
Voters got to hear candidates address the issues and students got to participate in the political process as the university hosted debates between democrats in the Massachusetts 3rd Congressional District race.

Held on April 29, the debates brought 12 candidates to Durgin Hall to field questions about foreign policy, the federal deficit, wage stagnation, gun policy, immigration and other topics. The candidates are seeking the seat being vacated by Rep. Niki Tsongas, who is stepping down at the end of the year.

The candidates were split in two groups, based on the results of a Boston Globe-UMass Lowell poll conducted in April. The poll showed a majority (59 percent) of respondents have not yet made up their minds about whom they will vote for in the Sept. 4 primary. (For poll results, visit uml.edu/polls).

The debates, sponsored by UML’s Center for Public Opinion and The Boston Globe, attracted hundreds of attendees. UMass President Marty Meehan was on hand, as were local elected officials, candidates’ families and supporters, students and faculty.

Shaila Bornstein, a junior majoring in criminal justice, was a panelist during the first debate, and David Todisco, a senior political science major, participated in the second.

Students from UML’s College Democrats chapter served as timekeepers and ushers.

“Civic engagement by young people on both sides of the political aisle is important to the health of our democracy. I’m pleased UMass Lowell students are at the forefront,” Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney said in welcoming attendees to Durgin Hall.

Todisco, president of UML’s College Democrats, agreed.

“I think it’s an amazing opportunity,” he said, adding that students are paying attention to the race, and several candidates have already come to campus to meet with his group.

Bornstein spent the week before the debate preparing for her role as a panelist. She reviewed the questions she was going to ask, memorized the schedule and familiarized herself with the stage at Durgin.

“I wanted to be able to speak comfortably and confidently,” she said.

Bornstein said the debates offered students an opportunity to get involved in the political process.

“You get to experience democracy first-hand. You get to hear the candidates’ answers in real time and see how they respond,” she said. “That’s different than watching speeches on Facebook.”

Facing off in the first debate were Jeff Ballinger, Beej Das, Leonard Golder, Patrick Littlefield, Bopha Malone and Keith St. John. In the second debate, candidates Alexandra Chandler, Rufus Gifford, Dan Koh, Barbara L’Italien, Juana Matias and Lori Trahan took the stage.

The winner of the Democratic primary will face Pepperell businessman Rick Greene, the only Republican candidate in the race, in the Nov. 6 general election.
Students’ Plan to Turn Seafood Waste to Fertilizer Wins EPA Grant

_Engineering and Biology Students Garner $15K_

Students’ plan to transform piles of discarded lobster shells and other seafood waste into an eco-friendly fertilizer has won a $15,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The students were participating in the EPA’s annual P3 contest, a national student design competition for sustainability that focuses on three P’s—People, Prosperity and the Planet.

UMass Lowell’s team won funding for its proposal to create safer, nontoxic fertilizer from an abundant resource—the waste produced by processing crustaceans such as crabs, lobsters and shrimp. The group will develop a hydrothermal process to make chitin, a natural sugary substance derived from the hard outer shells of crustaceans, and turn it to renewable fertilizer.

The UML team was one of 31 from 30 colleges and universities across the country to win $15,000 to advance their designs. The teams will be eligible to compete for Phase II funding—with each grant worth up to $75,000—later this spring. The EPA’s ultimate goal is to bring the technologies to market.

Members of the team include chemical engineering doctoral students Melisa Nallar and Peng Yu, biology senior William Bizilj, chemical engineering sophomores Nicholas Tenaglia and Olivia Gauntlett and mechanical engineering sophomore Jonathan Aguilar. Their advisor is chemical engineering Asst. Prof. Hsi-Wu Wong.

The students showcased their project at the National Sustainable Design Expo, held in April in Washington, D.C.

Manning School Make Their Case for Business Ethics

_Manning School Fields First Team for International Contest_

A team of students from the Manning School of Business used the Market Basket story as an object lesson in principled business conduct in a recent ethics competition.

The students were participating in the International Business Ethics Case Competition (IBECC), the most venerable business ethics competition for college students in the country.

It was the first time Manning School students participated in the IBECC, held in April in Boston. The Manning School’s Donahue Center for Business Ethics and Social Responsibility was a sponsoring partner of this year’s competition.

