

To the Board:

In challenging times like these—with the outbreak of armed conflict in the Middle East, worsening inequality, an erosion of trust in institutions of governance, and daunting new assessments of climate change—we are reminded of the critically important role of public research universities. Our responsibility, as a community of students, educators, researchers, and concerned citizens, is to understand the causes and consequences of these and other challenges, so that we may better address them with rigor, compassion, and innovative solutions. UMass Boston embraces this responsibility, and our recent work reflects this commitment.

- Our cover story celebrates more than 20 years of an extraordinary partnership between UMass Boston and the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center. The partnership has been a key driver of research innovation, strengthened research infrastructure, interdisciplinary collaboration, student opportunity, and research faculty diversity at UMass Boston. (page 1)
- The university extended an impressive run of record philanthropic and research funding success, with planned giving bequests increasing in number and value over the past three fiscal years *and* with significant increases in research awards and expenditures during 2025. Since 2024, the value of documented bequest commitments grew by 33 percent, reaching \$6.28 million in FY26 and totaling over \$15.8 million. And in 2025, the university reported \$87.5 million in research awards received, a 7.9 percent increase over FY24, and \$81.7 million in research expenditures, a 14.5 percent increase over FY24. (pages 5–7)
- UMass Boston improved its standing in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2026 rankings of online academic programs. Specifically, our online MBA and online MBA for Veterans programs moved up to #59 and #38, respectively. These rankings continue to affirm UMass Boston as the world-class academic institution it is. (page 3)

I trust you will appreciate this report on our progress.

– Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco



The four principal investigators on the U54 grant, which has supported the partnership between UMass Boston and the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center. From left to right, they are K. Viswanath, Gregory Abel, Jill Macoska, and Adán Colón-Carmona.

Over 20 Years, Cancer Partnership Has Trained Hundreds of Researchers

For more than two decades, the partnership between UMass Boston and the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center has helped hundreds of students gain hands-on experience in cancer research while strengthening the university's research community.

The partnership was formally forged in 2005 when the two institutions jointly secured funding from the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health. The partnership combined Dana-Farber/Harvard's advanced research infrastructure with UMass Boston's diverse student population and strong community connections—an approach the federal grant program was designed to support.

With this U56 funding and two subsequent U54 grants, the program has supported 493 trainees across a wide range of disciplines. Many participants begin as undergraduates and continue their work through graduate school, while some have returned to UMass Boston as faculty or research staff.

Faculty involved in the partnership can apply for seed, pilot, or full-project funding—up to \$450,000 over three years—to advance cancer research. Since 2010, participating faculty have secured 234 external grants totaling more than \$111.7 million, expanding the university's research capacity and attracting new investigators.

“What this means is that faculty who are engaged in research with us...are successful. They stick with it,”

Continued on page 2

Cover story (cont.)

said Adán Colón-Carmona, a UMass Boston biology professor and principal investigator on the grant supporting the partnership.

The program has also strengthened research infrastructure at UMass Boston. Jill Macoska, director of the Center for Personalized Cancer Therapy (CPCT), has led efforts to secure funding, successfully competing for several awards from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center to expand cancer research facilities. The CPCT, which grew out of the UMass Boston/Harvard Partnership, is the focus of cancer research at UMass Boston and has trained more than 100 high school, undergraduate, and graduate students in cancer biology scholarship and research. The CPCT's Genomics Core now has instruments that can analyze cancer biopsies down to the sub-cellular level, and others that can track the growth of mouse tumors in living mice.

Beyond laboratory work, the partnership prepares students for careers in industry, public health, and community-based research through internships, job fairs, and collaborations with local organizations and biotech companies.

Develop First-Rate Infrastructure

Housing Secured for Students Displaced by Flooding

Alternative, long-term housing has been secured for students displaced by flooding from a burst pipe on the tenth floor of the Motley East Residence Hall on February 9. Students in rooms that sustained the most damage have moved to spaces at Emerson College and Harbor Point apartments for the remainder of the semester.

The significant flooding from the tenth to the second floors of the building required temporary closure, displacing approximately 700 students; roughly 50 rooms sustained direct water damage. Alternative housing was arranged at the Amherst Charles River campus and nearby hotels.

