



University of Massachusetts Boston
Spring Convocation 2025

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Program

National Anthem Vocalist	Orion Manzira
Jazz Musicians	Angel Hepes-Yenao, piano Jorry Tropnas, drums Ash O'Brien, bass
Photographer	Olivia Reid
Welcome	Pratima Prasad, <i>Dean</i> College of Liberal Arts
Presentation of Departmental Distinctions	Jennifer Gregg, <i>Associate Dean</i>
Presentation of Senior Honors	David Pantalone, <i>Associate Dean</i>
Recognition of John F. Kennedy Award Nominees	Rafael Jaen, <i>Associate Dean</i>
Recognition of Undergraduate Research Showcase Winners and Portfolio Students	Rafael Jaen, <i>Associate Dean</i>
Presentation of Awards	Africana Studies Professor Keith Jones Anthropology Professor Patrick Clarkin Art & Art History Professor Cat Mazza Asian Studies Professor Sana Haroon Classics and Religious Studies Professor Jason von Ehrenkrook Communication Professor SunYoung Park Economics Professor Michael Carr English & Creative Writing Professor Hugh O'Connell History Professors Heidi Gengenback & Liza McCahill Human Services Professor Carroy Ferguson Labor Studies Anneta Argyres Latin American & Iberian Studies Professor Maria Cisterna Gold

Performing Arts
Professor Carrie Ann Quinn

Philosophy
Professor Nelson Lande

Political Science
Professor Paul Kowert

Psychology
Professor Laurel Wainwright

Sociology
Professor Reef Youngreen

Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Professor Elora Chowdhury

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Departmental Distinctions

Yohenny Arias <i>Political Science</i>	Sally Lynn Edmonds <i>Africana Studies</i>	Temitope Odedele <i>Psychology</i>
Joaniris Baez <i>Criminology & Criminal Justice</i>	Diana Erinna <i>Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies</i>	Danielle Reinalda <i>Criminology & Criminal Justice</i>
Margaret Anne Ball <i>Latin American & Iberian Studies</i>	Megan Marie Feudo <i>Performing Arts (Theatre)</i>	Dave Scherson Renois <i>Economics</i>
Lucas Manuel Batista <i>Anthropology Economics</i>	Ava Avara Freeman <i>English</i>	Dillon Joyce Rodgers <i>Human Services</i>
Riley Bermas <i>History</i>	Vivian B. Gaile <i>American Studies</i>	Kristin Marie Goscinak Royer <i>Social Psychology</i>
Naomi Rose Bethune <i>Philosophy and Public Policy</i>	Isabella Caroline Garcia <i>Sociology</i>	Darlene Marie Santana Batista <i>Psychology</i>
Katelyn LeeAnn Bottoms <i>Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies</i>	Timothy Charles Grace <i>Economics</i>	Karina Silva <i>Psychology</i>
Jessica Leigh Boyajian <i>Classical Studies</i>	Katherine Johanna Guevara <i>Psychology</i>	Dana Alexander Simon <i>Labor Studies</i>
Amy E. Bramhall <i>Italian (Modern Languages, Literatures & Cultures)</i>	Emma Johnson <i>Philosophy</i>	Jeylyn Maria Simono <i>Art & Art History</i>
Aidan Michael Butler <i>Performing Arts (Theatre)</i>	Abigael Jolliffe <i>Psychology</i>	Alexa Shanice Soto <i>Communication</i>
Jared Joseph Carreiro <i>Communication</i>	Grace Kaseke Kindeke <i>Africana Studies</i>	Samia Tariq <i>Psychology</i>
Lily Charbonneau <i>Psychology</i>	Amelia Mahabir <i>Asian Studies</i>	Betel Fitwi Tekleghiorghis <i>Political Science</i>
Makeila G. De Andrade <i>Africana Studies</i>	Orionis Moone Manzira <i>Performing Arts (Music)</i>	Dayana Nahomi Ukraine <i>Criminology & Criminal Justice Psychology</i>
Tristan Robert Duggan <i>International Relations</i>	Alexander May <i>Philosophy, Law, and Ethics</i>	I.S. Ward <i>Classical Languages</i>
Katie Duross <i>Psychology</i>	Ian Richard McGrath <i>Communication</i>	Edmund Whelan <i>Philosophy</i>
Kayli Michelle Dziobecki <i>Criminology & Criminal Justice</i>	Elizabeth F. McGrory <i>Global Affairs</i>	Sarah Zyba <i>Classical Studies</i>
	Mercy Moncada <i>English</i>	

Senior Honors

Kossiwa Awlenou-Koumako
Human Services

Jessica Leigh Boyajian
Theatre

Owen Matthew Burke
Human Services

Aidan Michael Butler
Theatre

Ryan Carpenter
Human Services

Eliane Centeio
Human Services

Lily Grace Charbonneau
Psychology

Katie Frances Duross
Psychology

Emily Elizabeth Fantasia
Psychology

Megan Marie Feudo
Theatre

Violeta Virginia Russell Foster
Human Services

Lillian Mae Harris
Music

Ermette Henry
Human Services

Caroline Mary Clough Howard
Music

Austin Jain
Sociology

Yannely Carla Louis
Human Services

Orionis Moone Manzira
Music

Delcy Leah Martinez
Human Services

William Paul McElroy
*Political Science, International
Relations*

Chevelys E. Melo Dominquez
Human Services

Jill Leslie Monteiro
Human Services

Kaylah Morilus
English

Gema S. Recio Luciano
Human Services

Karina Delima Silva
Psychology

Millicent Ann Snow
Criminology & Criminal Justice

Samia Tariq
Psychology

Anika Toprac
Art & Art History

Connor Triehey
Psychology

Dayana Ukraine
Psychology

Adler Vallon
Human Services

Abigail Joan Wallace
Psychology

Mafu Yalape
*Political Science, International
Relations*

Students Nominated for the John F. Kennedy Award

Matthew Carlson, *English*

Asha Lawrence, *Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies*

Undergraduate Research Showcase Prizes

First place: Candace Chan “From Hong Kong to Boston: Translating Oral History”

Second place: Abigail Wallace “Examining the Relationship Between Caregiver Stress, Motivation, and Behavior Problems in Children with ASD and Social Communication Delays”

Honorable Mentions:

Teddy Jouret “How Code-Switching in Central Asia Supported Pre-Viral Advertising”

Matthew Carlson “Carol McEldowey: Comensality & Representations of Vietnamese Agriculture and Food”

Henry Needham “The Dissemination of Information and Journalism for Spanish-speaking Americans”

Emily Fantasia, “Emotional Intelligence Predicting Student Achievement in Fourth and Fifth Graders”

Ian McGrath “The Identity We Give to Movies: The Masculinity and Femininity of Sexual Minority Characters Represented Across Movie Genres”

Ishaiah Alvarenga “Translating Resistance: The Impact of Varied Socio-political & Cultural Contexts of Translators of Fenon’s Les Damnes de la terre”

Amira Lucas “Poetic Translation: Exploring Retranslation and the Minds of Alexandre Amprimoz and Mario Martin Gijon”

Linda Valette, Frederick Baez, Joaniris Baez, Oriana Lara, Ana Matos, Angie Zavaleta, Smarlyn Rodriguez, Andres Matos, Jose Santiago, and Katherine Gravehorst Picazz “Understanding Problem Gambling Among Latino Youth: A Study with Casa Latina and LLOP”

Nicole I. Carmona Martinez, Jose Santiago, Odalys Diaz, Esmerelda Gonzalez, Valentina Valderama Perez, and John Nguyen “Understanding Problem Gambling and Vulnerability Pathways Among BIPOC Youth”

Linda Valette, Francisco A. Bello, Jose Santiago, Zoraya D. Hernandez, Jelitza Romero, Jackelyne D. Abranches, and Katherine Gravehorst Picazz “Understanding Problem Gambling Among Latino You: A Study with Sociedad Latina and LLOP”

Undergraduate Research Portfolio Certificates

Jessica Boyajian

Naomi Bethune

Matthew Carlson

Anuoluwapo A. Mokuolu

Jose A. Santiago

Undergraduate Awards

Clinton M. Jean Prize

(Africana Studies Department)

The Clinton M. Jean Prize in Africana Studies was established in honor of Professor Clinton Jean (1936–1993), former Professor of Black Studies. Born in Trinidad, Professor Jean came to UMass Boston after completing his studies at Columbia University and his PhD in sociology at Brandeis University. A dedicated teacher and scholar, Professor Jean published a number of articles and an acclaimed book, Behind the Eurocentric Veil: The Search for African Realities. His book, published by the University of Massachusetts Press, has been a pioneering work in the area of Afrocentrism, which critiques Eurocentric traditions of social and historical analysis. His death was a major loss to his family, friends, and the field of Africana studies.