Now in its 22nd year, IBECC attracts teams of undergraduate and graduate students from business schools around the world. This year’s competition included teams from Hong Kong, Australia, Kuwait and England, as well as from schools across the U.S. The teams were scored on how well they addressed the legal, financial and ethical dimensions of their case, as well as on their overall persuasiveness and presentation skills.

Five classmates in a business ethics course, seniors Shakeem Browne, Evan Cotreau, Maya Crawford and Kelly Skelton, and junior Elianna Makiej, formed a team for the competition and met throughout the semester to prepare. They picked the story of Market Basket employees and customers rallying around ousted CEO Arthur T. Demoulas as the case they would present.

“Having a presence at the competition is huge, both for our students competing and the university as a whole,” says Manning School Dean Sandy Richtermeyer. “The university has demonstrated a very strong commitment that puts us at the forefront with top organizations committed to ethics education.”

Mentoring Program Pairs UML Students with Lowell Schoolchildren

_Program Aims to Inspire Next Generation of Teachers_

Judress Sylvestre spends some afternoons in downtown Lowell helping schoolchildren with homework or working on art projects. Being someone the kids look up to inspires him to work hard and stay focused.

“I learn responsibility, I gain more confidence and I feel a sense of accomplishment,” says Sylvestre, a sophomore who is studying psychology and animation.

Sylvestre is part of a mentoring program started by Assoc. Prof. of Education Phitsamay Uy. The program pairs UML students who are among the first generation in their families to attend college with Lowell children and teenagers in after-school programs at the Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA) and the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA).

Uy’s goal is twofold: help children in low-income Lowell neighborhoods believe that they, too, can go to college, and inspire UML undergraduates to consider a career in teaching.

“My intention is to diversify UMass Lowell and, ideally, to diversify the teaching field,” says Uy, who is also co-director of the university’s Center for Asian American Studies.

Uy recruited 10 first-generation UML students, who are receiving a $1,000 stipend to work in the program this semester.

As part of the program, the schoolchildren visit campus once a month. Those visits, coupled with the role models who come from similar circumstances, can help the children see themselves as future college students, Uy says.

“Having a strong adult mentor—a teacher, a coach or a youth organization staff member—makes a real difference in children’s lives,” she says.

Students from the Manning School of Business competed for the first time in the International Business Ethics Case Competition. The team included, from left, Shakeem Browne, Kelly Skelton, Elianna Makiej and Maya Crawford and faculty members Erica Steckler, center back, and Elissa Magnant. Not pictured is team member Evan Cotreau.
‘Exercise is Medicine’ Supports Well-being

Program Prescribes Free Personal Training to Students Coping with Stress

Classes, job responsibilities, resident advisor duties. Senior Ralph Saint Louis could feel the pressure mounting.

Saint Louis, a senior biology major, noticed he was gaining weight and feeling less motivated as his stress level increased. Then he learned about the university’s Exercise is Medicine program.

A collaboration between Campus Recreation, the Wellness Center and the Exercise Physiology Department, the program teaches students how exercise can improve their overall well-being by providing them with 16 personal training sessions—free of charge. Participants, who are usually referred to the program by Counseling Services, are paired with certified student trainers for personally tailored one-hour workouts at either the Campus Recreation Center or the Riverview Fitness Center.

Saint Louis began working out with a personal trainer and, after eight weeks of structured cardio and weight training, he felt better both physically and mentally. He has continued the workout regimen on his own.

Asst. Director of Fitness and Wellness Diana Davis helped bring EIM, which is a global health initiative managed by the American College of Sports Medicine, to UMass Lowell. The program was introduced on campus with 11 students in 2014 and has taken off.

Stressed-out students aren’t the only ones who benefit; the student trainers, most of whom are juniors and seniors in the exercise physiology program, get practical experience.

Based on its success, Davis is thinking about expanding the program. One idea is to offer group exercise programs for students looking for mind-body balance.

Giving Back Goes Big at UML Donor Challenge

Days of Giving Sets New Donor and Dollar Records

Donors turned out in force for UMass Lowell’s second annual Days of Giving challenge, setting new participation and giving records.

Held April 10 and 11, Days of Giving attracted 2,719 donors who gave $314,070 in 48 hours to support student scholarships and their favorite colleges, clubs and athletic teams.

“We set our goals high this year,” says John Feudo, vice chancellor for advancement, “and our donors—alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and friends—still exceeded our expectations. What they told us, again and again, is that they really believe in this institution and our students. They’re excited for the chance to give back to the people and programs they care so much about.”

