Commencement 2012: Another Record-Breaker

U.S Interior Secretary Salazar Praises Lowell Partnerships

For the fifth year in a row, UMass Lowell awarded degrees to a record number of graduates—2,900—at commencement exercises at the Tsongas Center at UMass Lowell. The number of students at the University has grown 37 percent over the past five years, a reflection of rising retention and graduation rates, as well as enrollment growth.

The class of 2012 includes eight students with perfect 4.0 grade point averages and residents of 39 U.S. states and 69 nations. Thirty-six percent graduated with honors.

UMass Lowell Chancellor Marty Meehan presided over the ceremony, saying, "The class of 2012 has seen global conflict, economic turmoil and other issues unfold during their years in college, but by completing the education we’re celebrating today, you are in a far better position to not only support yourselves, but also to help forge the solutions we desperately need in today’s world. I am confident that you are ready, willing and able to offer your skills and strengths to help solve society’s challenges. This commonwealth and this country need you."

Keynote speaker U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar told the graduates, "My father would often tell us that he couldn’t leave us a legacy of material things, but what he and my mom could do was make sure we received a good education. He would say that he preferred it that way because no one could ever take your education away."

Salazar also called on Congress to address the issue of college affordability by preventing the interest rate increase on student loans scheduled to take effect July 1.

Salazar praised the cooperation between the University, City of Lowell and Lowell National Historical Park, calling them "great examples for all the rest of America." In calling on graduates to “seek to leave the next generation in a better place,” Salazar evoked the legacy of Lowell’s native son, the late Sen. Paul Tsongas, who spurred the renaissance of his community.

$700,000 for Scholarships

UMass Lowell has raised nearly $700,000 for student scholarships through the annual Commencement Eve Celebration held at the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center. Since 2008, more than $2.2 million has been raised.

“Commencement Eve has become a showcase of all we celebrate about the UMass Lowell community: scholarship, generosity and service. As we come together to honor exceptional graduates, alumni and public leaders, we are gratified so many friends support the University with scholarship dollars that help lower the cost of education for current and future students,” said Chancellor Marty Meehan.
Ken Geiser and TNEC Receive EPA Merit Awards

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently presented merit awards to Prof. Ken Geiser of Work Environment and The New England Consortium (TNEC) for protecting the public, workers and the environment from toxic chemicals and hazardous waste.

Geiser, one of the authors of the Toxics Use Reduction Act in Massachusetts, received the Lifetime Achievement Award during a Faneuil Hall ceremony for dedicating his life to the betterment of the environment worldwide.

“At UMass Lowell, we have played a significant role in changing public and private chemicals policy, locally, nationally and internationally. That is what I am most proud of,” says Geiser, who directed the Toxics Use Reduction Institute at UMass Lowell for more than a decade and has contributed to chemicals policy and green chemistry research and implementation around the world.

The New England Consortium at UMass Lowell, also honored by the EPA, receives funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to train workers in hazardous waste operations, emergency response and health and safety.

The New England Consortium has trained more than 27,000 workers in 1,700 courses, as well as provided custom training programs for employers and regulatory officials. Experts from TNEC have traveled around the country to sites of environmental disasters, such as the Gulf Coast, to provide emergency training and other assistance.

Prof. Sajo Awarded $450K by Federal Nuclear Agency

Funds Will be Used for Faculty Research and Development

Physics Prof. Erno Sajo recently received a three-year $450,000 grant from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to support UMass Lowell’s longstanding academic programs in nuclear engineering and radiological sciences.

He says there is currently a shortage in research talent in nuclear science.

“UMass Lowell is committed to strengthening its nuclear science education and research programs by hiring new faculty and supporting existing research areas and initiating new ones,” says Sajo. “Maintaining this level of commitment and competitiveness will allow us to eventually attract more external research funding.”

Sajo says the grant will also improve students’ experiences in the program by providing more research topics and assistantships.

Sajo, who is an alumnus (he received his Ph.D. from the University of Lowell in 1990), is an expert in medical physics and radiological science. He recently returned to UMass Lowell after 20 years at Louisiana State University.

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Plastics Engineering Researchers Receive $505K Grant From Raytheon

Study Will Focus on Stimuli-Responsive Polymers

A team of researchers from UMass Lowell’s Plastics Engineering Department recently received a three-year $505,373 grant from Raytheon, which specializes in defense, homeland security and other government markets throughout the world.

“The team will use the funds to design, develop and evaluate polymers as thin-film/coating systems for applications in a chemical sensor device,” says asst. Prof. Bridgette Budhall, the project’s principal investigator.

Budhall says the polymer coatings will allow the sensor to remotely detect very low concentrations (in parts per million) of hazardous agents in the environment.

“By controlling the chemical composition and morphology of the polymers, we are able to control the sensor’s selectivity when exposed to an external stimulus, whether it’s heat, pH, laser, microwave, magnetic or chemical,” she says.
University Names Engineering Building for Esteemed Alumnus

**Barry Perry ’68 Advances Research, Innovation Efforts**

In honor of distinguished alumnus and generous benefactor, Barry Perry ’68, UMass Lowell recently re-dedicated its Engineering Building as Perry Hall. Built in 1952, the building has a rich 60-year history on campus, first as laboratory and classroom space for students in the paper and leather engineering fields, and later, for those in chemical engineering and biomaterials. Perry Hall will continue to be a catalyst for student achievement in engineering and other emerging fields. Perry, whose latest gift to the University totals $1.25 million, is the retired chairman and chief executive officer of New Jersey-based Engelhard Corp., a chemical and metals company. His latest gift will enable UMass Lowell to make improvements to Perry Hall, to build the Perry Atrium inside the Emerging Technologies Innovation Center and will increase the Barry W. Perry Plastics Engineering Endowment Fund, established nearly seven years ago.