The Clinton M. Jean Prize is given each year to a graduating senior who has the highest grade point average in the Department of Africana Studies.

Makeila De Andrade

Makeila De Andrade is a first-generation student and mother. She plans to pursue a graduate degree after graduation. Makeila is an advocate for herself, her daughters, and her local community. Africana Studies faculty shared that Makeila demonstrated excellence in her academic work, earning high marks. She

consistently participated in extracurricular activities to enrich her learning experience; showed leadership in team-oriented research projects, producing high-quality presentations; demonstrated maturity in her research and presentation skills; and made a tremendous impact on both the faculty and her peers.

Sally Lynn Edmonds

Sally Edmonds enjoys nature walks, reading, working out with her favorite YouTube trainers, and cooking for friends. This summer, she looks forward to spending time with her kids at the beach. Sally is seeking a job in social science research, community organizing, or public service. In the next few years, she plans to pursue a graduate degree that combines her interests in psychology and Black studies. Sally earned the

highest GPA in the department. Africana Studies faculty noted that she demonstrated consistent academic excellence, produced an outstanding research essay on the early history of the UMass Boston Black Studies Department, provided student leadership during team-oriented research projects, and consistently engaged critically with source materials and contemporary issues.

Harriet Tubman Essay Prize

(Africana Studies Department)

The Harriet Tubman Essay Prize has been established in the Department of Africana Studies to stimulate student research on issues of Black freedom and resistance. The prize has been named after the great nineteenth-century freedom fighter Harriet Tubman, who escaped from slavery but returned to the South to rescue at least two hundred Blacks from slavery. She has been called “the greatest heroine of the age,” a freedom fighter who put her own freedom in jeopardy in order to secure freedom for others.

The prize is given every year to the student who best exemplifies courage and determination to succeed academically against all odds.

Grace Kaseke Kindeke

Grace Kindeke is a multidisciplinary artist and social justice advocate whose work is deeply rooted in the lived experiences and expansive histories of the Black Diaspora. Born in the Democratic Republic of Congo and raised in New England, Grace carries the traditions, resilience, and visionary spirit of her lineage into every facet of her art and activism. An avid reader and passionate speaker, she grounds her creative and political practice in Black feminist thought and African-futurist visions. After graduation, she plans to nurture and grow her family while continuing to advance the ongoing struggle for racial justice and immigrant rights.

According to Africana Studies faculty, Grace established herself as a formidable thinker and engaged student. In addition to showing up to class prepared and focused, she made astute parallels between the ideas and concepts introduced in assigned readings and her social justice work with the New Hampshire branch of the American Friends Service Committee. Her thinking and writing revealed her to be a thoughtful student leader who supports the collective liberation of Black people and works diligently to make it a reality.

David Walker Prize

(Africana Studies Department)

The David Walker Prize has been established in the Department of Africana Studies to recognize achievement in both scholarship and community service. The prize was established in honor of David Walker, a nineteenth-century black abolitionist who published "Walker's Appeal" in 1829. A scholarship is given annually to a graduating Africana Studies major who shows evidence of involvement in Boston community development projects and superior academic achievement.

Makeila De Andrade

Makeila De Andrade demonstrated excellence in her academic work, earning high marks. She consistently participated in extra-curricular activities to enrich her own learning experience; showed leadership in team-oriented research

projects, producing high-quality presentations; demonstrated excellent maturity in her own research and presentation skills, and made a tremendous impact on the faculty and her peers.

Founder's Prize in American Studies

(American Studies Department)

The Founder's Prize in American Studies is given to a graduating senior in American Studies who has done outstanding work in his/her American Studies major, as attested to by two or more faculty who teach regularly in the program. Recipients must have an excellent academic record in the major and meet one of the following requirements: 1) submission of two short papers, or one substantial research paper, that demonstrate competence with two of the program's required modes of analysis (historical, literary, ethnographic, media); or 2) submission of a paper that explores the applicability of American Studies theory, knowledge, or modes of analysis to a practical setting, such as an internship, tutoring or teaching, community service, social action, or political action.

Cynthia Pages

The American Studies Department awards the Founders Prize to Cynthia Pages in recognition of their exceptional work as an undergraduate major. In addition to high academic achievement, Cynthia exemplifies the value our discipline places on community engagement in their work

as a full-time Director of Youth Leadership Programs at The City School, an organization based in Upham's Corner committed to mentoring young people from greater Boston for effective social justice leadership.

Sally Goss Memorial Prize

(Anthropology Department)

Since 1984, the Department of Anthropology has awarded an annual prize in honor of the late Sally Goss. Sally transferred to UMass Boston from Middlesex Community College and completed a bachelor's degree in anthropology. She was accepted into our master's program in historical archaeology and worked toward her degree for one and a half years, until her death from cancer in 1982. She was the mother of two sons, and throughout her student career she balanced the conflicting demands of home, school, and work, as well as her illness. Sally was a valued member of our community, and her family and the Anthropology Department are proud to honor her memory with this prize.

The Sally Goss Prize is awarded to an anthropology major who is a returning female student, who has demonstrated academic excellence, and whose education in anthropology has been especially meaningful to her because of the obstacles she has had to overcome to obtain it.

Sarah Bissel

Awarding Sarah (Gonzalez) Bissel this prize highlights her great class performance, deep curiosity about humans and their communities, and unique arc of life experience. She began her degree at UMass Boston a mere two months before the pandemic, which was challenging enough, but she undertook this journey well after many of her classmates and had to complete final requirements remotely from Louisiana. Born in Miami and raised in a family with Cuban and Guatemalan roots, Sarah joined the U.S. Navy out of high school, where she used her service and bilingualism on a deployment to Puerto Rico for hurricane relief. Frequent moves

across the country led her to appreciate the diversity of local cultures and, ultimately, to anthropology as an academic pursuit, which she feels she was primed to do collaboratively given her military background. Following her service, Sarah worked in San Diego as a surf instructor and a lighting technician and electrician at the Old Globe Theater, the latter of which provided her access to the performance worlds that had defined her youth as a dancer and her theater aspirations at the university level. Fortunately for us, she declared anthropology as her major with theater studies as a minor.

Ruth Butler Scholarship

(Art & Art History Department)

The Ruth Butler Scholarship was established in honor of Ruth Butler, Professor Emerita of Art at UMass Boston and a distinguished scholar in the history of sculpture. While a student, Professor Butler won a Fulbright Fellowship that allowed her to pursue research in France. Recognizing that her trip abroad was a life-changing event, she would like art majors at UMass Boston to have a similar opportunity. The award provides an outstanding art major with funds for travel outside the United States for the purpose of studying and making art. Preference is given to projects that promote the student's understanding of a culture other than the student's own.

Kaitlin Birlin

Kaitlin Birlin is a graduating art major with a minor in German studies. As a self-described “textile artist,” her artistic practice is particularly focused and disciplined. As Zach Horn, her Studio Capstone professor, notes: “Kaitlin is determined and meticulous,” and her “entirely self-reflexive ambition has set a tone for excellence,” inspiring her classmates “to step up their game.” Her interest in both art and Germany is the motivation for her Ruth Butler Travel Scholarship proposal. Her project will explore the impact of the Bauhaus, the important early 20th-century German school of art, architecture,

and design, with a specific focus on the contributions of Anni Albers, who was both a student and professor at the school. While in Germany, Kaitlin will work with Dr. Ute Ackermann, a curator at the Bauhaus-Museum in Weimar, and she will also conduct research in Dessau and Berlin. Her findings will be compiled in a journal and sketchbook, and through photography and videos. In addition, she will gather various textiles during her journey. After her return, this research and the collected materials will be incorporated into a series of tapestries exploring various Bauhaus color and design principles.

Wilfredo Chiesa Prize for Painting

(Art & Art History Department)

The Chiesa Prize for Painting was established in 2021 by Art Department Professor Emeritus Wilfredo Chiesa. This non-competitive prize is bestowed annually upon a single outstanding painting created by a student enrolled in a painting course at the introductory or advanced levels at UMass Boston. The prize is decided by the UMB painting faculty (led by the full-time professor of painting), who may select a worthy recipient from art majors or non-majors.