Supporters not only surpassed the 2,500-donor participation goal, they blew past challenge goals set for faculty and staff, young alumni, the Honors College and sports teams like field hockey, baseball and ice hockey—earning an additional $50,000 in matching funds. Student scholarships attracted the greatest number of both donors and dollar contributions.

Feudo points with particular pride to student participation. “At a time when many of our undergraduates are working to pay for their own education, they still gave more than $11,000 in support of their fellow students,” he says. “That says so much about their character and the culture of UMass Lowell.”

For more information on how you can give back to UMass Lowell, visit uml.edu/give.

Students Honored at State House Ceremony

Tyler Cote came to UMass Lowell for hands-on learning opportunities and a chance to make a difference in people’s lives.

He earned a degree, double-majoring in political science and criminal justice, with a homeland security concentration. Along the way, he accomplished so much more, from launching an award-winning nonprofit that fights extremism, to writing a book chapter about the use of Twitter in the 2016 presidential campaign, all while maintaining excellent grades.

This month, Cote was recognized as one of the “29 Who Shine,” outstanding students selected from each of the 29 Massachusetts public colleges and universities.

“I accomplished more than I could have imagined when I walked in here,” Cote says.

The students were honored at a May 4 State House ceremony hosted by Gov. Charlie Baker and attended by elected officials, state education leaders, administrators and faculty from the colleges and universities and students’ families.

Cote was recognized, in part, for helping start Operation250, a nonprofit that educates children, parents and teachers about online recruitment tactics used by violent extremist groups. He and four other students developed Op250 as interns at UML’s Center for Terrorism and Security Studies. They took third place in an international counterterrorism competition held by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and first place in the 2017 DifferenceMaker contest on campus. Cote finished his coursework in December and now is Op250’s first full-time employee.

Each of the 29 students honored named a faculty or staff mentor to be recognized at the State House event. Cote chose Asst. Prof. Neil Shortland, director of the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies.

Student support was strong at UMass Lowell’s second annual Days of Giving. In all, 2,719 donors gave $314,070 as part of the two-day challenge.

Tyler Cote was selected as one of 29 outstanding students from Massachusetts public colleges and universities.
After Losing Leg in Accident, Lacrosse Player Makes Triumphant Return to Field

With 7:49 to go in the first half of the River Hawks’ game against visiting Hartford, UMass Lowell women’s lacrosse player Noelle Lambert heard the words she had wondered if she’d ever hear again.

“Noelle, go in.”

Lambert had worked for this moment for more than a year and a half—ever since losing her left leg in a moped accident on Martha’s Vineyard in the summer of 2016—but now that it was happening, it felt surreal.

After receiving NCAA approval to play with a prosthesis weeks earlier, Lambert didn’t know when she would get the nod to play. “I tried not to think about the fans or anything. I just wanted to be there for my team,” says Lambert, a junior from Londonderry, N.H., who plays attack. “It was a really special moment.”

And it was just the beginning.

Minutes later, with the River Hawks holding a commanding 10-0 lead, Lambert took a perfect pass and zipped a shot past the goalie and into the net.

Goal.

Lambert dropped her stick and screamed with joy. She turned toward midfield, bounding on the prosthetic blade that now serves as her left leg on the lacrosse field, and into the arms of her teammates—including fellow junior Kelly Moran, who was on the back of the moped that day on the Vineyard and also suffered serious leg injuries in the crash. Fans in the Cushing Field Complex stands went wild as the entire UML bench streamed onto the field for an impromptu celebration.

As the enormity of the moment hit her, tears began to well behind Lambert’s protective eye-mask. Teammates and coaches began wiping tears from their eyes, as did many of those in the crowd. Her against-the-odds comeback was the culmination of months of hard work, determination and pluck.

A standout three-sport athlete in high school, Lambert thought she had lost a major piece of her identity in the accident. She got a running prosthesis last April and began re-learning how to do all the things that always came so naturally to her on the playing field. The criminal justice major returned to practice last September, passing the team’s running test—which had given her trouble with two legs her freshman year.

While Lambert has cleared some major hurdles by getting back on the field—and has inspired legions of fans, fellow athletes and students along the way—she is far from satisfied. “I know I’m nowhere close to where I want to be, and I have to keep putting in that work,” she says.

Lambert Soars Again for River Hawks