “CAREER: Interfacial behavior of motile bacteria at structured liquid crystal interfaces.”

 Strengthen the University's Research and Development Enterprise (cont.)

Justice in Aging Creates Fellowship with LTSS Center to Focus on Data and Equity

Justice in Aging, a national legal advocacy nonprofit that fights senior poverty through law, has formed an innovative partnership with the Gerontology Institute's LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston to support research while enhancing the nonprofit's capacity to interpret data. The Justice in Aging Data for Equity Fellowship will provide annual support for a UMass Boston gerontology graduate student whose research aligns with Justice in Aging's priorities and who will train the organization's staff members on data literacy and analysis.

"We are proud to launch this new partnership," says Marc Cohen, co-director of the LTSS Center.

"The fellowship allows us to support Justice in Aging's mission, which is closely aligned with ours, while supporting a doctoral student and faculty member with a unique applied research and mentorship opportunity."

Mentorship is at the heart of the Justice in Aging fellowship.

Doctoral candidate Andrew Alberth, the inaugural fellow, will be mentored by Jeffrey Stokes, assistant professor of gerontology and director of the graduate program. In turn, Alberth will work with the Justice in Aging staff on analyzing and interpreting data, skills he has gained since coming to UMass Boston, beginning with his statistics class with Stokes.

University Research Awards for the Last Quarter

- PI Joseph Berger/Office of the Provost received \$3M from Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending - Construction, Health Resources Service Administration for *Home Care Digital and Simulation Lab*.
- PI Jean Winsor/Institute for Community Inclusion received \$2M from the Florida Department of Education (Sub from U.S. Department of Education) for *Arts to Competitive Integrated Employment (ArtCIE) - Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment (SWTCIE)*.
- PI Callie Brusegaard/Global Inclusion and Social Development received \$1,249,995 from the Department of Education for *Diverse Personnel Preparation for Related Services in Orientation and Mobility*.
- PI Robert Chen/School for the Environment received \$982,800 from the University of Massachusetts Foundation for the *Center for Environmental Justice Media*.
- PI Jason Green/Chemistry received \$749,999 from the U.S. Department of Energy for *Data-driven learning of dissipation from microscopy of chemically active materials*.
- PI Anne Douglass/Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation received \$650,000 from the MA Department of Early Education and Care for *Statewide Professional Development Academy*.
- PI Heike Boeltzig-Brown/Institute Community Inclusion received \$618,928 from the U.S. Department of State for *FY23 Professional Fellows Program*.
- PI Heather Trigg/Anthropology received \$185,270 from the National Science Foundation for *Processes of Hispanic Ethnogenesis in New Mexico: Archaeological Investigations of an 18th-Century Spanish Ranch*.
- PI Ping Chen/Engineering received \$124,997 from the National Science Foundation for *Collaborative Research: EAGER: Deep Learning-based Multimodal Analysis of Sleep*.
- PI Karen Johannesson/School for the Environment received \$110,000 from the American Chemical Society for *Vanadium speciation in sulfidic environments: Inferring the origin of metalliferous source rocks and petroleum*.
- PI James O'Day/Facilities received \$100,000 from the MA Department of Energy Resources for *Leading by Example Clean Energy Feasibility Study Grant*.
- PI Jill Macoska/Biology received \$100,000 from the University of Wisconsin Madison (Sub from NIH - National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases) for *Y10 Cellular and molecular mediators of fibrosis in the development of urinary tract dysfunction*.

Position University in the Higher Education Marketplace

U.S. News Ranks UMass Boston Online Programs Among the Nation's Best

UMass Boston's online bachelor's degree and online graduate programs, including the MBA and master's in education, are listed among the nation's best in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2024 Best Online Programs rankings.

The rankings reflect the university's ongoing commitment to access to higher education for all. UMass Boston online programs offer digital access to the same quality courses and programs we offer on campus, taught by the same academic departments, at one of the lowest online costs per credit available.

Most notable among the rankings was the university's online bachelor's degree, which was ranked as 50th in the nation.

Highlights include

- Online Bachelor's – No. 50
- Online Master's in Business (non-MBA) – No. 140
- Online MBA – No. 102
- Online MBA for Veterans – No. 65
- Online Master's in Education – No. 58
- Online Master's in Education for veterans – No. 18
- Online Master's in Nursing – No. 83

U.S. News & World Report conducts online program rankings annually, and they are based on indicators such as student services and technology, faculty credentials, and student engagement, using data collected directly from each institution. The programs that score the highest are those applying educational best practices specific for distance learners.

New Athletics and Recreation Strategic Plan Announced

Vice Chancellor of Athletics and Recreation Jacqueline Schuman announced the completion and publication of "Advancing the Legacy of Excellence," a comprehensive five-year strategic plan for UMass Boston Athletics and Recreation.

"The release of this plan concludes over a year of broad consultations across the university and thoughtful consideration of the critical role of sports at UMass Boston," Schuman said. "Our new strategic plan honors our rich athletic history and charts a clear path forward."