Asmaa Asousy

Asmaa Asousy has always considered herself to be creative by nature, whether she is pursuing painting, drawing, or photography. Recently, she has focused on painting as a means for exploring her personal identity. In her own words: “Whether it be through color or subject matter, I am always trying to tell a story about who I am. Each piece becomes a way for me to explore and reclaim parts of myself, especially those tied to culture, heritage, and emotion. Painting is not just a form of expression but a quiet ritual of remembering and reclaiming, of connection and discovery. My art is a way for me to trace the threads of my

history and all the things that have woven me into who I am today. Painting has become not just a form of self-expression, but a sacred space where my identity unfolds and reveals itself with every brushstroke.” After graduation, Asmaa plans to continue this combination of painting and self-discovery in order to integrate more of her Moroccan and Egyptian heritage into her work. This will be accomplished through her study of traditional visual languages but also her interest in the “in-between spaces...between generations, languages, homelands, and identities.”

Marion Parry Prize

(Art & Art History Department)

The Marian Parry Prize is named for the artist Marian Parry, who made a substantial gift of art supplies to the department. Born in 1924, Parry was the founder and senior instructor of the Watercolor Program for the Radcliffe Seminars at Harvard University. Her work is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Houghton Library of Harvard University, the Smith College Rare Book Room, the Eric Carle Museum, and the Boston Public Library. The annual award is comprised of a selection of artist's grade paper, sketchbooks, paints, brushes, pens, pencils and miscellaneous studio materials. The recipient is a student of exceptional promise in drawing or painting.

Sydney Bolger

Sydney Bolger is graduating with a double major in art and communication. Sydney's art practice includes textiles and variations of traditional fiber art techniques, including embroidery, sewing, and paper weaving. In addition, she also enjoys painting and drawing. Central to her art

are themes of the environment, rural and urban life, nostalgia, and the complexities of societal expectations. After graduation, Sydney plans to take a year off, traveling during the summer and then moving to Richmond, Virginia, where she may pursue graduate school and an MFA program.

Melissa Shook Documentary Photography Award

(Art & Art History Department)

The Art & Art History Department at the University of Massachusetts Boston established the Melissa Shook Documentary Photography Award in 2022, honoring the work and legacy of artist, educator, and activist Melissa Shook (1939-2020). She epitomized every aspect of the creative practices in visual arts and amplified our pedagogical mission in the department where Shook taught for thirty-three years. The award provides an annual prize to one or more students or graduating seniors who demonstrate exceptional skill or promise in photography, with a preference for documentary photography skills. The Melissa Shook Documentary Photography Award is made possible with a generous gift by Nancy Lutz '82 and her husband Wendell.

Anika Toprac

Anika Toprac is a graduating senior majoring in art and minoring in philosophy. Over her four years of study, she has spent countless hours in the Art and Art History Department facilities, learning meaningful lessons and making invaluable connections. She has studied many different studio art mediums, but photography made the deepest impact. In her words: "I have fallen in love with having the power to immortalize an otherwise fleeting moment of time in a reflection of light." Her current honors project is

titled *Step into My Space*, where she documents herself and her friends in their bedrooms to explore themes of identity and platonic love. She is honored to receive the Melissa Shook Prize for Photography and plans to use the award to further her photographic endeavors. As an educator, it was central to Melissa Shook's pedagogy to provide a safe and caring classroom space for students to explore deeply personal content that often would lead to rich and powerful artworks, like those produced by Anika.

Michael Lafargue Award for Excellence in Asian Studies

(Asian Studies Department)

This award, named after the first director of Asian studies, is given to an exceptional graduating major for outstanding academic achievement in the field of Asian studies and who shows great promise in his or her future pursuits, whether academic, nonprofit, public sector, or entrepreneurial.

Edmund Whelan

A native of the Boston metro area, Edmund (Ned) Whelan completed a double major in Asian studies and philosophy with a minor in religious studies, distinguishing himself with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. In selecting Ned for this award, faculty members highlighted his conscientious and serious engagement with the humanistic study of Asia, his insightful

contributions to class discussion, his exceptional dedication to learning and openness to new ideas and experiences, and, of course, his consistently high level of academic achievement. Ned enriched the Asian studies community with his warmth, care for others, and enthusiasm, and will be greatly missed. We look forward to seeing where his journey takes him.

Outstanding Achievement in Classical Languages (Classics Department)

The Outstanding Achievement in Classical Languages Award is given each year to honor a graduating student for exceptional and distinguished performance in the study of the ancient Greek and Roman classics. The award recognizes academic excellence respectively in classical language and philology and in the broad-based interdisciplinary study of classical literature, history, and culture.

I.S. (Isaac) Ward

The faculty of the Department of Classics and Religious Studies are pleased to award Isaac Ward with the Outstanding Achievement in Classical Languages prize. Coming to UMass Boston after a distinguished career in the Marine Corps, Isaac has been an exemplary student of the ancient Mediterranean world. He excelled in his study of Greek and especially of Latin, which provided him an excellent base from which to explore Greco-Roman philosophy, economics, literature, warfare, religion, mysticism, and more. He also did exceptional work studying the reception of Stoicism in contemporary American discourse, and showed how, despite its trendiness among “tough guy” culture, Stoics like Marcus

Aurelius, Seneca, and Epictetus have much to teach us about living with chronic pain. Isaac has also combined his study of the Mediterranean world with a deep interest in Tai Chi and other eastern philosophies. In 2025, Isaac received the Woodenfish Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Program fellowship in South Korea to explore Buddhist philosophy, monastic discipline, and cultural traditions, including history, oral tradition and teaching, meditation, and martial arts. In the fall of 2025, Isaac will begin a master’s program at Simmons University in library and information sciences with a concentration in archives management.

Outstanding Achievement in Classical Studies

(Classics Department)

The Outstanding Achievement in Classical Studies Award is given each year to honor a graduating student for exceptional and distinguished performance in the study of the ancient Greek and Roman classics. The award recognizes academic excellence respectively in classical language and philology and in the broad-based interdisciplinary study of classical literature, history, and culture.

Sarah Zyba

The faculty of the Department of Classics and Religious Studies are pleased to award Sarah Zyba with the Outstanding Achievement in Classical Studies Prize. Sarah is a creative, intelligent, diligent student with exceptional research and writing skills combined with a remarkable mastery of factual details. Sarah's written work demonstrates an excellent ability to synthesize complex literary data while articulating and supporting a cogent and substantive argument. A paper on "Athena as Divine Patroness to Odysseus and Telemachus," for example, exhibits perceptive attention to the nuances of dialogue in Greek myth while showing a strong sensitivity to character

development and power-dynamics. Her capstone paper on "Marriage in Virgil's *Aeneid*" combines a thoughtful and mature engagement with literary criticism and social history in service of a well-written, interesting, and persuasive argument. Sarah's written work, in short, demonstrates her exceptional ability to integrate her skills as a double major in English and classical studies. Sarah is also the recipient of the Historeon Fund, a competitive award designed to support study abroad experiences for classics students at UMass Boston. She will be using the award this summer to participate in the Bostel di Rotzo Excavation archaeological field school in Vicenza, Italy.

Robert Risse Prize in Communication Studies

(Communication Department)

The Robert Risse Prize honors a graduating senior for superior performance in communication in the College of Liberal Arts. The award commemorates Professor Robert Risse, one of the founders of UMass Boston's original Communication Studies Program. Professor Risse conceived and designed courses; developed and taught curricula in television fundamentals and production; and, early on, employed computer technology to enhance the study of imagery and sound. He directed the program for most of its first fifteen years, prior to the establishment of the Communication Department in 2013. He personally advised hundreds of students about their options in the field of communication.

Sarah Hamilton

As a communication major at UMass Boston, Sarah Hamilton has excelled with a 3.9 GPA. She has also excelled both academically and creatively, especially in her passion for media and television production.

Throughout her undergraduate study, Sarah has worked at Braintree Community Access Media, where she has had the chance to direct and produce shows, create digital content, and explore all aspects of local television. Professors mentioned she has participated in class excellently, has done an excellent job on exams and assignments, and has truly cared about the faculty project that she works on as a research assistant.

These experiences have helped her build skills and confidence in the field she loves. In the fall, Sarah will be continuing her education at Boston University in the Television Producing and Management MS program. She is excited to keep learning and growing with the goal of one day producing content that is meaningful, inclusive, and resonant with people.