Since the event, teams have been working around the clock with external contractors; inspectors; the building's management company, Capstone On-Campus Management (COCM); and the building owner, Provident, to repair and reopen the building safely. Reoccupation of undamaged rooms occurred in late February, and final long-term housing was secured in early March.

While this has been a challenging event operationally and emotionally for some members of our community, we are grateful for the partnership from faculty, staff, and students across the entire campus and external community.

Position University in the Higher Education Marketplace



Chancellor Suárez-Orozco speaks at the Boston Globe Summit.

At the Boston Globe Summit, UMass Boston Faculty, Staff, and Students Tell Stories of Making an Impact

Leaders from art, science, business, and politics gathered to discuss some of the year's most pressing issues at the Boston Globe Summit, held Nov. 18–19 at the House of Blues in Boston. UMass Boston, a sponsor of the event, was prominently represented by faculty and students who joined panels on topics ranging from higher education and climate change to economic justice.

UMass Boston Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco introduced a panel on the future of higher education. He highlighted the perils that colleges and universities now face, as they must navigate an increasingly tense social climate. Christian E. Weller, a UMass Boston professor of public policy, participated in a panel on the middle class in Massachusetts.

Representatives from UMass Boston's School for the Environment discussed "Turning the Tide on Climate Change." The panel was moderated by Elizabeth Sweet, associate dean of the School for the Environment, and featured Massachusetts Deputy Climate Chief Aladdine Joroff; Katherine Dafforn, co-director of the Stone Living Lab; Laura Castro Diaz, assistant professor at the School for the Environment; and Kayla Bradley, a PhD student at UMass Boston and expert in science communications.

The panelists reviewed ways in which the daunting problems of climate change can, through careful planning, become manageable issues to which local communities can contribute.

Position University in the Higher Education Marketplace (cont.)

UMass Boston's Online Programs Among Top Universities in the Nation, according to 2026 U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report has again recognized UMass Boston among the nation's best for online education in its 2026 rankings, with the university's online MBA climbing 16 spots to No. 59 and its online MBA for veterans earning a No. 38 ranking.

"This recognition underscores the quality and upward momentum of our online MBA programs," said Dean Venky Venkatachalam. "We're proud to provide a flexible, high-impact education that supports working professionals and veterans alike—and we see this as just the beginning."

Highlights include these rankings:

- #41 in Best Online Master's in Nursing Programs (tie)
- #59 in Best Online MBA Programs (tie)
- #38 in Best Online MBA Programs for Veterans (tie)
- #89 in Best Online Bachelor's Programs (tie)
- #112 in Best Online Master's in Education Programs (tie)
- #34 in Best Online Master's in Education Programs for Veterans

Rankings from *U.S. News & World Report* are calculated based on student engagement, services and technologies, faculty credentials and training, and peer assessment. The highest-scoring programs are those applying the best educational practices for online learning.

Develop a Leadership Role in Public Service

Chancellor Suárez-Orozco Co-Organizes West Africa Resilience Summit in Senegal

In March, Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco co-organized the latest in a series of regional summits in support of the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences' Global Initiative, *From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience*. The West Africa Resilience Summit, *Pathways for West Africa and the Sahelian Region at Local and Regional Levels*, was held in Dakar, Senegal, and brought together mayors, governors, scientists, academics, and advocates from across the region for discussions on how to make local communities more climate resilient.

The summit series—the most comprehensive climate resilience initiative in the world to date—has positioned UMass Boston as a global leader in promoting the mitigation, adaptation, and societal transformation (MAST) strategy: mitigation measures to diminish climate risks, adaptation planning to manage risks, and societal transformation to reinforce mitigation and adaptation. Regional summits previously held in Brazil, Austria, Kenya, Massachusetts, California, and the Vatican during the past year have produced a windfall of mitigation, adaptation, and societal transformation strategies—in addition to local knowledge sharing and nature-based solutions—that can be replicated or approximated around the world.

