

To the Board:

I am honored to present this quarterly report highlighting the University of Massachusetts Boston's recent achievements.

I am pleased to announce that Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell will deliver the keynote address at UMass Boston's commencement in May. As a proud graduate of Boston Latin School and Boston Public Schools, Attorney General Campbell recognizes the significance of public education and higher education in preparing and inspiring the next generation of leaders in Boston and the Commonwealth.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education recently recognized UMass Boston as an R1 research institution, its highest designation for research. This recognition validates our significant efforts in recent years to enhance core research facilities and build cross-sector partnerships that strengthen faculty and student scholarship. Furthermore, the R1 designation places UMass Boston on a clear path to continue producing high-impact research for the benefit of Boston, the Commonwealth, and the world. (right)

On March 4-5, I led a workshop of The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences on Artificial Intelligence, Justice, and Democracy at the Vatican, bringing together leading experts from various domains of inquiry and practice, including Massachusetts' Hon. Yvonne Hao, Secretary of the Executive Office of Economic Development, the Hon. Jason Snyder, Secretary of the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security, UMass Boston Professor Michael Ahn, and many other scholars and practitioners to examine the impact of AI on society, focusing on the administration of justice, the practice of democratic citizenship, and the dignity of work. (p. 9)

Last fall, UMass Boston's Stone Living Lab led the first-ever installation in the U.S. of Living Seawalls panels, which are designed to create habitats for marine life on what would otherwise be inhospitable flood barriers. The 240 Living Seawalls at the Condor Street Urban Wild in East Boston and Fan Pier in South Boston aim to increase biodiversity, improve water quality, and reduce wave impact. (p. 3)

I trust you will appreciate this report on our progress.

—Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco



In fiscal year 2024, UMass Boston reported \$81.1 million in annual research funding.

UMass Boston Is Named Top Tier Research University

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education has recognized UMass Boston with its top designation for research. The new 2025 Carnegie Classification designation names UMass Boston an R1 research institution with “very high research activity—very high spending and doctorate production.”

“In higher education, we frequently discuss research that expands the ‘frontiers’ of knowledge, drives economic and social progress, and spurs innovation,” said Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco. “This R1 designation places UMass Boston on a clear path to deliver high-impact research for the benefit of the city of Boston, the commonwealth, and the world. Furthermore, this recognition affirms the university’s strong commitment to enhancing core facilities and forging cross-sector partnerships that amplify the research produced by our extraordinary faculty, staff, and students.”

UMass Boston has long maintained a commitment to research that generates new knowledge that both explores critical areas of inquiry and addresses complex challenges of our times, from climate resilience to health equity to education for all. For many years, the university has been designated an R2 research institution, which

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Increase Endowment

New Generosity from Long-term Benefactors

Longtime UMass Boston supporters Christine '76 and Alan Huber, who have given to the university over almost three decades, made a new \$500,000 gift to the university in November. Their gift adds \$400,000 to their existing Huber Family Endowed Scholarship and contributes \$100,000 in current-use funds to the Stone Living Lab. The couple has made three donations to the lab since its launch in fall 2020 and established their scholarship fund with a \$30,000 gift in 2018.

The Hubers' most recent generosity was particularly inspired by the communications they receive from recipients of the Huber Family Scholarship, which is open to all UMass Boston students who are in good academic standing and have financial need. The new gift will extend the scholarship's impact to many more students each year, in perpetuity.

Christine Huber, who was a sociology major at the university, has felt UMass Boston's transformative impact herself. "UMass Boston changed my life forever. I wouldn't have attended college if UMass Boston didn't exist," Huber has said. "I have been very fortunate to be in a position to give back to UMass Boston for all that it gave me."

Two New Foundation Grants Support Climate Resiliency

Two foundations have made major gifts to UMass Boston's Sustainable Solutions Lab (SSL) this winter to advance community-engaged climate research and green workforce development.