Sarah Hamilton exemplifies the values celebrated by the Robert Risse Prize in Communication—academic excellence, active community involvement, and a meaningful influence on those around her. Her accomplishments and dedication highlight her outstanding character, making her a truly worthy honoree.

Leonard J. Kirsch Memorial Prize (Economics Department)

Leonard J. Kirsch was a member of the Department of Economics at UMass Boston from its first years until his early death in 1977. He held a PhD in economics from Harvard University, and was the author of Soviet Wages: Changes in Structure and Administration since 1956 and the editor of the English-language edition of The Developing Countries: Employment and Capital Investment, by S. A. Kuz'min. Lenny's devotion to his students, his brilliant classroom performances, and his distinguished contributions to the field of labor economics made him a fine representative of the university's mission. During good times and hard times, as the university grew and as it had its share of troubles, Lenny always found a way to keep us moving forward—and he kept us laughing along the way. Upon his death, the department decided to give its annual prize in his name, both to honor his memory and to honor the students who receive the award.

Eric Luong

Eric Luong began college as a computer science major, but then added an economics major after getting an email from Professor Konstantinidis. He chose UMass Boston because it was the safest choice for him. He had planned on transferring after his second year, but the community changed his mind. After taking a few economics classes, he received a lot of support from the department and had the opportunity to work with faculty members, such as Dania Francis

and Y.K. Kim, doing research. Eric is currently applying for research assistantships across the world to continue engaging in economics research, which he has come to truly enjoy. He is also considering pursuing his PhD in the future, or possibly a career in data analytics at an institution like the Federal Reserve Bank. He says he is “not exactly sure what [he’ll] end up doing but [he’s] excited to see where life takes [him].”

Joann P. Stewart Prize

(Economics Department)

Professor Emerita Joann P. Stewart retired from UMass Boston in 1993, after spending most of her academic career at Boston State College. In 1969, she earned the first PhD awarded to a woman by the Economics Department of Boston University. Her scholarly interests have focused on the roles of women in economics and of unions in public life. In recognition of her contributions to the university and her encouragement of students, this prize is awarded each year to an outstanding female economics major.

Quynh Nguyen

Quynh Nguyen officially graduated in December 2024. Quynh's professors describe her as smart, thoughtful, and insightful, and a true joy to have

in class. They have every belief that, whatever Quynh is doing, she is doing it well.

Alice E. Trost Memorial Prize

(Economics Department)

Each year the department chooses an outstanding economics graduate to receive this prize, established in honor and in memory of our colleague Alice E. Trost, who died in 2001. In Professor Trost's short time at UMass Boston, she made an indelible impression on all who worked with her. She was a wonderful teacher and was particularly successful in engaging students with her wit and intelligence. Confronted with terminal cancer from the time she arrived here, Professor Trost never let that diminish her teaching and scholarly efforts. Her courage and dignity in the face of a tragic disease were a lesson to all who knew her. Significant factors in awarding the prize are the student's GPA in economics and overall GPA.

Elena Albano

Elena Albano is graduating this May with a bachelor's degree in economics and as a member of the Honors College. Elena is also a four-year collegiate athlete and captain of the Women's Tennis Team and serves on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, where she is the treasurer for the Executive Board.

Elena's academic and research interests include the economics of inequality, education, public

policy, affordable housing, and welfare programs. Elena is currently enrolled in the Accelerated Master's Program in the Economics Department, with one more year to go. After graduation, Elena plans to pursue a career in economics and public policy to address social and economic inequalities. Elena says she is "honored to receive the Alice E. Trost Memorial Prize and is deeply grateful to the Economics Department and its professors who continue to inspire [her]."

David G. Terkla Memorial Prize

(Economics Department)

Professor David Terkla joined the Department of Economics in 1987 as an assistant professor. He served as the chair of the department between 1994 and 2000. He then joined the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) Dean's Office as an associate dean in 2010 and went on to serve the college as a dean from 2014 until his passing in the fall of 2020. The department established this prize in his memory to recognize his contributions not just to the department but also to the college and the university. Each year the department gives this prize to an outstanding economics graduate. Preferably, the prize will be given to a graduate interested in public finance or environmental issues.

Lucas Batista

Lucas Batista is a first-generation college student and a second-generation American from the south coast of Massachusetts. He is currently a finalist for the Robert C. Wood Endowment Internship for this summer. If selected, he'll be working with A Better City to advance research on strategies to improve investment in Boston's public transit system and advance progress toward achieving Boston's climate goals. After

graduating, he also hopes to continue his role on the Somerville General Basic Income Pilot with the Center for Social Policy. Lucas is also enrolled in the Accelerated Master's Program in the Economics Department, with one more year to go. Lucas says he "is honored to be selected as the recipient of the David Terkla Memorial Prize."

Eleanor Marie Fay and James William Fay Memorial Prize (English Department)

In memory of an avid reader, a perfectionist whose love and study of architecture were motivated by his lifelong appreciation of style and design balanced by the creative spirit, this prize will be awarded for the best capstone essay in English and Anglophone literature. Faculty nominate essays that demonstrate the breadth and imagination of the project, intellectual facility in blending abstract concepts with research, graceful articulation, and an appreciation of artistic achievement.

Kaylah Morilus

The English Department is delighted to award the James William Fay Prize for best capstone essay in English and Anglophone literature to Kaylah Morilus for her senior honors thesis, “*The Psychological and Physical Harm of Jim Crow in Lovecraft Country*.”

Kaylah's thesis examines how Misha Green's HBO series *Lovecraft Country* uses racialized and gendered archetypes to depict the psychological impact of Jim Crow-era segregation on Black girls and women. She focuses on two characters, Diana Freeman and Ruby Baptiste, to analyze how the series combines cinematic devices like

voiceover with its engagement with literary texts such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide* to depict racism and sexism as violence to Black women and their autonomy. Deeply informed by the philosophical, psychiatric, and literary scholarship of W. E. B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, and Brittney Cooper, Kaylah argues that elements of horror and magic embedded in *Lovecraft Country*'s depictions of everyday lives reveal the consequences of mid-twentieth-century segregation laws as generational, ongoing, and grotesquely real.

Francis Russell Hart Prize

(English Department)

The Francis Russell Hart Prize honors a scholar of English and Scottish literature who set a standard for committed teaching and effective learning in his department, his university, and his profession at large. As co-founder of UMass Boston's Center for the Improvement of Teaching and author of Beyond the Books: Reflections on Learning and Teaching, Russ Hart devoted much of his career to enhancing the quality of the work done by many individual teachers and to enriching the teaching culture of the campus. He taught in the English Department from 1971 until his retirement in 1991 and he died in 2001.

The recipient of the Francis Russell Hart Prize is a senior English major who has demonstrated excellence in English studies and made significant contributions to the university community. The English Department recognizes with gratitude the support of its alumni whose contributions underwrite this award.

Anny Perez

The English Department is pleased to award the Frances Russell Hart Prize to Anny Perez Sanchez for their outstanding work in English and mentorship of other students.

Since 2023, Anny has been a consultant in the university's Writing Center, where they have helped over 100 fellow students develop confidence in and authority over their writing. Anny's mentees have praised their ability to understand what they want to say and help them articulate those ideas in academic, creative, and professional writing. A math and sciences student has

described how Anny's genuine curiosity about her ideas helped her overcome anxiety about writing literature papers and learn to craft her interpretations into arguments. Anny's work with other multilingual students inspired Anny's suggestion to include consultants' languages besides English in their Writing Center website biographies. That addition is an example of how Anny's insightful, inclusive mentorship extends beyond the students they have worked with individually. It also exemplifies Anny's gift for turning careful, sensitive reading into powerful, transformative ideas in their own work.

The Alfred R. Ferguson Prize (English Department)

The Alfred R. Ferguson Prize is awarded to the junior or senior English major for outstanding work in American literature. Nominations are made by English faculty, and include a summary of the student's course work in this field together with one (or more) papers of at least 10 pages.

Sophia Serra

The English department is delighted to award Sophia Serra the Alfred R. Ferguson Prize for best work in American Literature.

Sophia's capstone essay, "'The Cheese Stands Alone': Omar Little at the Periphery of the Narrative, Forms, and Systems Employed in *The Wire*," offers a complex and lucid analysis of how the series' antihero, Omar Little, moves from the periphery to the center of its sociopolitical critique. Sophia draws on narrative theory and network analysis, among other critical and

theoretical approaches, to develop a sophisticated reading of this eccentric, charismatic character's representation and function in the series. Omar's commanding screen presence and outsider status provides a lens that frames networks and institutions in a new light, highlighting the oppressive nature of capitalism in the series' fictionalized Baltimore. Sophia's stellar close readings of key scenes from *The Wire* provide clever, illuminating support for her compelling argument.