The remaining regional summits, to be convened in India, Australia/Oceania, China, Japan, and again at the Vatican in 2027, will consider the development of region-specific blueprints for building resilience and continue to explore ways of implementing the solutions outlined in the 2024 *Planetary Protocol for Climate Change Resilience* issued by Pope Francis. At these summits (all of which are philanthropically funded in their entity), Chancellor Suárez-Orozco promotes the cutting-edge work on our campuses to drive resilience innovation and the leadership of our elected officials who are implementing model legislation.

Chancellor Suárez-Orozco also delivered the keynote address on the outcomes of the climate resilience summits at the *Resilience 365 Conference* hosted by the Climate Resilience Institute at the University of Miami on March 17.

Researchers Present on Native Wealth Report

Cedric Woods of the Institute for New England Native American Studies, Allison Taylor of the Institute for Community Inclusion, and Phillip Granberry of the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy co-presented their report for the research center Boston Indicators, *To Live and Thrive in Massachusetts: Native American Perspectives on Wealth*, at the Massachusetts State Library.

The goal of the report, according to Woods, was "to center Native voices and experiences on the topic of Native wealth." Their presentation sparked a lively discussion about the Allotment Act and its impact on Native land, tuition waivers for American Indian and Alaskan Native students to attend state universities and community colleges, and the Commonwealth's fiduciary responsibility to its Native residents.

Woods, Taylor, and Granberry's recommendations echoed focus group themes: building wealth in Native communities begins with access to higher education; culturally relevant financial literacy and wealth-building opportunities; and affordable, accessible housing.

Develop a Leadership Role in Public Service (cont.)



Vesela Veleva (left) is enthusiastic about getting students like Shelby Ansel G'25 (right) involved in sustainability initiatives.

With New Funding, Sustainable Craft Beverage Program Expands Its Reach

How eco-friendly is your beer? What about your kombucha? Vesela Veleva, faculty and co-director of the Center for Sustainable Enterprise and Regional Competitiveness in UMass Boston's Department of Management, is helping craft beverage companies and consumers answer that question.

Under Veleva's leadership, UMass Boston was among the five founding partners of the BetterBev program, which provides resources and recognition for small craft breweries and other craft beverage manufacturers to reduce the environmental impact of their entire manufacturing process, from buying their raw ingredients to serving their customers. Initially, the program was aimed at brewers, but the BetterBev program is expanding and now also recognizes the makers of other craft beverages.

"We don't think of the industry as very polluting, but it has a major impact," said Veleva.

According to Veleva's research, most craft beverage makers are interested in becoming more sustainable (which often reduces costs), but many lack the time, resources, or knowledge to make improvements. BetterBev helps participating businesses make positive changes and get recognized for their efforts.

Student-Athlete Nathan Rubin Debuts Children's Book, *Chasing a Dream*

UMass Boston basketball player and economics major Nathan Rubin has published a children's book to inspire kids to dream big and work toward achieving their goals.

A Boston native, Rubin transferred to UMass Boston in the fall semester to play on the basketball team. During that time, he also published a children's book, *Chasing a Dream*, to inspire young readers across Greater Boston.

The book came out of his talks at local YMCA programs and inner-city schools about his experience as a college athlete and the value of setting goals. The son of an immigrant, Rubin said he didn't grow up in a sports-oriented family, so he had to create his own path by setting goals and pushing himself forward.

Rubin's biggest hope is that young readers feel inspired by his story. Since publishing the book, he has visited local schools, run workshops, and even sponsored a backpack drive at the Mildred Community Center in Mattapan.

"When I was that age, I remember the people who would come speak or read to us," he said. "My goal is to be looked at as a role model. I love the Northeast. I love this city, and I want to be able to give back as much as I possibly can."



Student-athlete Nathan Rubin reads his book, *Chasing a Dream*, to students.

Strengthen the University's Research and Development Enterprise

Record-Breaking Year Highlights UMass Boston's Commitment to Research

UMass Boston's commitment to growing its research enterprise was made particularly clear in fiscal year 2025 with record-breaking levels of research funding and expenditures.