The Barr Foundation granted SSL \$700,000 over two years to support and elevate the Sustainable Solutions Lab's climate resilience efforts. The grant will be used toward SSL's core operating and program expenses and will also fund the development of new programs. These include a community-engagement program and climate justice research through SSL's Climate Inequality and Integrative Resilience (CLIIR) Center initiative, which focuses on climate migration, climate and health, and Indigenous knowledge and governance. This new funding builds from the Barr Foundation's prior three-year, \$1,050,000 grant to SSL.

The Sustainable Solutions Lab will also receive \$540,000 over three years from the Liberty Mutual Foundation to fund SSL's Climate Careers Curricula (C3) initiative. Building on the university's existing academic programs and recently developed microcredential program in wind energy, C3 will develop microcredentialed trainings for a broad range of jobs in the sustainability sector, including areas such as solar installation, energy auditing, green building techniques, and climate resilience planning. Through community partners and City of Boston affiliates, these trainings will target vulnerable young adults, people of color, and low-income adults currently underrepresented in blue and green jobs, creating economic opportunities for vulnerable populations and building community capacity to address climate challenges directly.

These credentials will be stackable, allowing participants to build a comprehensive skill set over time, and will align with industry-recognized certifications. C3 will also work toward bundling the microcredentials to attain college credits for participants interested in acquiring formal degrees.

Charitable Trust Supports Music Students with Scholarships and New Equipment

A gift from the Murray Burnstine Charitable Trust has had a remarkable impact on the university's music students. To date, \$100,000 in scholarships have been awarded to 55 music majors with financial need. An estimated \$50,000 in new instruments, accessories, and equipment has been acquired, including state-of-the-art audio production technology to support a new Audio Production Course.

Murray Burnstine was a mechanical engineer and lifelong musician, playing in bands and local orchestras throughout his life. He created the trust to support opportunities for young people to advance their musical studies.

Cover Story (cont.)

signifies "high research activity—high spending and doctorate production." The new R1 classification is a major reputational advancement for UMass Boston that will aid in attracting new research funds and recruiting accomplished faculty researchers and graduate students.

In fiscal year 2024, UMass Boston reported \$81.1 million in annual research funding, a 31% increase over the previous four years. Research expenditures grew to \$71.34 million, a 33.7% increase over the previous four years. Doctoral degrees conferred have reached record levels over the past four years, totaling 110 in 2024, nearly double the number a decade ago.

Strengthen the University's Research and Development Enterprise



Students and researchers admire the new Living Seawalls habitat panels at the Condor Street Urban Wild in East Boston

Stone Living Lab Installs North America's First Living Seawalls at Two Boston Harbor Sites

The Stone Living Lab installed North America's first Living Seawalls habitat panels at two locations on Boston Harbor last fall. The panels are specially designed to create habitat for marine life to flourish on what would otherwise be inhospitable flood barriers.

The Condor Street Urban Wild in East Boston and Fan Pier in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood are now home to 240 Living Seawalls panels, which mimic beneficial natural habitats like rock pools. The project is exploring how Living Seawalls panels can help increase biodiversity and abundance of ocean life, improve water quality, and potentially soften wave impact while also mitigating the environmental downsides of existing seawalls.

The Stone Living Lab is a Boston-based research partnership led by Boston Harbor Now and UMass Boston, along with city, state, federal, and Indigenous partners.

Living Seawalls is a flagship program of Australia's Sydney Institute of Marine Science and was a finalist for the 2021 Earthshot Prize, an annual award launched by Prince William and Princess Catherine, the prince and princess of Wales, to search for and scale up the most innovative solutions to the world's greatest environmental challenges.



Eric Cornell (left) being introduced by the event organizer and CSM Professor Robin Côté (right).

International Quantum Information Science Workshop Brings Together Physics Experts for Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration

Researchers from the nuclear physics (NP); atomic, molecular, and optical (AMO) physics; and quantum information science and engineering (QISE) communities came together at UMass Boston for a three-day Quantum Information Science (QIS) Workshop in January.