Marcia Keach Memorial Poetry Prize

(English Department, Creative Writing)

This prize is given by her family in honor of Marcia Keach, an English major in the creative writing program who died in 1988, in the spring semester of her senior year. People who knew her spoke of the energy, determination, indomitable good cheer, and unsentimental sense of reality with which she handled her life, her work, her three children, and her education. Many of those qualities are evident in her poems, some of which have been published in small literary magazines. In presenting this award recognizing the best poem by a graduating senior, Marcia's family hopes to share with other students her interest in poetry.

Kace Pharris

One reader of Kace Pharris's Senior Honors Thesis wrote, "It wouldn't be an overstatement to say that Kace Pharris is among the most impressive young poets I've encountered. Ever!" Kace's thesis, *Come Back Bloody* is a daring investigation of selfhood and desire—an exploration of being and the myriad ways identity negotiates its place in the world and among relationships. Pharris uses a mosaic of poetic portraits and narrative snapshots to render an identity that is both fractured and fluid through visceral imagery and bold experimentation. These are poems with meter and momentum

and surprising turns of phrase, like *some dear-set future*. What is happening here is questions and possibility, potential: *what would your name be, if you could change it to anything?* These poems are often funny and haunting, drawing the reader in with laughter that quickly turning to something a lot scarier, something that often implicates the reader. Kace is also the president of the UMB Creative Writing club, where he works to foster creative community, and where he mentors other student writers. To quote one of his poetry professors: "We LOVE Kace!"

Chet Frederick Prize in Fiction

(English Department, Creative Writing)

The Chet Frederick Prize recognizes excellence in fiction writing. Students, typically graduating seniors in creative writing, are nominated by the creative writing faculty.

Michael Claude

Michael Claude's imagination knows no bounds and claims allegiance to no genre. His fiction ranges from the wildest sci-fi to the most grounded realism. In one story, his planet-hopping main character swaggers through an intergalactic night club run by interstellar drug barons. In another, we meet a group of young boys in rural Virginia, seized by suspicions about the dark doings in their farmer-neighbor's barn, only to be surprised by what they actually find there. As comfortable evoking the hardware of gunslingers and space trawlers as he is describing the lushness of a southern countryside in summer,

Claude's talent is large. And his commitment to the art of fiction is serious, as anyone who's heard him analyze a story by one of his peers in a creative writing class. Perhaps most important of all, his interest in fiction isn't confined to the classroom. He's vice-president of the UMass Boston Creative Writing Club, where he encourages and supports the creative spirit of his fellow writers with his energizing counsel. Together, these qualities make him a worthy recipient of the Chet Frederick Prize, named in honor of UMass Boston's pioneering creative writing professor.

Paul F. Boller Prize

(History Department)

The Paul F. Boller Prize is named for a distinguished former member of UMass Boston's history faculty who taught here from 1966 to 1976 before leaving to take an endowed teaching position in Texas. Professor Boller's specialty was the history of ideas in American history. In the last 20 years he has published a number of books on American politics; the most successful is Presidential Anecdotes. It was largely money from the sale of his popular histories that provided the fund that forms the endowment of the Boller Prize.

Paul Boller loved teaching and scholarship equally because he loved to teach the things that he learned. He wanted above all to recognize excellence. The prize named in his honor is given each year for the best history essay written by a graduating senior.

Quinn Farley

Quinn Farley (Boller Prize, read by Liza McCahill): In the 1980s, Carol Walker Bynum's *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* was one of the foundational works of gender history. Bynum demonstrated that medieval monks thought about divinity in more fluid ways than the simple image of a patriarchal Catholicism suggests. In "*God as Mother through Julian of Norwich*," Quinn Farley develops and extends Bynum's arguments. Most importantly, they show that it was not just male clerics but also female lay people who thought about gender and divinity in rich and complex terms. She explores how Julian of Norwich, a 14th-century

English anchorite and mystic, attributed female qualities to God and differentiates Julian's distinctive vision from that of earlier theologians. Quinn's impressive, nuanced, and thoughtful essay provides important evidence of the complexity of late medieval religion and the ability of laypeople to theorize about the divine on their own terms. During her time at UMass Boston, Quinn has been a valued member of the History Department. In the fall, she will be starting a PhD in religion at Boston University, and we are excited to see the results as she moves her scholarly acumen to the study of the Hebrew Bible.

Outstanding Achievement in History

(History Department)

The award for Outstanding Achievement in History is given each year to a graduating history major for exceptional and distinguished performance in history courses. The Department of History established this fund in 1999 in order to recognize the hard work and discipline that are the key ingredients in the achievement of academic excellence.

Shannon Leary

Shannon Leary (OAIH, read by Heidi Gengenbach): The History Department is pleased to name Shannon Leary as the 2025 winner of the Outstanding Achievement in History award. A history major and art history minor, a creatively intrepid researcher and gifted writer, Shannon has earned the accolades of her professors for her stellar performance in courses on a wide range of time periods, places, and topics—from Ancient Greece to modern South Asia, from the French Revolution to Nazi Germany, from African food history to Baroque architecture, from Native American health to spirituality in early modern Europe. Her perfect 4.0 GPA attests to her academic excellence, and her transcript

reflects her remarkable intellectual curiosity and adventurous spirit. But Shannon is also receiving this award because of how she has blossomed, in four short years, from a shy, hard-working, and quietly extraordinary student into a bubbly, provocative, empathic, and inspirational collaborator-leader among her peers, someone whose infectious love of learning makes every classroom a better place for students and instructors. As one of her admiring professors wrote, capturing the department consensus, Shannon is “one of the very smartest undergraduates (perhaps the smartest) I have taught, and she is certainly the one who is most fun to have in class.”

Outstanding Academic and Service Achievement in Human Services (Human Services)

This excellence award is given each year to the undergraduate student who has achieved exceptional performance in human services courses and has earned the highest overall grade point average of all graduating human services majors.

Anjelika Macaibay

This award is being presented to Anjelika Marie Macaibay in recognition of her outstanding academic achievement in human services and for her extraordinary leadership and skillful service to others on campus. She will be graduating with an overall GPA of 3.903, with a similarly remarkable GPA in human services. On campus, she provided excellent service in her role as a Residential Assistant (RA) and as an intern with the Center for Academic Excellence. As an RA, she was responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive environment, acting as a campus resource person, and facilitating community programs.

She also skillfully helped to enforce university policies and procedures within her residence hall via her excellent communication skills. Indeed, as an intern, the Center for Academic Excellence director and her internship site supervisor, noted her RA experience and described her as “one of the most capable, patient, and skilled students/ interns [that they] ever worked with.” The Center director enthusiastically touted her skills at assessment, problem-solving, active listening, organizing, note-taking, outreach, and being an “amazing communicator and very caring while being intentional about boundaries.”

Outstanding Achievement in Labor Studies

(Labor Studies)

This achievement award is given each year to a graduating labor studies major for exceptional and distinguished performance in course work, research and/or community engagement. This award was funded to recognize the hard work and dedication that are the key ingredient in the achievement of academic excellence.

Stephanie Carvalho

Stephanie Carvalho has a near perfect GPA and is an exceptionally thoughtful and committed individual. She is also incredibly active, having worked with nonprofit, education, and labor organizations, including Women Encouraging Empowerment, a social services nonprofit. She

has also volunteered at Latino Outdoors Boston while being broadly committed to public service, workers' rights, and equitable community development. She is a real force and we are thrilled to call her a labor studies graduate.

Claire Sullivan

Claire Sullivan is an outstanding student, graduating with a 3.95 GPA. Claire has maintained this high academic standard while interning for a labor union, engaging in political activity, and working as a pastry chef! Claire's intellectual curiosity, commitment to

hard work, and exceptional analytical and writing skills will carry them successfully down whatever path they follow. We could not be happier that Claire found their way to labor studies, or more confident that they will have great success in the future.

Shane Tendler

Shane Tendler is an outstanding student who has put his research and writing skills to great use in the labor movement while simultaneously earning a 3.95 GPA as a labor studies major. Over the past two years, Shane has worked closely with the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) to create a timeline of the union's history, and

he has helped prepare archival materials and historical analysis for history workshops for BTU members. Shane will surely shine in whatever role he finds after graduation, and we are thrilled to send such a talented researcher and writer out into the world as a labor studies graduate.