In FY25, the university reported \$87.5 million in annual research funding and \$81.7 million in research expenditures. The university also moved into the R1 category on the 2025 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Research Awards Received

FY25: \$87.5 million (7.9% growth)

FY24: \$81.1 million (4% growth)

FY23: \$78.2 million (16% growth)

Research Expenditures

FY25: \$81.7 million (14.5% growth)

FY24: \$71.34 million (13% growth)

FY23: \$63.1 million (22% growth)

Core Research Facilities Revenue

FY25: \$1.36 million

FY24: \$1.27 million

FY23: \$570,000

Strategic investments in research support, administration, and infrastructure have been instrumental in this growth.



Nobel Laureate Wolfgang Ketterle answers questions during his presentation at the QISE Conference.



Think College staff

Think College at UMass Boston's Institute for Community Inclusion Receives \$10 Million Grant from the U.S. Department of Education

Think College at the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) has been awarded a five-year, \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to continue to serve as the National Coordinating Center for the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID).

Based in the School for Global Inclusion and Social Development's Institute for Community Inclusion, Think College is a federally funded center whose research, evaluation, and national leadership efforts are administered through UMass Boston. Think College has served as the National Coordinating Center since the TPSID initiative first began, leading the national effort to improve higher education access for students with intellectual disability. With this new funding, Think College will continue its work supporting hundreds of programs across the country to strengthen the quality and reach of inclusive higher education.

"The bottom line is, if students with intellectual disability go to college, we want them to have an authentic, meaningful, and inclusive college experience that leads to competitive employment and good outcomes," said Meg Grigal, senior research fellow at the ICI and principal investigator for Think College.

UMass Boston Hosts International Workshop on Quantum Information Science and Engineering

Researchers from the nuclear physics; atomic, molecular, and optical physics; and quantum information science and engineering (QISE) communities came together at UMass Boston for a four-day Quantum Information Science (QIS) Workshop on January 13–16. This meeting was the second iteration of a series sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Physics. Exploring the overlap in QIS between nuclear physics; atomic, molecular, and optical physics; and quantum machine learning, the workshop was organized through UMass Boston's Data and Quantum Science (DataQS) Center by Physics Professors Robin Côté of UMass Boston and Kyungseon Joo of the University of Connecticut.

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

The event convened over 70 participants 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. In attendance were a number of leaders from academic institutions; national laboratories such as Brookhaven National Laboratory, Jefferson Laboratory, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology; industry businesses such as Keysight, Nvidia, QuEra Computing, IonQ, SHI, Atom Computing, and Quantum Catalyzer; and government agencies such as the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech) and the Northeast Microelectronics Coalition.

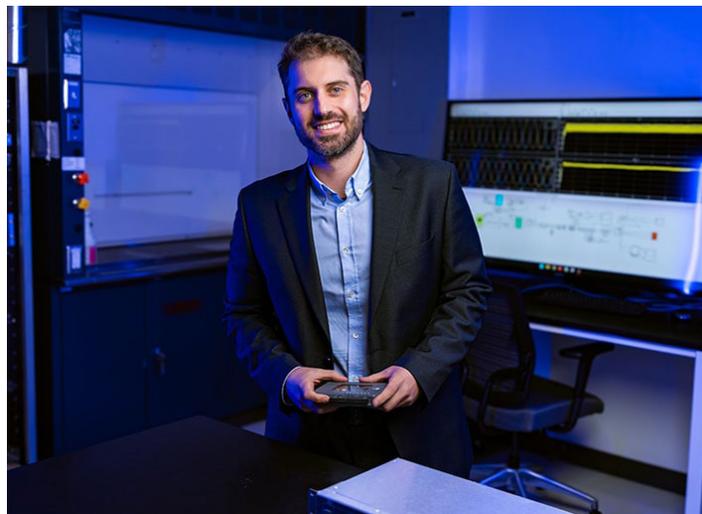
Funding for the event was provided by a \$24,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy and generous contributions from Keysight, SHI, MassTech, ETRI, and the Korea-U.S. Quantum Technology Cooperation Center. The workshop is an example of UMass Boston's growth trajectory in QISE that has also included the creation of the DataQS Center, receiving a \$5 million National Science Foundation ExpandQISE award and a \$3.8 million MassTech investment in the Quantum Hardware Development and Commercialization Core Facility.

UMass Boston Researcher Receives Grant to Study Cyberattacks on Power Grids

Ioannis Zografopoulos, an assistant professor in the Engineering Department of the College of Science and Mathematics, has been awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to study the cybersecurity of power grids targeted by communications-based cyberattacks.