The first international workshop of its kind to explore the overlap in QIS between NP and AMO physics was organized through UMass Boston's new Data and Quantum Science Center ("DataQS Center") by Physics Professors Robin Côté of UMass Boston and Kyungseon Joo of the University of Connecticut.

The event convened researchers from three fields that usually do not have common meetings. The unique opportunity enabled attendees to share their approaches with each other, and to identify and discuss fundamental questions and experimental applications in each field that could help and benefit the others in their work.

Participants represented more than 30 institutions within the United States and abroad and included a number of leaders from academic institutions and national laboratories such as Lawrence Berkeley, Argonne, and Pacific Northwest.

The QIS Workshop is an example of UMass Boston's growth trajectory in QISE that has also included the creation of the new DataQS Center, receiving a \$5 million National Science Foundation ExpandQISE award, and the success of the Quantum Hardware Development & Commercialization Core Facility.

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

University Research Awards for the Past Quarter

PI Melissa Pearrow/Counseling and School Psychology received \$2,500,000 from MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services (Sub from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) for *Application for CMS State Grants for the Implementation, Enhancement, and Expansion of Medicaid and CHIP School-Based Services*.

PI Changmeng Cai/Center for Personalized Cancer Therapy received \$2,108,677 from the NIH - National Cancer Center Institute for *Noncanonical Activities of SETD7 in Preventing Prostate Cancer Progression and Therapy Resistance*.

PI Jonathan Celli/Physics received \$1,998,978 from Light Research, Inc. (Sub from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) for *Mobile Oral-Cancer Screening and Treatment (MOST) System for Low-Resource Settings*.

PI Kelly Ann Haines/Institute Community Inclusion received \$1,800,000 from the Administration for Community Living for *Center on Scaling Up Progressive Employment (PE): Promoting Competitive Integrated Employment for Jobseekers with Disabilities and Meeting Needs of Businesses in the Community*.

PIs Robin Côté and Joseph Noel/Dean's Office, Sciences and Mathematics received \$1,665,595 from U.S. Department of Education for *University of Massachusetts Boston McNair Program*.

PI Edward Miller/Gerontology Institute received \$1,485,506 from the University of Minnesota (Sub from NIH-National Institute on Aging) for *Alberth - Training the Long-Term Services and Supports Dementia Care Workforce in Provision of Care to Sexual and Gender Minority Residents*.

PI Robert Chen/School for the Environment received \$1,483,479 from the Office of Naval Research for *Inclusion and Belonging in Ocean Science (IBOS) Collaborative: The East Coast Division of the D-ENTERPRISE Initiative-UMass Boston*.

PI Callie Brusegaard Zube/School for Global Inclusion and Social Development received \$1,250,000 from U.S. Department of Education for *A New Vision Forward: Diverse Personnel Preparation for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments*.

PI Callie Brusegaard Zube/School for Global Inclusion and Social Development received \$1,249,995 from U.S. Department of Education for *Diverse Personnel Preparation for Related Services in Assistive Technology for People with Visual Impairments*.

PI Anne Douglass/Institute for Early Education received \$1,216,666 from the MA Department of Early Education and Care for *Early Childhood Support Organization (ECSO)*.

PI Callie Brusegaard Zube/School for Global Inclusion and Social Development received \$1,035,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Increasing Access to Quality Braille Instruction for Diverse Populations*.

PI Anne Douglass/Institute for Early Education received \$1,000,000 from City of Boston for *Cohort 2 Growing the Early Education and Care Workforce*.

PI Cedric Woods/Institute for New England Native American Studies received \$796,016 from the University of Connecticut (sub from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) for *New England Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Center (NE EJ TCTAC)*.