The Clara Estow Award in Latin American and Iberian Studies

(Latin American and Iberian Studies Department)

A renowned scholar in Castilian Medieval history, Professor Clara Estow dedicated four decades of her life to UMass Boston and the Department of Hispanic Studies (1968–2008). During that time, Professor Estow gathered accolades for her inspiring teaching, her generous mentoring of junior faculty, her scholarly rigor, and her dedication to improving public education in Massachusetts. Her teaching effectiveness and her capacity for mentorship were proverbial. She inspired many students to become teachers and scholars. She showed an extraordinary teaching range and flexibility. Her accomplishments in scholarship were equally outstanding. Professor Estow authored several widely respected books in her field as well as dozens of articles and essays on a number of topics. Professor Estow was repeatedly selected by her peers to represent them on the campus' most significant committees and governance structures. She was the first Hispanic person to lead UMass Boston's Faculty Council.

In gratitude for Professor Estow's tireless, generous, and inspiring academic work on behalf of UMass Boston, her colleagues, upon her retirement, established an award in her honor. The Clara Estow Award is awarded to a junior or a graduating senior who has shown excellence, determination, and inspiration in his or her academic work in Hispanic studies.

Maggy Ball

Maggy Ball embodies the qualities of the Clara Estow Prize: academic excellence, determination, and inspiration in Latin American and Iberian Studies.

Having joined the university amid the COVID pandemic, she is graduating as a Latin American & Iberian studies major, a secondary education minor, and a member of the Honors College. Maggy is always on target and always on time, despite the challenges.

Maggy Ball loves knowledge, learning, and understanding. From as long as she can remember, she knew she wanted to be a teacher, to help

others learn and understand why things are the way they are. She fell in love with Spanish in high school and chose to continue studying and learning in college. She knew she had reached the highest level of fluency when she was able to read, understand, and enjoy Don Quixote de la Mancha in the original 17th-century Spanish version, and when she spent a wonderful Summer alone in Salamanca (Spain). Maggy Ball will forever be grateful for the wonderful professors, staff, and friends she made at UMass Boston, especially those in the Latin American and Iberian Studies Department. And they, in turn, will forever be grateful for her presence in their lives.

Lee Murray

Lee Murray, a lifelong Boston resident, has always had a deep passion for music and languages. His studies in Latin American & Iberian studies, along with a minor in French, have helped him refine his proficiency in both Spanish and French. At UMass Boston, Lee discovered a welcoming and supportive academic environment, formed lasting friendships, and developed a new interest in computer technology. He is currently pursuing various IT certifications to build on this interest. Lee is optimistic that

combining his multilingual abilities with his growing tech skills will help him navigate and contribute meaningfully to our rapidly evolving world. He believes consistent practice is key to growth—whether it is maintaining the coordination to play guitar, integrating new vocabulary in the languages he masters, or understanding concepts like subnet masks. Grateful for the opportunities and support he has received, Lee is proud to complete his degree and join UMass Boston's dynamic and diverse alumni community.

The María Luisa Osorio Award

(Latin American and Iberian Studies Department)

The María-Luisa Osorio Prize is named in recognition of the many contributions of a colleague, who taught in the Hispanic Studies Department from 1967 to 1995. One of Professor Osorio's most passionate academic interests was the role of women in Spanish society, more specifically, the images of women in Spanish literature. Grateful for her wise and dedicated leadership, her colleagues, upon her retirement, established this prize in her honor, to be awarded to a graduating Spanish major who has written an outstanding paper on the topic of women in Spanish-language literatures or who has demonstrated academic excellence and an active interest in promoting greater understanding of the role of women in the Spanish-speaking world.

Andrea Flores Dueñas

Andrea Stephanie Flores Dueñas's journey from El Salvador to the United States began with a dream—the American Dream—and an unwavering determination to build a better future. As a first-generation college student, she has faced and overcome numerous challenges, from learning English to navigating life in a new country. Through resilience and faith, she has transformed those obstacles into opportunities for growth.

At UMass Boston, Andrea found academic purpose and personal empowerment. Her studies in Latin American literatures and cultures deepened her pride in her heritage and amplified her commitment to uplifting marginalized voices, especially those of Latin American women. Courses such as Exile: Latin

America, Educating Women, Autobiography, and Don Quixote shaped her understanding of identity, exile, and cultural belonging.

Andrea has also made a meaningful impact outside the classroom. Through her work with the Framingham Adult ESL program at Milford High School, she has supported English learners whose journeys mirror her own. Her passion for education continues to grow as she prepares to teach at the high school level and ultimately pursue a career in higher education.

She is especially grateful to Professor Reyes Coll-Tellechea for her mentorship and to her family for their sacrifices. Receiving the María Luisa Osorio Award is a powerful affirmation of her journey and future aspirations.

John J. Conlon Prize in Theatre Arts (Performing Arts Department)

The John J. Conlon Prize recognizes outstanding service to the Theatre Arts Program in honor of Professor John Conlon, distinguished scholar, theatrical director/performer, and dedicated educator of UMass Boston theatre arts students. Throughout his long career at UMass Boston, Professor Conlon inspired and mentored both faculty and students alike while always encouraging active participation in the lively arts and setting an inspirational example with his tireless service to the department, university, and community. The John J. Conlon Prize recognizes a graduating senior who best exemplifies this spirit of dedication and service to the theatre arts, fellow students, and the community.

Jessica (Jes) Boyajian

Jessica (Jes) Boyajian was selected to receive this special prize because they have exuded nothing but the utmost dedication and enthusiastic service to theatre arts, their fellow students, and the university community. A double-major in theatre arts and classics and graduating with Senior Theatre Honors in Costume Design, Jes maintained their extraordinary academic record while also displaying tremendous leadership and generosity of spirit. Involved in every theatre production from acting onstage (in shows such as *Radium Girls* and *Rhinoceros*) to stage management of NVNS and backstage; Jes was assistant costume designer for three shows: *The Annual Dance Concert*, *Clue*, and *Peter and*

the Starcatcher, selected for a CLA Performing Arts Internship in Costume Design for *Clue*. Jes has represented us at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival multiple times, presenting performances and research as an actor, stage manager, and technician, and recently represented us at the United States Institute for Theatre Technology's National Conference. Jes has been a dependable and trusted ensemble member to every classmate, castmate or crewmate they have collaborated with. A fearless peer mentor, advocating and supporting fellow students, Jes has earned the deepest respect of students and faculty alike.

Louis E. Roberts Prize in Theatre Arts

(Performing Arts Department)

The Louis E. Roberts Prize is named for the founder and mainstay of the Theatre Arts Program, who is presently professor emeritus of theatre arts. An accomplished actor, a versatile director, a prolific playwright, and, above all, an inspirational teacher, Lou Roberts led the Theatre Arts Program for three decades and made it a place where the lively art of theatre in all of its aspects thrives.

In recognizing the Louis E. Roberts Prize recipient, the theatre arts faculty honors and celebrates the graduating senior who has best combined academic excellence with artistic excellence in theatre.

Aidan Butler

Aidan Butler exemplified all aspects of the Louis E. Roberts Award with his outstanding academic and artistic record. Graduating with Theatre Honors and a GPA of 4.0, Aidan's professors expressed their admiration for his intelligence, critical thinking and dedication in the classroom. Artistically, he has also cultivated tremendous skills, onstage as an actor, and backstage, he has worked his way up from stitcher to wardrobe head to firsthand of the costume shop, a trusted leader. His commitment to the department's theatre productions was impressive, with acting roles that continued to grow in size and artistry: *Working, the Musical, The Government Inspector,*

Rhinoceros, Radium Girls, Clue, and Peter & the Starcatcher, where he played Black Stache. Nominated to attend the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival for the last two years, he performed extraordinarily as a scene partner in the 2025 Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship final round, winning high praise. He won a CLA Performing Arts Internship for the year and completed a Senior Theatre Honors in Design and Dramaturgy. Aidan exhibited professionalism throughout his studies, and with his tireless work ethic and desire for artistic growth, he has earned the top praise of all the theatre arts faculty.