In a communications-based cyberattack, malicious actors can spread through a network of different infected devices as the devices communicate with each other. Modern power grids can be vulnerable to this kind of attack due to their complexity, remote access, and ability to rapidly react to consumer energy needs. In his research at UMass Boston, Zografopoulos studies how cyberattacks can spread through a network of connected devices—and how they can be stopped.

With the support of his new NSF grant, Zografopoulos will be developing and testing several different ways to protect networks. For instance, by adopting secure communications techniques, such as encryption and data verification, power distributors can strengthen vulnerable parts of the network and give them an added layer of protection. The grant includes funding to support student involvement, including at least one graduate student, as well as undergraduate students.



Ioannis Zografopoulos in his lab at UMass Boston.

University Research Awards for the Past Quarter

- Meg Grigal/Institute for Community Inclusion received \$10,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for the *Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities – Coordinating Center (TPSID-NCC)*.
- Russell Thelin/Institute for Community Inclusion received \$3,200,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Impact VR ITG (84.263G)*.
- Julisa Cully/Institute for Community Inclusion received \$3,200,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Innovative Guided Rehabilitation Employer Engagement Training (iGREET) 2.0*.
- Callie Mae Brusegaard Zube/GISD – Dean's Office received \$1,250,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Bridging Disciplines, Sharing Expertise: Advanced Educator Preparation for Students with Complex Vision and Hearing Profiles*.
- Mona Abo-Zena/Curriculum and Instruction received \$1,249,998 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Project RISE: Readiness and Instruction for Supporting Early Intervention*.
- Ping Chen/Engineering received \$1,111,098 from Massachusetts General Hospital (sub from NIH) for *Gut Microbiome and Individual Differences in Lumbosacral Radicular Pain*.
- Dimity Peter/Global Inclusion and Social Development received \$1,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Rehabilitation Long-Term Training Program: Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling ALN 84.129B*.

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

- Caitlin Coyle/Gerontology Institute received \$1,000,000 from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund for *Legacy Planning as a Free Public Service Supporting Intergenerational Wealth Transfer*.
- Callie Brusegaard Zube/Global Inclusion and Social Development received \$875,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for *Long Term Training: Assistive Technology, Vision Rehabilitation Therapy and Orientation and Mobility*.
- Jillian Carr and Lisa Weber/Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Partnership received \$475,456 from Restore America's Estuaries (sub from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) for *Seeding the Future: Restoring Eelgrass and Building Community Engagement Across the MassBays NEP*.
- Jean Rhodes/Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring received \$435,000 from the UMass Foundation (sub from Fidelity Foundations) for *Creating Connected Futures SSI*.
- Vesela Veleva/Management received \$350,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for *UMass Boston – P2 for Massachusetts Craft Beverage Manufacturers*.
- DeBrittany Mitchell/Institute for Community Inclusion received \$250,000 from the Administration for Community Living for the *American Indian Rural Youth Apprenticeship Development Project (AIRYAD)*.
- Jillian Carr and Lisa Weber/Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Partnership received \$234,035 from the University of Southern Maine (sub from U.S. EPA) for *Improving New England Waters by Developing Data Tools and Building Regional Collaboration*.

Maintain and Improve Affordability and Access

Admissions Hires Dedicated Veterans Admissions Counselor

UMass Boston continues to strengthen its longstanding commitment to those who have served our country, supporting more than 600 veteran and military-connected students currently enrolled. The university recently hired Benjamin Whelihan as assistant director of admissions for veteran and military outreach.

A UMass Boston alumnus with extensive experience supporting veteran and military-affiliated students, Whelihan brings both professional expertise and personal commitment to this role. He previously served as a program specialist with the New Hampshire Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services Division of Community Based Military Programs, veteran services specialist with the Northeastern University Center for the Advancement of Veterans and Servicemembers (CAVS), and worked with the Salem State University Office of Veterans Affairs.