PI Cedric Woods/Institute for New England Native American Studies received \$750,000 from the MA Department of Public Health (sub from SAMHS) for *Lifting Up Indigenous Voices in Creating and Delivering Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Services*.

PI Balakrishnan Balachandran/Sustainable Solutions Lab received \$540,000 from University of Massachusetts Foundation (sub from Liberty Mutual) for *Climate Careers Curricula Initiative (C3 Initiative)*.

PI Fabian Torres-Ardila/Gastón Institute received \$500,000 from the MA Department of Public Health (sub from SAMHS) for *Canala 2024*.

PI DeBrittany Mitchell/Institute Community Inclusion received \$499,999 from the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services for *Pathways to Partnerships Innovative Model Demonstration Project*.

PI Juliet Girard/Biology received \$457,500 from the NIH - National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for *Dissecting the Mechanisms Through Which Wnt5 Signaling Influences Hematopoiesis*.

PI Labib Rouhana/Biology received \$457,500 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for *Discovery of Germline Genes and Regulatory Networks in Planarians*.

PI Bela Torok/Chemistry received \$457,500 from NIH-National Institute of General Medical Science for *Green Synthesis of Building Blocks and APIs by High Hydrostatic Pressure-initiated Synthesis*.

PI Benjamin Johnson/History received \$300,000 from National Endowment for the Humanities for *THE TLALAMATL CUAXICALA: A Cuadrilingual Mesoamerican Hieroglyphic Text that Remains a Living Document in its Home Community Nearly 500 Years Later*.

PI Melissa Pearrow/Counseling and School Psychology received \$300,000 from the MA Department of Mental Health for *Bipartisan Safe Communities Act: Crisis Response and Intervention Training*.

Improve Delivery of Administration and IT Services



Katherine Dafforn

University Announces New Co-Director of Stone Living Lab

Leading international environmental scientist Katherine Dafforn has joined UMass Boston as the Distinguished Professor of Coastal Resilience in the School for the Environment and as co-director of the Stone Living Lab.

Dafforn is recognized for her contributions to coastal ecology, particularly understanding and managing urban impacts in marine systems and developing nature-based solutions to climate change. She cofounded the Living Seawalls project, which uses panels installed on seawalls and other built structures around the world that encourage native habitat-forming species to counter the adverse effects of climate change.

She recently served as associate professor in the School of Natural Sciences at Macquarie University and as deputy director of the Sydney Harbour Research Program at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science. In her new role at Stone Living Lab, Dafforn will lead the research and monitoring activities, long-term planning, and fundraising for the lab.

Recreation Sees a 20 Percent Increase in Engagement

UMass Boston Recreation deepened its connection with the campus community through enhanced wellness programs such as the breast cancer awareness event, more inclusive recreational opportunities such as pickleball, and new partnerships that opened doors for greater engagement.

Behind the scenes, operational improvements and streamlined services made for a smoother and more efficient experience for everyone involved. Among the outcomes were increased participation and collaboration across campus. With nearly 5,000 members last fall, Recreation saw students (4,494), faculty (223), and community members (288) coming together, reinforcing the core mission of Recreation: fostering well-being, connection, and personal growth.

UMass Boston Expands Health Access with Emergency Contraception and Naloxone Kits

A new vending machine has been installed in Residence Hall East that provides free access to emergency contraception. The unit is the result of ongoing advocacy that started with a group of nursing students and faculty and has received continued support from the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Governments and the Division of Student Affairs. Along with emergency contraception, information on University Health Services resources and information regarding how to access a medical professional 24 hours a day, 7 days per week is provided on the unit's screen.

In December, University Health Services announced via email the placement of 20 Naloxone Opioid rescue kits next to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) throughout the campus. This initiative is part of the ongoing commitment to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

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

National Science Foundation Funds Engineering Professors' Research Projects

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Engineering Research Initiation (ERI) grant program awarded three UMass Boston engineering professors nearly \$200,000 each for their innovative research.