Martin Andic Prize for Distinction in Philosophy (Philosophy Department)

This prize is given in memory of Professor Martin Andic, a member of the Philosophy Department between 1971 and 2001. Much loved as a classroom teacher, Professor Andic was renowned for the range and breadth of his courses. He taught ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy, in addition to nineteenth-century philosophy, the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of religion, metaphysics, and the philosophy of science. His interest in literature allowed him to include thinkers such as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Iris Murdoch on his syllabi. Professor Andic's research was equally far-ranging. He published on Greek philosophy, medieval philosophy, moral psychology, and religion as well as on particular thinkers such as Kierkegaard and the twentieth-century French philosopher Simone Weil.

Emma Johnson

As a philosophy major, Emma Johnson was an utterly superb student—the very sort of student who makes teachers love teaching. She always mastered the required readings in such extreme detail that, with no apparent effort on her part, she could be counted on to articulate and to elaborate on exactly how, for example, this medieval philosopher and that medieval philosopher differed radically in their respective conceptions of God's knowledge and its relation to God's essence.

Emma was a constant fixture of the Philosophy Club for six semesters, serving as vice president and then as president during her senior year.

Under her presidency, the number of students attending the weekly club meetings—twenty-five or so—reached a near all-time high. This was no coincidence: as president, she created a welcoming atmosphere at the club—a welcoming, intellectual atmosphere—designed to guarantee that attendees would return week after week. She herself made five first-rate presentations to the club.

Emma graduates with a 3.84 GPA. Having been accepted by two law schools and wait-listed at two others, she will be entering law school this fall as a student who will see the legal universe through the sharpest of decidedly philosophical lenses.

Roger Feinstein Award for Distinction in Public Policy (Political Science Department)

This award honors the memory of Roger Feinstein, a political science faculty member at UMass Boston (and, before then, at Boston State College) who inspired deep affection and respect among his many students and colleagues. With the help of Roger's family and friends, the Political Science Department established the award in 2005 to recognize a graduating senior who has demonstrated particular academic excellence in the field of state and local government and exemplified the personal qualities that made Roger so beloved a human being. His voluminous knowledge of public administration and state and local government was based not only on book smarts but also on his depth of experience working in civic and town associations that focused on environmental and international justice. Roger extended the classroom experience to the civic realm by taking his students to the meetings and events of myriad nonprofit and governmental groups—literally opening students' eyes to the fruits and frustrations of engaged citizenship. Accordingly, the Feinstein Award salutes a graduating senior whose activities inside and outside the classroom have reflected the same unwavering commitment to fostering a more empathic, respectful, and humane society that Roger's life's work did.

Cole Francis Mansfield

Cole Mansfield is a shining example of what a political science student can be. In his major coursework and beyond, Cole has earned an astonishing perfect GPA in his classes at UMass Boston. He has excelled within his chosen discipline, from international relations to legislative processes and public policy. Indeed, the realm of policy engagement is where he truly shines. Cole takes a broad view of the subject, completing coursework on social welfare, civil liberties, and the Black Lives Matter movement,

within political science and in related departments such as history, sociology, and Africana studies. Cole's inclination toward paralegal work and a potential law degree follows naturally from his studies and his desire to engage with institutions, changing them for the better. The worlds of law, government, and policy will be much improved with Cole's contributions. He has a bright future, and we look forward to hearing all about his accomplishments.

Maurizio Vannicelli Award for Distinction in International Relations *(Political Science Department, International Relations)*

In 1992, the Political Science Department established this award, to be given to the graduating senior who best exemplifies the spirit of Maurizio Vannicelli, one of the finest students ever to graduate from the department. Like many other UMass Boston students, Maurizio came to this campus at age 26 with an uncertain sense of himself. Helped by many dedicated teachers here, he soon found a creative and stimulating channel for his energies. He went on to graduate training at Harvard University on a full fellowship and became a dedicated teacher and scholar himself, touching hundreds of students in his decade of energetic work as a teacher. Maurizio's career exemplifies what is best at UMass Boston. In memorializing his name with this book award, we hope that his passionate dedication to learning, teaching, and social justice will continue to inspire others for years to come.

William Paul McElroy

Will McElroy is a quietly brilliant student whose reserved manner hides a sharp intellect and a terrific instinct for asking good questions. His skill in the classroom is reflected in nearly perfect grades in his political science classes as well as a Classroom Leadership Award from the Honors College. Will's honors thesis in political science thoughtfully explores the importance of national image and the way countries build soft power through their manipulation of cultural

symbols. Outside the classroom, Will has served as president of the UMass Boston Model United Nations Club. The club grew and excelled under his guidance, winning the Best Delegation Award at the 2024 Five College Model UN Conference. Will is fluent in French and skilled in policy analysis. After graduation, he intends to pursue graduate studies as preparation for a career in public service. The Political Science Department looks forward proudly to his future success.

Award for Outstanding International Relations Major

(Political Science Department, International Relations)

The Award for Outstanding International Relations Major pays tribute to former long-standing faculty members who were exemplary scholars, teachers, advisors, and mentors. It is given to outstanding students who distinguished themselves in their interests in understanding the challenges facing our global world, in their grasp of the dynamics of international relations, and in their commitment to fostering peace and justice.

Natalia Kiralova

Natalia describes herself as “passionate about the interconnectedness of countries through international affairs and global business.” This is evident in her educational pursuits, where she is not only a student in the Political Science Department and the Honors College, but is currently pursuing a master’s in business administration. It is also evident in her work as a global ambassador for the university, helping other students look for options to study abroad.

More than anything, though, this shows up in the classroom, in the rigor of her writing, in the questions she asks, the insights her work pursues, and the insatiable curiosity that is the hallmark of a budding scholar. We are proud that Natalia will graduate with a political science degree. We commend her for that and look forward to hearing about her many future accomplishments and the places her passion will take her.

Richard J. Landry Award for Distinction in Political Theory (Political Science Department)

The Richard J. Landry Award is given to the graduating senior whose work in the field of political theory exemplifies the scholarly standards and humane ideals of Richard Landry, who taught political theory in the Political Science Department until his death in 1973. Professor Landry, who received his education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the University of Chicago, and Cornell University, was a brilliant scholar and teacher, familiar with both Western and Chinese political theory. In the memorial for Professor Landry, Professor Glenn Tinder of the Political Science Department wrote, "In the classroom, he brought together two qualities that do not always readily go together: thorough scholarly rectitude and great popular appeal. His demands on his classes were as uncompromising as his demands as a scholar on himself; yet his courses were always filled with admiring and appreciative students." The recipient of the Landry Award must be a student whose work is distinguished by high intellectual quality and breadth. It is not necessarily awarded each year.

Lauren Marie Nessralla

Lauren Nessralla represents the finest spirit of a critical theorist, someone who is interested in understanding how a conceptual framework can be mobilized to transform the world in an emancipatory direction. Her interests are broad and range from animal rights, queer of color critiques, decolonial liberation, social justice, labor struggles, political identity in the Middle East and the diaspora, and global solidarity. She is fluent in multiple genres of political theory, skillfully weaving together themes from postcolonial, feminist, and Marxist theory,

among others, to challenge established wisdom and to advocate for the disempowered. Her unique and powerful poetic voice never fails to leave its mark. Hardworking, eager to learn, generous with her knowledge, and well-grounded in the collective visions of social movements and grassroots organizations, theory and praxis are joyful comrades in her spirit. Our department is proud to have played a role in cultivating Lauren's spirit, and we are confident that we will continue to celebrate her accomplishments for many years to come.

Adrian Jill Barnett Memorial Prize for Academic Excellence (Psychology Department)

Through the generosity of the Barnett family, each year the Department of Psychology awards the Adrian Jill Barnett Memorial Prize in honor of Adrian Jill Barnett, a psychology major, who was killed while riding her bicycle in Cambridge shortly after graduating with distinction from UMass Boston in 1977. Adrian was a research assistant in the Psychology Department and intended to carry her studies on to graduate school. The Barnett Prize is awarded to a psychology major each year on the basis of academic excellence as represented by the quality of a paper submitted for this competition. Interested students must be nominated by a faculty member in the Department of Psychology and submit a 10- to 30-page paper to the prize committee for evaluation. The paper may be a theoretical paper, a literature review, or a research study. Papers are judged with regard to organization, thoroughness, clarity, and originality. In addition to the award, the prize includes the inscription of the winner's name on a plaque displayed permanently in the department office.