The addition of this dedicated admissions position marks a significant step forward in advancing the university's commitment to supporting veteran-affiliated students. In conjunction with the Office of Veterans Affairs, this role ensures that prospective veteran students receive personalized guidance through the admissions process, including support with military transcripts, transfer credits, and navigating federal and state educational benefits. By providing expert, individualized assistance from the first point of contact, the university is enhancing access and reducing barriers to enrollment.

University Expands Strategic Partnerships to Strengthen Enrollment Pathways and Student Success

UMass Boston continues to expand its network of strategic partnerships to strengthen enrollment pathways and promote long-term student success. The university recently finalized agreements with Messina College and OneGoal, reinforcing its commitment to educational access, persistence, and degree completion.

Through an articulation agreement with Messina College, the university has established a clear transfer pathway for students enrolled in select associate degree programs to transition seamlessly into bachelor's degree programs at UMass Boston. This agreement not only creates a structured and transparent route to degree completion but also supports students in maintaining academic momentum as they advance toward a four-year degree.

In partnership with OneGoal, UMass Boston joins a national network committed to helping students enroll in, persist through, and complete high-quality postsecondary programs. The partners work to increase college application and completion rates, improve enrollment yield by addressing logistical and financial barriers during the junior and senior years of high school through the first year of college, and provide coordinated support to keep students on track to graduate.

Messina College, OneGoal, and UMass Boston share a strong commitment to supporting first-generation, low-income, and minority students, ensuring these populations have access to sustained guidance, resources, and opportunities throughout their college experience.

Continue a Positive Focus on Diversity and Positive Climate



The UMass Boston Athletics team accepts their DIII LGBTQ Award at the NCAA Convention.

DIII Honors UMass Boston Athletics with LGBTQ Institution of the Year Award

The UMass Boston Athletics Department has been named a 2025 Division III LGBTQ Institution of the Year recipient. The university was recognized at the NCAA Convention, celebrating their commitment to inclusion, equity, and support for the LGBTQ community.

“This award is representative of the intentional work that our team and student-athletes do every day to honor the mission of UMass Boston and create a place where everyone feels included, celebrated, and able to reach their highest potential,” said Jacqueline Schuman, vice chancellor and director of athletics and recreation.

The UMass Boston Athletics Department has invested in sustained efforts around LGBTQ+ inclusion. In 2023, the department created the position of director of community engagement and inclusive excellence, filled by Tiffany Alford. Alford created an active Athlete Ally chapter and school Pride Games and has dedicated resources to sending student-athletes to the Athlete Ally Activism Summit and administrators to the NCAA’s Common Ground program.

The Athletics Department also maintains an internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of students, coaches, student-athletes, and administrators that addresses issues and advances sustainable solutions.

Chancellor Suárez-Orozco to Receive MIRA Coalition’s 2026 Community Champion Award

On Wednesday, May 20, Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco will be honored at the Give Liberty a Hand event hosted by the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition.

As this year continues to present significant challenges for immigrant communities, this recognition as the 2026 Community Champion honoree highlights UMass Boston’s longstanding commitment to immigrant rights and inclusion. An immigrant himself, Suárez-Orozco has been a consistent advocate for policies and practices that promote belonging.

This marks the thirtieth year of MIRA’s Give Liberty a Hand event, which celebrates collective progress, honors exceptional individuals, and raises vital support for immigrants across the commonwealth. The honor places the chancellor alongside a distinguished group of previous recipients, including U.S. Senators Edward J. Markey and Elizabeth Warren, Governor Deval Patrick, then Attorney General Maura Healey, and Mohamad Ali, among others.

UMass Boston and GBH News Host Panel Discussion on Rethinking College



(From left) Managing Editor and Correspondent for Higher Education at GBH News Kirk Carapezza moderated a panel in the Campus Center in March with Chancellor Suárez-Orozco; Marjorie Hass, president of the Council of Independent Colleges; and Fanta Aw, executive director and CEO of NAFSA, The Association of International Educators. The conversation will appear on a future episode of the GBH News podcast College Uncovered.

Increase Endowment

State Match Program Fuels Growth of New Endowed Funds

UMass Boston has fully utilized its FY26 allocation from the Commonwealth's Public Higher Education Endowment Incentive Program (PHEEIP), securing commitments that activated the campus's entire \$1,047,000 state match by the close of the second quarter.