Engineering professors Rafael Valotta Rodrigues, Michael Rahaim, and Joanna Dahl received grants for their research projects in renewable energy, wireless communication optimization, and lab-grown tissue engineering.

The NSF's Directorate for Engineering created the ERI program with the goal of broadening the number of engineering researchers by limiting the award to those not affiliated with Carnegie-designated R1 institutions (UMass Boston was an R2 institution in 2024). The competitive awards granted to three faculty members speaks to the research strengths of the Engineering Department, the newest in the College of Science and Mathematics.

Enhance the Learning Experience



Student Olivia Moos, a member of the Technovators, answers questions from Paul English and Provost Joseph Berger during the Hackathon presentations.

UMass Boston Hosts Inaugural Paul English Institute AI Symposium and Hackathon

UMass Boston's Paul English AI Institute recently hosted AI for All, an event showcasing an AI Applications Hackathon, student presentations, and a panel discussion, all designed to foster collaboration, creativity, and ethical AI application. The hackathon competition drew 16 interdisciplinary teams of graduate and undergraduate students across the university to develop their innovative ideas that address real-world challenges, everything from health care and education to the tech sector and everyday life, using AI tools and applications.

Four groups were selected to present their ideas to Provost Joseph Berger and distinguished alumnus Paul English '87, G'89, H'19—a tech entrepreneur, cofounder, and philanthropist who founded the university's AI institute. The Technovators won first place for their project Beacon Pathway, developing a user-centered platform to help students navigate academic and career opportunities.

"The purpose of the hackathon isn't just to develop new ideas and new apps and think about how best to apply artificial intelligence; it's about how to help all of us challenge ourselves to learn new skills, new abilities," Berger said.

The hackathon was organized by the AI Institute's Student Advisory Council (SAC), which formed this past spring. The SAC is composed of students across academic disciplines and works closely with the institute's Executive Director and Distinguished Professor of Computer Science Wei Ding to design learning and engagement opportunities for their fellow students.

College of Management Introduces Five New Undergraduate Majors

UMass Boston's College of Management is expanding its undergraduate programs with five new majors, giving students greater opportunities to gain specialized business expertise and stand out in today's competitive job market. Students can now pursue a bachelor of science (BS) in accounting, entrepreneurship, finance, information systems and business analytics, and marketing.

These new majors join the college's Management BS, the college's most popular program, ensuring students have both broad and specialized options to build expertise in high-demand fields and connect with top employers. With hands-on learning, industry-aligned coursework, and access to a strong professional network, graduates will be ready to launch successful careers in business.

"Our goal is to prepare students for the future of business by offering focused programs that blend theory with real-world application," said Venky Venkatachalam, dean of the College of Management. "These new majors will give students the knowledge, confidence, and connections to excel in their careers."

Develop a Leadership Role in Public Service



Lorna Rivera

Gastón Institute Director Appointed to State Commission on the Status of Latinos and Latinas

Lorna Rivera, director of the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy and professor of higher education, has been appointed to the Permanent Commission on the Status of Latinos and Latinas for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a three-year term.

Rivera brings her expertise in community-based research and advocacy to the commission, focusing on empowering Latinx and immigrant communities through research, teaching, and service centered on grassroots, social justice-oriented education, and community development initiatives.

The commission will make policy recommendations, based on research and analysis, to the general court and executive agencies that ensure Latinos and Latinas equitably benefit from and have access to government services; amend laws, policies, and practices that have benefited citizens of the commonwealth to the exclusion of Latinos and Latinas; and promote solutions that address the impact of discrimination against Latinos and Latinas.

Renew the Faculty



Arthur Eisenkraft

Professor Named 2025 NSELA Outstanding Leadership in Science Education Award Winner

Arthur Eisenkraft, distinguished professor of science education and director of the Center of Science and Math in Context (COSMIC) at UMass Boston, has been named the recipient of the 2025 Outstanding Leadership in Science Education (OLISE) Award.