Darlene Santana Batista

The winner of this year's Adrian Jill Barnett Memorial Prize for Excellence in Psychology Writing is Darlene Santana Batista. The Barnett Prize is awarded for excellence in psychology writing and was established in memory of Adrian Jill Barnett, a psychology major and Honors student who was tragically killed in a traffic accident shortly after her graduation. Darlene graduated in December 2024 with a BA in psychology and minors in anthropology and communication. She has served as a Youth Leader at the Boston COC Youth Council, connecting youth to necessary resources and mental health services and advocating for equitable resource distribution. She was also

a Spanish tutor for the Spanish Resource Center at the UMass Boston library, where she supported students through experiencing academic and emotional distress by creating a safe and encouraging space for learning. Darlene was an excellent research apprentice for the Early Minds Lab as well as for Dr. Liz Roemer's lab. As part of her research experience with Dr. Roemer and Lisa Nakamura, her doctoral student mentor, Darlene wrote an impressive, comprehensive literature review, "*Barriers in Mental Healthcare within the Latino Community in the US*," which demonstrates her commitment to addressing systemic inequity in the field of psychology.

Ina Samuels Memorial Prize

(Psychology Department)

The Ina Samuels Memorial Prize is in memory of Professor Ina Samuels, who was a member of the Psychology Department for over twenty-five years until she passed away in 1998. This award is made possible by an endowment established through Dr. Samuels's estate and faculty, student, and alumni contributions. Professor Samuels taught a broad range of courses, specializing in physiological psychology and neuropsychology. She was an extraordinarily effective and inspiring teacher and a superb research mentor dedicated to fostering the personal and professional development of her students.

This award honors a student whose research proposal or research report is judged to be of such high quality as to have met Ina's criteria of scholarly evidence.

Connor Triehey

The winner of this year's Samuels Award is Connor Triehey. The Samuels Award is given for excellence in psychology writing in the form of a research proposal or the reporting of a completed research project. Connor will be graduating in May with a bachelor of arts in psychology and from the Honors College. He will be attending Salem State in the fall to pursue his master's in social work. His paper titled, "*Association of Socioeconomic Status with Perceptions of Nicotine Product Harm among Older Adults Who Smoke*," was completed as part of his psychology senior honors thesis in collaboration with Dr. Jaqueline Contrera Avila in gerontology and under the

mentorship of Dr. Laurel Wainwright in psychology. For his thesis, Connor conducted a secondary analysis of survey data from a randomized trial and found that among older adults who smoke, having lower SES was associated with more misperceptions regarding the harms of e-cigarettes relative to traditional cigarettes. His paper was an interesting, well-written, and thorough description of his research, with promising implications for improving harm-reduction efforts and reducing health disparities for smoking-related outcomes among older adults with lower SES.

T. Scott Miyakawa Memorial Prize (Sociology Department)

The T. Scott Miyakawa Memorial Prize provides recognition for the lifetime work and career of Scott Miyakawa, a distinguished scholar and leader. During his time at UMass Boston, Professor Miyakawa served as chair of the Sociology Department for six years. He also served countless students as a teacher and mentor. Although he was taken from us too early, he is remembered most often as simply a wonderful person. The Miyakawa Memorial Prize is presented annually to a student who embodies the ideals of Professor Miyakawa—excellence in academics and social service.

Kaitlyn Schraffa

Kaitlyn Schraffa, a double major in sociology and psychology, credits UMass Boston with shaping her understanding of the world and instilling a determination to effect positive change for children and families. Through the Psychology Department, Kaitlyn interned with Head Start, working with underserved and low-income children and families to provide support and care. She found it gratifying to be a TA in the very community center where she attended events and lessons as a child. As a volunteer for the suicide call center in her hometown, Kaitlyn learned crisis management and provided essential support and comfort. This difficult but rewarding work solidified her commitment to aiding people in distress to survive and eventually

thrive. Additionally, Kaitlyn worked as a research assistant for Dean David Pantalone, assisting with qualitative research concerning the experiences of trans and non-binary youths. As a first-generation student and a commuter student, Kaitlyn appreciated being able to connect with and draw inspiration from UMass Boston students from similar backgrounds. Immediately after graduation, Kaitlyn plans to work in local communities through the Behavioral Health Service Corps at William James College. Long-term goals include pursuing a master's in social work, receiving licensure, and opening her own community and family-based counseling practice.

Founders' Award for Excellence in Women's Studies and Social Activism (Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department)

This award is given annually to a women's, gender and sexuality studies graduate who has achieved academic excellence in all coursework and contributed to the improvement of the status of women at UMass Boston or in the wider community. Students are invited to apply for the award by submitting a personal statement or letter of recommendation from someone who has a thorough knowledge of the applicant's record of social activism. Social activism is defined broadly in determining eligibility for the award. Examples of social activism include working with schoolchildren to promote understanding of gender differences or enhance girls' self-esteem, advocacy on behalf of women who are victims of violence, or organizing public educational campaigns in support of women's rights or particular policy reforms that will benefit women and families.

Initiated in 1990 by Mary Anne Ferguson, professor emerita of English and women's studies, the Founders' Award fund is supported by contributions from faculty, alumnae, and friends of women's studies.

Anjelika Macaibay

The Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality (WGS) Studies presents Anjelika Macaibay with this year's Founders' Award for her commitment to academic excellence and service. As a WGS major, Anjelika has applied her academic learning to various service opportunities. As an intern at Megara Bell, Anjelika promoted access to menstrual health and conducted sexual education advocacy. Anjelika's commitment was further illustrated when she contributed inclusive puberty education materials to the Brookline Public School's health manual.

Anjelika has worked as both a peer mentor and a peer mentor lead at the Center for Academic

Excellence at UMass Boston. She has also served as a Resident Assistant, serving a diverse community of students with a range of issues, including peer conflicts, mental health crises, and identity-based challenges.

Anjelika displays a keen attention to problem solving, especially in areas of gender equity and self-expression, mental health initiatives, and promoting well-being among youth. She does this work by jumping right in. We wish her all the best as she graduates and hope she successfully pursues her goal of further studies in the field of social service.

Asha Lawrence

The Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality (WGS) Studies proudly presents Asha Lawrence with this award for academic excellence and social activism. Asha interned at On the Rise in Cambridge, MA, a shelter and advocacy organization for homeless and formerly homeless women and transgender/non-binary individuals. Asha is also a volunteer with Warm Up Boston and Food Not Bombs, which do weekly food and personal supply distributions to vulnerable and unhoused people in Boston and Cambridge.

Asha completed the WGS major, and minors in queer & trans studies and communication. One

of her professors remarked, "They write beautifully and powerfully, demonstrating strong critical thinking, as well as creativity and elegance in the construction of their essays. I found myself giving them grades of A+ on some papers, trying to signal their intellectual sophistication, political nuance, and wisdom." In addition, Asha has demonstrated their many talents as both a peer educator on safe sex and as treasurer of UMass Boston's first Queer History Club. In a time where LGBTQ+ rights are under threat, we commend Asha for their ongoing academic work and investment in social justice.

The Human Rights Award

(Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department)

This award is presented upon graduation to one or more student(s) graduating with a minor in human rights, in recognition of honorees' academic excellence and commitment to human rights and social justice. Awardees are typically students who have achieved the highest or second highest GPA, and who have supported human rights causes at an individual level or collectively, in the US or globally, during their time at UMass Boston. The Director of the Human Rights Minor receives nominations from faculty who have taught a potential awardee, following a review of the entire list of students graduating with a human rights minor in a given academic year.

This Award was established in 2018 by the minor's founding director, Professor Elora Chowdhury. It is funded from the minor's annual core budget from the College of Liberal Arts.

Skyllah Alexander

Skyllah is an exceptional student whose academic excellence is matched by her unwavering dedication to social justice and community engagement. Her analytical rigor and curiosity drive her to critically examine systems of power and to actively contribute to a more just and inclusive society. Skyllah exemplifies human rights ideals through both her scholarship and action, demonstrating how knowledge and empathy can intersect to foster tangible change.

On campus, Skyllah has not only excelled academically but also embraced her responsibility as a civic leader through MASSPIRG, a student-led advocacy organization. She participated in initiatives to make textbooks more affordable,

ensuring equitable access to learning resources, and mobilized students to participate in the democratic process by mobilizing people to vote, especially at the right time.

In 2021, she was a Green Ambassador and played a pivotal role in the creation of green spaces across Boston during the COVID pandemic, an initiative featured on the "Bettering Boston" platform. Her work provided vital access to outdoor spaces for communities disproportionately affected by isolation and environmental inequality. Overall, Skyllah embodies the spirit of this award through her academic insight and a sustained drive to uplift others.