**Looking for Something for the Kids to do This Summer?**

UMass Lowell’s series of popular summer camps is back with a wide variety of camps, sure to satisfy even the pickiest camper. Go to www.uml.edu/summer-camps for more information. Here’s a sampling:

- **Reckids Summer Camp:** A recreational day camp designed for kids between 6 and 11 years old. Reckids runs for three weeks each summer 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday with after-care options until 5:30 p.m.

- **Sports Camps:** UMass Lowell offers camps for: baseball, softball, boys’ and girls’ basketball, ice hockey, field hockey, rowing, girls’ and boys’ soccer, track and field and volleyball.

- **Plus Rowdy’s All Sports Adventure Week:** A week-long camp of fun instructional games and activities, including an introduction to various sports.

- **Symphonic Band Camp:** The University offers a week-long intensive program aimed at improving the individual skills and broadening the experiences of musically talented students.

- **DesignCamp:** Offering hands-on science and engineering workshops for students in grades five through 11. Each workshop is built around a series of design projects, interesting science activities and problems to solve.

- **The Tsongas Industrial History Center’s Summer Camps:** Get a front row-seat to history and science! Children can visit four national parks in Massachusetts, build their own canal system, see how far they can make a rocket fly, go eco-exploring, take a boat trip on the Merrimack River and more!

**Malloy Inducted Into Plastics Hall of Fame**

**Engineering Professor Cited for Teaching, Service**

Prof. Robert Malloy is one of 10 individuals from academia and industry inducted into the Plastics Hall of Fame during the National Plastics Exposition banquet in Orlando, Fla., in April. Malloy, who has chaired the Plastics Engineering Department since 2002, joins two other UMass Lowell plastics faculty who had been honored this way: the late Profs. Russell Ehlers and Rudolph Deanin.

“I am very proud to have been selected as one of this year’s Plastics Hall of Fame honorees,” says Malloy. “I am pleased that our plastics engineering program continues to be a nationally recognized leader in the areas of plastics education and research, and this award will help in that respect."

Malloy started his career as a plastics technology instructor and lab director at the Algerian Petroleum Institute in Annaba, Algeria. He earned a bachelor’s degree in plastics engineering in 1979 and a doctorate in polymer science in 1987, both from the University of Lowell. He joined the faculty in 1988.

He has taught more than a hundred undergraduate, graduate and corporate education courses and received the Society of Plastics Engineers Educator of the Year award for 2009. He holds 20 U.S. and European patents. He has been the principal or co-principal investigator for more than 70 funded research projects or grants, has authored or co-authored more than 75 technical papers and has served as thesis advisor for more than 90 graduate students.
Stephen King Takes a Shine to UMass Lowell

Legendary Author to Make Rare Personal Appearance at Event for Public, Campus

Stephen King’s words on page and screen have thrilled and chilled fans for three decades, but opportunities to hear those words spoken by the author himself are rare.

For one night only, King will take to the stage at the Tsongas Center at UMass Lowell, offering fans the chance to hear him read his work, ask questions and listen to him discuss his passion for writing and his advice for aspiring authors.

“A Conversation with Stephen King”—set for Friday, Dec. 7, at 7:30 p.m.—will be moderated by Andre Dubus III, bestselling author and professor in UMass Lowell’s English Department, the program’s co-sponsor.

King’s appearance marks the debut of the new UMass Lowell Chancellor’s Speaker Series. Tickets to the Dec. 7 event are on sale to the public now and are $30 (plus $2 facility fee) for general admission and $50 ($2 facility fee) for reserved floor seating. Tickets will be sold at the Tsongas Center box office, www.tsongascenter.com and 866-722-8780. Admission is free for UMass Lowell students with valid ID who obtain tickets in advance at the Tsongas Center box office.

“Writing requires not just a creative mind and some good ideas, but also dedication to the craft. I look forward to sharing my experiences as a writer and the lessons I have learned with UMass Lowell students and the public,” says King, who will hold a special master class for UMass Lowell creative writing majors during his visit to the University.

To further support UMass Lowell students, King and his wife, Tabitha, will endow a new scholarship fund in their names. King will donate his fee from the UMass Lowell appearance and at least $5 from every ticket sold for the Dec. 7 event will go to this scholarship fund.

“It is a tremendous honor to have Stephen King as the first headliner of the new UMass Lowell Chancellor’s Speaker Series. This is a perfect example of how the series will bring people at the top of their fields to campus to speak to our students and the community,” says Chancellor Marty Meehan.

King’s nearly 35-year literary career includes publishing more than 50 full-length books that have sold more than 350 million copies, as well as many short stories, essays, anthologies and novellas. King’s early thrillers, like “Carrie” and “The Shining,” put him on the map, not only as a writer of popular horror novels, but also one whose work could be successfully adapted for film and television.

King, who also published work under the pen name Richard Bachman, is best known for crafting tales that terrify. But he is also the author of nonfiction books like “On Writing,” his self-described “memoir of the craft,” and “Faithful,” a chronicle of the Boston Red Sox 2004 championship season co-written with Stewart O’Nan. Last year’s “11/22/63” was King’s first work of historical fiction, set around the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

King is the recipient of numerous honors, including the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters and the Mystery Writers of America Grand Master Award.

Many of Stephen King’s books have been made into movies, including 1980’s “The Shining,” starring Jack Nicholson.