Presented by the National Science Education Leadership Association (NSELA), the award recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional leadership in science education at school, district, regional, national, or international levels. Eisenkraft will be honored at the NSELA Annual Conference in Philadelphia.

With a career spanning over four decades, Eisenkraft has transformed science education through innovative curriculum design, professional development, and leadership initiatives that have impacted educators and students worldwide.

His research encompasses curriculum development and evaluation, problem-based learning, technological literacy, distance learning models, and equity in science instruction. Eisenkraft also contributed to landmark National Research Council (NRC) reports and helped write the National Science Education Standards.

2025 Grawemeyer Education Award Goes to Mark Warren for Book *Willful Defiance*

Professor Mark R. Warren received the 2025 Grawemeyer Award for Education for his work researching and writing *Willful Defiance: The Movement to Dismantle the School-to-Prison Pipeline*, a book that describes and analyzes the building of the grassroots movement to end racially disproportionate school discipline policy and policing practices in schools across the United States.

In the book, Warren shows that some of the first people to name and challenge the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP) in a way that created a movement for change were Black and Brown parents and students of color in places like the Mississippi Delta. The movement they created played a pivotal role in placing the STPP on the agenda of educators and policy makers and led directly to the adoption by the Department of Education of federal guidelines warning against racially discriminatory school discipline policies.



Installation view of Cat Mazza: *Network* at Gallery 360.

Professor Cat Mazza Debuts New Solo Art Exhibition *Network*

Artist and educator Cat Mazza has her first solo exhibition in Boston, *Network*, at Northeastern University's Gallery 360. Mazza first began teaching at UMass Boston in 2007 and is currently a professor of Digital Media in the Art and Art History Department.

Mazza's work seamlessly blends the ancient practice of textile art with modern technology. *Network* reflects her ongoing exploration of social change, labor practices, and mental health. Some of the pieces were created with *knitPro*, a freeware app developed by Mazza and programmer Eric St. Onge in 2004, which turns digital images into stitchable patterns. Others include animated video works, made with the software *Knitoscope*, which turns digital video (much of it digitally drawn, pixel by pixel, by Mazza) into knitted animations. One of the videos, *By & By: With Psychedelic Features*, was funded by the UMass Boston Dean's Research Grant and is debuting in *Network*.

When discussing the impact of her work, Mazza said, "The materials often connect craft and technology in some way, and then the ideas behind the work are informed by historical research."

Renew the Faculty (cont.)



Professor Laura Hayman, Provost Joseph Berger, Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Professor Peter Kiang, and Professor Suha Ballout

Distinguished Faculty Award Lectures Celebrate Excellence in Teaching, Scholarship, and Service

UMass Boston showcased three faculty members for their outstanding contributions to teaching, scholarship, and service at the 14th Annual Chancellor's Distinguished Faculty Award Lectures in November.

The event featured presentations by Professor of Nursing Suha Ballout, Professor and Director of the Asian American Studies Program Peter Kiang, and Professor and Chair of Nursing Laura Hayman, who were originally honored during the 2024 commencement ceremony in May. Each honoree gave a talk highlighting the significance of the award and their work.

"The lectures showcase our singular ability to bring together people or perspectives around innovative research endeavors and exceptional educational programs to serve the common good," said Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco.

Provost Joseph Berger emphasized the importance of leveraging faculty expertise to drive meaningful change.

"In the face of very real challenges, we do have a responsibility to use our talents as a platform for continuous improvement, but for it to be constructive agents of change," Berger said.

Maintain and Improve Affordability and Access

Collaborations Support Pathways to and Through UMass Boston

In an effort to strengthen ties to the Boston community, the Enrollment Management team has been collaborating with the Boston Public Schools (BPS) and area community college counselors to host on-campus events and professional development days. These efforts further underscore UMass Boston's long-standing goal to increase community engagement and to prepare and educate students for successful futures.