In fall 2021, Schuman assembled a Mission, Vision, Values Committee (MVVC) composed of a broad, representative range of members of the campus community to help guide the process. Five priorities are outlined in the strategic plan: Wellness, Stakeholder Engagement, Gender Equity, Capital Investment, and Advancement.

"With our strategic plan and priorities in place, the time is now to elevate everything that we do as our mission, vision, and values drive our daily work and impact our students for the better," Schuman said.

Increase Endowment



UMass Boston hosted more than 400 alumni at their annual holiday reception.

Alumni Return to Columbia Point to Celebrate the Holidays as a Community

The Office of Alumni Engagement hosted more than 400 alumni at their annual holiday reception. After holding the event at a downtown Boston venue for the past three years, the engagement moved to the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, drawing alumni and friends back to the Columbia Point campus. Proceeds from the event benefit the endowed Young Alumni Council Scholarship, which is awarded annually to a rising junior or senior.

Develop First-Rate Infrastructure

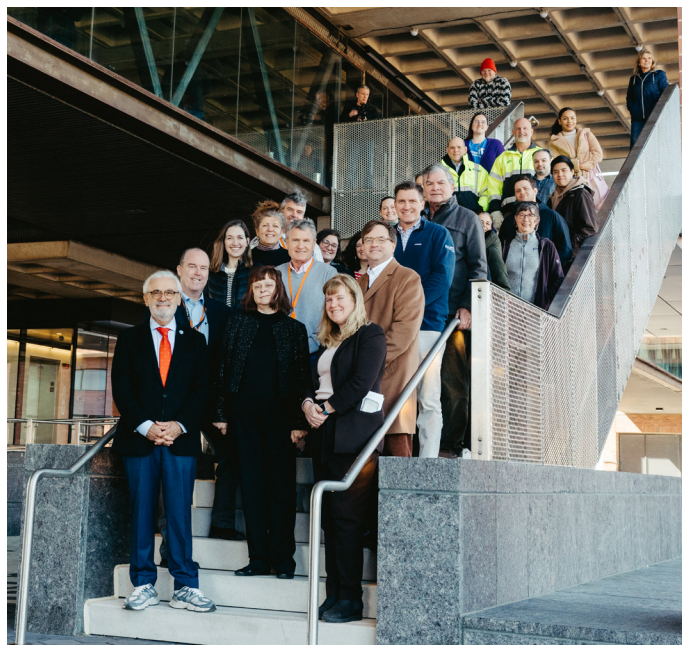
UMass Boston Earns Silver STARS Rating for Sustainability Achievements

UMass Boston recently earned a silver Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. The STARS system is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance based on environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability.

The STARS score is based on points earned across four main categories: Academics, Engagement, Operations, and Planning & Administration. According to UMass Boston Sustainability and Resiliency Planner Janna Cohen-Rosenthal, the scores will be used as a benchmark for future integrated sustainability initiatives.

There were several projects that contributed to the silver rating, including UMass Boston's role as a living laboratory for applied student learning through the UMass Boston Professional Apprenticeship Career Experience (PACE), which allows students to have hands-on experience in a variety of areas, including sustainability.

"We are proud of our first STARS report earning a silver-level rating," said Kathleen Kirleis, vice chancellor for administration and finance. "This effort represents hard work across UMass Boston in both data collection and program implementation. Building energy efficiency efforts and our Solar Plus Storage Project are reducing our energy costs and reliance on fossil fuels while expanding resiliency during peak energy-use times."



Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco joined Dean of Libraries Stephanie Walker, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Kathleen Kirleis, and staff and students for a ribbon cutting at the Healey Library.

University Celebrates Renovated Healey Library Entrance Ribbon Cutting

Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Kathleen Kirleis joined faculty, staff, and students in March to celebrate the opening of a new accessible entrance to the Healey Library. As part of the Substructure Demolition and Quadrangle Development (SDQD) project, an elevator and new stairway were installed connecting the library to the university's new quad area.

Increase Endowment (cont.)

UMass Boston Receives Increased Scholarship Funding for International Students

Upon her retirement from her role as UMass Boston's vice chancellor of enrollment management in 2014, Kathleen S. Teehan '71 was honored with the creation of an endowed scholarship to recognize her many years of committed service to the university. The Kathleen Teehan International Scholarship Fund—which supports full-time undergraduate or graduate international students attending UMass Boston—was established by colleagues and other well-wishers, and Teehan herself committed to funding the scholarship to full-endowment status.

Teehan recently made an additional \$100,000 pledge to the endowed fund, taking the opportunity to benefit from available state matching funds to expand the impact of her generosity in support of our international scholars.

 Renew the Faculty



Jean Winsor

Jean Winsor Receives 2024 Policy Award from American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Jean Winsor, a senior research associate and project manager at UMass Boston's Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) is the winner of the 2024 Policy Award by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD).

She began working at ICI in 2002 as a graduate assistant while completing her PhD in public policy. She rapidly emerged as a leader in research and advocacy for employment policy and systems change and has since extended this work into state consultation and evaluation.