The program helped inspire 26 donors to partner with University Advancement to build the UMass Boston endowment. Their generosity established 14 new endowed funds and grew 12 existing funds, providing more than \$3.1 million of long-term support for students, faculty, and academic programs. Seventy-three percent of the funds support student financial aid, while others advance academic divisions, research, and programmatic priorities across the university. Support for these endowments came from a wide range of constituents, with foundations and alumni donors contributing 50 percent of matched gifts.

The PHEEIP program, created by the Massachusetts legislature, provides a powerful incentive for donors by providing new endowment gifts with a 50 percent match from state funds, allowing philanthropic investments to grow more quickly and expand their impact. At UMass Boston, the program continues to be an important catalyst for building long-term resources that support the university's mission and strengthen opportunities for students.

Planned Giving Grows, Strengthening Long-Term Support

UMass Boston has seen significant growth in planned giving commitments, with bequests increasing both in number and value over the past three fiscal years. Since FY24, the total value of documented bequest commitments has grown by 33 percent, reaching \$6.28 million in FY26 and totaling more than \$15.8 million across 37 commitments.

Alumni account for the largest number of these commitments, representing 65 percent of donors, followed by friends of the university and current, former, and retired faculty members. The majority of the bequests—89 percent—are designated to endowment funds, ensuring that these gifts will provide sustained resources in perpetuity.

University Advancement has strengthened its planned giving efforts by expanding outreach to a broader group of supporters and increasing engagement around estate planning conversations. The university has also leveraged digital tools and targeted communications provided by the UMass Foundation to connect with prospective donors and make information about planned giving more accessible and approachable.

Together, these efforts are helping more supporters include UMass Boston in their philanthropic plans while building a pipeline of future resources that will drive the work of the university for generations.

New Support from Liberty Mutual Foundation Supports Camp Shriver Character Development Initiative

The Liberty Mutual Foundation has awarded a new \$200,000 two-year grant to support Camp Shriver, strengthening a longstanding partnership that has provided more than \$700,000 in support for the program since 2019.

For 50 years, Camp Shriver's nationally recognized inclusive recreation program has brought together children with and without disabilities through sports-based activities designed to build social skills, confidence, and positive peer relationships. Each year, the program serves children ages 8–12 from Boston-area communities, with half of campers having a disability and the majority coming from low-income and minority households.

The new grant will help Camp Shriver enhance its programming by integrating intentional character development and social-emotional learning through a new "Character+" initiative. Developed in partnership with the American Camp Association's Character-at-Camp initiative, the program will introduce structured lessons focused on kindness, teamwork, and appreciation of diversity.

Over the next two years, Camp Shriver will reach more than 1,000 children through this and other flagship summer camp and school-year Saturday Camp programs, continuing its mission of creating inclusive spaces where young people of all abilities can learn, play, and grow together.

Enhance the Learning Experience



Dean Venky Venkatachalam, Founding Dean Richard M. Freeland, Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (center) pose for a photo with student ambassadors at the College of Management's 50th anniversary celebration.

College of Management Celebrates 50 Years

UMass Boston's College of Management recently marked a defining milestone as faculty, staff, students, alumni, and university leaders gathered to celebrate the college's 50th anniversary, five decades of expanding access to high-quality business education.

Founding Dean Richard M. Freeland launched the college in 1975 and later served as president of Northeastern University and commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. He reflected on the college's humble beginnings and remarkable trajectory.

"To stand here today and see a thriving institution with world-class faculty, global partnerships, and students from across Boston and around the world fills me with enormous satisfaction," Freeland said. "So many individuals over so many years have worked tirelessly to bring the college to where it is today. I salute every one of them."

From its inception, the college set out to make exceptional business education accessible to students from all backgrounds. Enrollment began with a small cohort in the mid-1970s; today, the college has more than 21,000 alumni and continues to grow in reach and impact.

As the college looks ahead, it remains focused on deepening AI-driven learning, strengthening student support, expanding industry partnerships, and advancing its mission of providing accessible, high-impact business education for a diverse and dynamic student body.