Over the past three years, approximately 20% of UMass Boston's undergraduate enrollments came from BPS, with 401 enrolling in fall 2024. With many area students choosing to further their education here, this past December, UMass Boston welcomed 130 BPS counselors to campus for a professional development day. Counselors were provided a tour of campus, a presentation about financial aid, and more information about the affordability and value of a UMass Boston education.

UMass Boston continues to work together with BPS and Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) through the New Skills Boston initiative focused on providing pathways and opportunities for BPS students to BHCC and UMass Boston. In collaboration with New Skills Boston, UMass Boston and BHCC recently established a partnership, the Future Beacon Joint Admissions Program, that streamlines the BHCC to UMass Boston transfer admissions process and allows for students to receive the support and resources of both colleges during a student's enrollment at BHCC.

This work supports the goal of ensuring that every student has the information and resources they need to make informed decisions about their education and to create their own pathway to success.

UMass Boston Launches New Interactive Financial Aid Planner

With the 2025–2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application back on a more typical timeline, UMass Boston's Office of Financial Aid Services has been packaging newly admitted students with aid. Nearly 70% of admitted first-year students have already filed for aid. Along with the offer notices, last month UMass Boston debuted its new Interactive Financial Aid Planner to newly admitted fall 2025 students.

The custom-built planner serves as an additional resource for students to help them further understand the cost to attend UMass Boston. The web-based planner applies each student's financial aid (scholarships, grants, tuition credits, and loans) to their estimated expenses to show expected out-of-pocket costs in the upcoming academic year. Within the planner, students can also select on- or off-campus living and view the cost impact.

The planner showcases UMass Boston's value and affordability, and it helps students and families make informed financial decisions about their education.

Position University in the Higher Education Marketplace



The cast of *Clue*, UMass Boston Performing Art's fall production.

Clue: On Stage Welcomes Special Guests and Earns Theater Honors

Last fall's sold-out production of *Clue: On Stage* at the University Hall Theatre featured eight special guest cast members. The role of the Newscaster—delivering reports on the McCarthy hearings to establish the 1950s setting and atmosphere of paranoia—was played by Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Provost Joseph Berger, CLA Dean Pratima Prasad, Police Chief Stacey Lloyd, Vice Chancellor of Athletics Jacqueline Schuman, Alumni Board Member Jim O'Sullivan, Undergraduate SGA President Christelle Joseph, and Jillian Fennimore, director of communications for Governor Maura Healey (and daughter of *Clue* director Michael Fennimore). Each evening's performance was preceded by a warm gathering and brief rehearsal, facilitated by Assistant Director Anna Pumphrey '25.

Pumphrey was later nominated to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival for her performance in last spring's *Radium Girls*, alongside Sierra Simone, who played Miss Scarlet in *Clue*. Both were finalists for the prestigious Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship, while Dylan Moore (Wadsworth the Butler in *Clue*) was a semi-finalist. Sam Stanley, assistant director for *Radium Girls*, placed third in the highly competitive Theatre Tech Olympics. Both *Radium Girls* and *Clue*, along with their student performers and crew, earned merit awards for Ensemble, Stage Management, Dramaturgy, and Run Crew.

UMass Boston Chancellor Leads Delegation to Vatican for Summit on Ethical Use of AI

UMass Boston Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco led a delegation of leaders from Massachusetts to participate in the Artificial Intelligence, Justice, and Democracy workshop at the Vatican, hosted by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences on March 4 and 5.

The summit brought together government and judicial leaders, scientists, and scholars from around the globe to examine the issues surrounding the use of AI and discuss how to utilize and harness AI while confronting the ethical and human challenges it presents.

"I believe we can all agree that, at the present time, AI is being fetishized around the world," said Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, who presented at the event. "Its success is measured by efficiency gains or the logic of the market. It is lauded as a breakthrough that changes everything and improves all human endeavors....The question is whether this state of affairs reflects AI's promise or peril. And the answer requires a proportionately judicious assessment of AI's risks."