Winsor co-developed the Higher Performing States Framework, an evidence-based model first published in 2007. This model has provided a foundation for employment policy and strategy in over 35 states and is used to guide the work of the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), ICI's membership-supported state intellectual and developmental disabilities agency community of practice committed to improving employment outcomes.

Winsor will be honored at a ceremony at the 148th AAIDD Annual Meeting in June for her outstanding contributions to the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities.


 Director of the MFA in Creative Writing Program
 John Fulton

Professor Receives National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship

John Fulton, English professor and director of the MFA in Creative Writing Program, has been selected by the National Endowment for the Arts as one of 35 writers to receive an FY 2024 Creative Writing Fellowship of \$25,000.

This year's fellowships are in fiction and creative nonfiction and enable the recipients to set aside time for writing, research, travel, and general career development. Fellows are selected through an anonymous review process and are judged on artistic excellence of the work sample they provided. These fellowships are highly competitive, with more than 2,100 eligible applications received for FY 2024.

Professor Fulton is the author most recently of *The Flounder and Other Stories*, a Poets & Writers Page One New and Noteworthy Book selection, which earned him the award. He is also the author of three other books of fiction: *The Animal Girl*, which was long listed for the Story Prize; *Retribution*, which won the Southern Review Fiction Prize; and the novel *More Than Enough*, a Barnes and Noble's Discover Great New Writers selection.

Continue a Positive Focus on Diversity and Positive Climate



(From left) Professor Adán Colón-Carmona, Professor Maureen Scully, Dean of Faculty Rajini Srikanth, Associate Professor Katalin Szélényi, and Professor Hannah Sevian

NSF Awards \$1M Grant to Enhance Gender, Racial Equity Among STEM Faculty

The National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE program has awarded a three-year \$1 million grant to a multidisciplinary team of five UMass Boston faculty members.

Their project, *ADVANCE Adaptation: UMass Boston CARES: Communities, Acknowledgment, Recognition, and Equity through a Culture of Sponsorship*, is designed to further advance UMass Boston's ongoing efforts to be a leader in increasing gender and racial equity among the university's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) faculty. UMass Boston was one of only six higher education institutions in the United States to receive an NSF ADVANCE Adaptation grant during the 2023 grant cycle.

"While the student body at UMass Boston is one of the most diverse in the country, the faculty is not as diverse, particularly in terms of faculty members with tenure and full professorships," explained Katalin Szélényi, principal investigator and associate professor in the Higher Education Program. "The UMass Boston CARES project addresses this disparity by focusing on the implementation of strategies that promote gender and racial equity in the STEM faculty at our university."

The CARES project aims to provide clarity around factors affecting the career outcomes of women faculty and faculty of color in STEM fields, with approaches that are relevant to all faculty at the university, both tenure- and non-tenure stream. This may include the way faculty activities are recognized and rewarded or undervalued, and organizational barriers such as policies, processes, practices, and culture and climate that inhibit equity.

In addition to the NSF ADVANCE projects, efforts such as the university-wide *For the Times* strategic plan, 2016-2017 PROGRESS Report from the Faculty Council examining faculty service work, and the work of the Faculty Staff Union and of the Faculty Council's Research Committee, among others, are part of a longstanding commitment to identifying and addressing inequalities faced by faculty of color and women faculty at UMass Boston.

Continue a Positive Focus on Diversity and Positive Climate (cont.)



Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Mayor Michelle Wu speak with Suha Ballout, director of the Traditional BSN Option at UMass Boston's Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

UMass Boston, Mass General Brigham Celebrate Expansion of Clinical Leadership Collaborative for Diversity in Nursing, \$20 Million Commitment

Alumni, current students and staff from Mass General Brigham and UMass Boston's Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences came together this winter to celebrate the bright future of the Clinical Leadership Collaborative for Diversity in Nursing (CLCDN) program.

They were joined by Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, UMass President Martin Meehan, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, Provost Joseph Berger, and several city and state leaders and advocates, who applauded the partnership's efforts to enhance diversity in the city's nursing and health care provider pipeline.

Last year, the two institutions announced a \$20 million investment in the CLCDN—\$10 million from Mass General Brigham and \$10 million from UMass Boston—with the goal to recruit and retain nursing students from underrepresented communities as they start their clinical rotations. Over five years, 400 students will be recruited to complete the program, removing barriers to higher education and fostering a diverse nursing workforce that mirrors the community it serves.

"I am delighted to be here as we open a new chapter in our partnership with Mass General Brigham and imagine the many ways it will touch individual lives and democratize our public health system here in our city of Boston and in the commonwealth for years to come," Chancellor Suárez-Orozco said.

The CLCDN Fellowship provides professional and leadership development opportunities for diverse nursing students at UMass Boston who have demonstrated academic excellence, the promise of success, and leadership potential. This program is dedicated to driving transformative change in the nursing workforce, embodying the spirit of diversity, equity, and innovation. To date, the program has supported over 100 undergraduate nursing students.