Beacons Celebrate Student-Athlete Success

Sophomore forward Cameron Perkins was named Little East Conference (LEC) Player of the Year for men's basketball following a tremendous sophomore campaign. He also earned All-LEC First Team honors after a dominant regular season in which he averaged 22.5 points, 5.8 rebounds, and 1.7 combined steals and blocks per game. Perkins's season was highlighted by a career-high 47-point performance against Salem State University, one of the top single-game scoring outputs in NCAA Division III this season.

Senior Arianna Garceau claimed her second consecutive LEC Indoor Track Athlete of the Year award after another standout championship performance. She repeated as the conference's top track athlete by winning three gold medals to earn All-LEC First Team honors in the 60m dash (7.71), 60m hurdles (8.45), and 200m dash (25.23).

At the Division III New England Championships, held the week following the LEC Tournament, Garceau continued to shatter records. In the 60-meter hurdles final, she blazed to a historic 8.31 finish, securing the Division III national record and further cementing her place in the record books. With the performance, Garceau now owns both the indoor (60m hurdles) and outdoor (100m hurdles) Division III national records. Garceau added a second gold medal in the 200-meter dash, setting a new DIII New England Championship meet record with a time of 24.32 and earning herself U.S. Track and Field Cross Country Coaches Association Co-National Athlete of the Week, the second Beacon in program history to earn that distinction.



Cameron Perkins

Renew the Faculty

ASLO Recognizes Professor Robert Chen as Sustaining Fellow



Professor Bob Chen

The Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography (ASLO) has recognized Robert Chen as a 2025 Sustaining Fellow in honor of his sustained excellence in contribution to ASLO and the aquatic sciences.

Chen, director of Grand Scholarly Initiatives and

a professor in the School for the Environment, will be honored during the upcoming 2026 ASLO-SIL Joint Meeting in Montreal, Quebec in May. Sustaining Fellows enhance the society's visibility, advancing public awareness about aquatic research, and promoting scientific stewardship of aquatic resources for the public interest. Their service and enthusiasm are an inspiration and crucial to ASLO's continued success.

Professor Xiaohui Liang Named 2026 Fellow for the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

UMass Boston's Associate Professor and Associate Chair of Computer Science Xiaohui Liang has been named an IEEE Fellow for his contributions in Internet of Things (IoT) communication and data security.

"I was thrilled to learn that I had been named an IEEE Fellow," Liang said. "This prestigious recognition from IEEE is truly an honor, and I felt immense gratitude for my mentors, collaborators, and students who have inspired me and worked alongside me over many years."

IEEE was founded in 1963 and is considered the world's leading professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for the benefit of humanity. Liang's research centers around keeping connected devices safe as they share information with each other. These devices are known as the IoT and include everyday technologies like smart home systems to tools for medical monitoring and health care.

English Faculty Secure Grant, Establish Writing Across Curriculum Program

College students expect to learn how to write, but how many of them expect to write to learn? Most would expect to develop their writing skills in their English courses, but how many would expect to do so in their biochemistry lab? A new, expanded, and interdisciplinary mind-set about writing is one of the central goals for the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, which was created and is currently directed by two English Department faculty members, Professors Lauren Bowen and Matthew Davis.

As leading scholars in the field of writing studies, Bowen and Davis secured a \$223,988 Davis Educational Foundation Implementation Grant to fund the initial development of the program from 2024 through 2026. The stated mission of the WAC program is "to increase the presence of effective, inclusive writing instruction across disciplines and to support connection and coherence in writing-related efforts across the university." To cultivate this culture of writing on campus, they created a WAC Faculty Fellows program, which offers writing pedagogy workshops, resources, and consultations to tenure-track and continuing contract non-tenure-track faculty across all colleges of the university and the School for the Environment.

They designed and implemented a "faculty-to-faculty" professional development structure, in which faculty writing specialists ran a series of WAC Fellow workshops on topics such as writing assignment design and writing assessment. As a result, the WAC Fellows revised their courses to incorporate effective, inclusive, and equitable writing activities to meet their disciplinary learning objectives.

Over the first two years of the program, the WAC Fellows redesigned a wide variety of courses. The program has been so successful and so thoroughly praised by its faculty fellows that Bowen and Davis are now seeking funding to sustain and build the program in the years to come.