The workshop focused on three themes: Ensuring Fairness and Equity, Safeguarding Democratic Processes, and Preparing Citizens for an AI-Driven World. Among the presenters and discussion leaders, in addition to Chancellor Suárez-Orozco, were Massachusetts Secretary of Economic Development Yvonne Hao and UMass Boston Associate Professor of Public Policy and Public Affairs Michael Ahn. They explored "AI Risks and Opportunities."

Online Programs Among Top in the Nation, According to 2025 U.S. News & World Report

The 2025 *U.S. News & World Report* lists UMass Boston's online bachelor's degrees and graduate programs among the nation's best. Included in the top rankings are the master's in nursing, which jumped from 83rd place last year to 33rd, and the master's in education for veterans (No. 27).

UMass Boston's online programs offer digital access to the same departments and faculty that are available on campus. The rankings reflect the university's continued commitment to providing access to higher education for all.

Highlights include these rankings:

- Online Bachelor's – No. 57
- Online MBA – No. 75
- Online MBA for Veterans – No. 49
- Online Master's in Education – No. 85
- Online Master's in Education for Veterans – No. 27
- Online Master's in Nursing – No. 33

Rankings from the *U.S. News & World Report* are calculated based on student engagement, services and technologies, faculty credentials and training, and peer assessment.

Continue a Positive Focus on Diversity



Vice Chancellor of Athletics and Recreation Jacqui Schuman joins broadcaster Amanda Keane (left) for an interview, as Maria Spylios (right) directs the game coverage with an all-female camera crew.

UMass Boston Celebrates National Girls and Women in Sports Day

UMass Boston Athletics recently commemorated National Girls and Women in Sports Day with an empowering celebration honoring women in athletics.

The event kicked off with a youth clinic aimed at inspiring and providing opportunities for young athletes, while also recognizing the invaluable contributions of women in sports. Strong Girls United partnered with the UMass Boston Beacons' coaching staff and student-athletes to lead the clinic, showcasing various sports before transitioning into a mental skills workshop.

Following the clinic, the UMass Boston women's basketball team took to the court, but the focus was not just on the game. Every game-day role was filled by women, highlighting their leadership and skills in all areas of the event. The game featured an all-female officiating crew, book-keeper, clock operator, and stats personnel. Additionally, the broadcast was led by Maria Spylios, who directed the coverage with an all-female camera crew.

Throughout the broadcast, female head coaches joined lead broadcaster Amanda Keane to share their experiences as women in athletics, offering valuable insights and motivating the next generation of female athletes.

"Empowering young female athletes with a pregame clinic led by our female student-athletes and coaches, and then having them witness women running every aspect of the game day operation—from referees to table crew to camera operators and broadcast personnel—was truly special," said Jacqui Schuman, vice chancellor and director of Athletics and Recreation. "I am so impressed and proud of our staff for helping make this day a success."



(From left to right) Director of the Portuguese Language Center José Rodrigues, Executive Director Global Programs Shaun Morgan, Associate Provost Susan Gauss, Coordinator for Portuguese Language Teaching João Caixinha, Chair of Latin American/Iberian Studies Maria Cisterna Gold, Consul General of Portugal Tiago Araújo, Associate Dean Jennifer Greg, intern Beatriz Pereira, and PhD student Joao Maroco

UMass Boston Renews Partnership to Promote Portuguese Language and Culture

In March, UMass Boston had the honor of welcoming Consul General of Portugal Tiago Araújo to campus. The occasion marked the renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the university and the Instituto Camões aimed at the continued promotion of Portuguese language and culture within the commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The university is privileged to collaborate with the consul general and his team in advancing this significant initiative throughout Massachusetts. The Camões Institute at UMass Boston works in close partnership with the UMass Boston College of Liberal Arts and the Latin American and Iberian Studies Department.