University Inn & Conference Center Opens
Former Hotel Transformed Into Social, Cultural and Intellectual Hub

The UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center officially opened at the end of August, creating a bustling center of academic, civic and corporate activity in the heart of Lowell. Housed in the former Doubletree Hotel, the facility provides housing for some 400 upper-class students in addition to providing public and community meeting space and lodging.

“This is a transformational move for both the University and the city. The new facility will create an economic vitality for the downtown area and a rich environment for faculty-student interaction,” says Chancellor Marty Meehan. “It will be an extremely attractive place for our students, their parents and for academic and corporate conferences and meetings.”

The property was purchased by the UMass Building Authority for $15 million and the university spent another $5 million on upgrades. The bond will be paid by student room fees and revenue generated from rentals and events.

The top seven floors will be reserved for student use while the bottom two will continue to be available to the public year-round. During the summer, the entire building will be open for public use.

The Center will further develop the creative economy of the city by providing a home for activities presented by local organizations and institutions such as the Lowell National Historical Park, the Lowell Film Festival and the Merrimack Repertory Theatre.

U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas calls the ICC plan the “highest and best use,” which “contributes to the life of the city, and to the good.”

The University’s efforts to increase student housing are critical to growing enrollment and improving student success and retention.

More at: www.uml.edu/inn
Innovation and Technological Entrepreneurship Degree Launched

A new master's degree program that will teach students how to convert technological innovation to market success has been launched within the College of Management, bringing together the campus's expertise in business education, engineering and the sciences.

The Master of Science in Innovation and Technological Entrepreneurship will help students—from recent bachelor's degree graduates to mid-career professionals—forge careers that focus on developing new products and establishing new ventures.

The new program combines studies in entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, accounting, operations and information systems with relevant courses in engineering or science.

"The degree gives students the tools to develop solutions and a business around them," says Asst. Prof. Steven Tello. "The economy needs it."

The new degree is ideal for aspiring entrepreneurs and working professionals needing new product or process development skills. It will also attract engineering, science and business undergraduates interested in the university's "Plus-One" program to complete their bachelor's and master's degrees in five years.

The capstone practicum will ask students to seek financing and “hopefully take a new product to market,” Tello says. The program’s real-world learning experience, he says, will allow students “to skin their knees and find out how difficult it really is.”

For the full background, go to www.uml.edu/MSITE

$2.4 Million NSF Grant to Help Scientists Learn to Communicate

Grant helps graduate researchers communicate more effectively and brings mentorship to Lowell and Lawrence high school students

The mad scientist secreted in his lab is a stereotype with a long tradition in popular culture, but the reality today is that scientists have to communicate effectively with a wide range of people so their work can be applied to pressing human problems.

The National Science Foundation is stepping up to this need and has awarded a five-year, $2.4 million grant to help UMass Lowell graduate students in science and engineering learn how to communicate about research.

The extra bonus for the region: the project will also benefit high school teachers and students in Lowell Lawrence.

Called GK-12: Vibes and Waves in Action, the project will provide training to eight graduate students in how to communicate science and technology in a classroom. They will spend 10 hours a week each in physics and math classrooms, working with teachers and students on sound and electromagnetic vibrations and waves.

The graduate students will discuss their own research with the high school students, build experiments for the classroom and become mentors and role models to them.

Industry partners include Raytheon Corp., MathWorks, MIT Lincoln Labs and the Motorola Foundation.

Carnegie Foundation Bestows High Ranking on UMass Lowell

Earlier this year, UMass Lowell was named a “community-engaged” university by the Carnegie Foundation—one of only 119 so named in the country. It is a prestigious honor that ranks the campus as one of the nation’s top institutions in the benefits it provides to the world outside its walls. The Carnegie Foundation found that UMass Lowell qualified for the honor in two distinct areas: both as a source of curricular (classroom-related) engagement benefiting communities and for its non-academic, community outreach and partnerships.

For the full background, go to www.uml.edu/carnegie
Students from Tsinghua University, China, visited UMass Lowell for two days this summer. Here, Asst. Director Patrick Drane, right, shows them the Baseball Research and Composites Lab.

Use of Asthma-Related Chemicals in Massachusetts Down
New Study Backs Need for Continued Toxics Use Reduction

The bad news: Massachusetts has one of the highest rates of asthma in the nation, causing substantial human suffering, financial costs and lost capacity and productivity.

The good news: The cumulative use of chemicals implicated in the onset or worsening of asthma declined by 27 percent in this state from 1990 to 2005, according to a recent report released by UMass Lowell’s Center for Sustainable Production. And that decline is likely due to the work of the campus’s Toxics Use Reduction Institute.

The development of asthma is caused by multiple factors and varies from individual to individual, but experts agree that genetic susceptibility and environmental exposures to chemicals play a role.

The Center’s report analyzed the extent to which chemicals that are capable of causing the onset of asthma or triggering asthma attacks are being used and released by Massachusetts industries that report chemical usage under the Toxics Use Reduction Act (TURA).

The TURA program’s Toxics Use Reduction Institute at UMass Lowell has conducted trainings, workshops and research for the last 20 years to help Massachusetts companies find alternative substances and processes that are economically viable and safer for health and the environment.

For the full background, go to www.uml.edu/asthma

New Publication Launched
NewsLine Serves as a Portal to Campus News, Projects and Plans

Welcome to the UMass Lowell NewsLine, a new publication to keep you current about the major news, projects and plans of the campus. The NewsLine will be published once a month except July and August.

The NewsLine replaces the Shuttle, a longer newsletter that for many years was published every three weeks during the academic year. The combination of the smaller, more targeted NewsLine, along with expanded and enhanced web and electronic-based news, will provide faster, more comprehensive and more flexible news delivery. The change—which will result in less paper usage—is also consistent with campus efforts to become more environmentally sound.

“In today’s world of web-based and social media, this model makes sense,” says Patti McCafferty, chief Public Affairs officer at UMass Lowell. “It allows us to get the important information out to interested audiences while providing a wider and deeper range of information on our Web site (www.uml.edu/news). There will be considerable savings in printing and mailing costs, which is very important in these challenging economic times.”
UMass Grants Target Regional Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Three Professors Awarded Funds to Promote the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Three UMass Lowell professors received grants recently from the UMass President’s Creative Economy Initiatives Fund, intended to promote the arts, humanities and social sciences in the Commonwealth.

Prof. Robert Forrant, of the Department of Regional Economic and Social Development, will use a $36,000 grant to support teen art groups in the production of movable murals based on immigrant histories that will be displayed at venues and events around Lowell. Forrant will also create a new fall series called “Voices of Lowell’s Past” that will feature public readings from the trove of letters, diaries and other written material left by immigrants, with the addition of fresh, contemporary voices.

Prof. Kay George Roberts received a $33,000 grant to create a community-based collaboration between the New England Orchestra, UMass Lowell faculty and music students and the newly created Lowell Youth Orchestra, as well as to create a downtown Lowell concert series with the Elliot Church.

The downtown series will include a multimedia concert with original music composed by David Amram to celebrate Lowell native and celebrated Beat poet Jack Kerouac and his friend, Sebastian Sampas. Other planned events include a spring celebration with music from around the world, and a festive holiday concert with the Elliot Church choir.

David Turcotte, a research professor in the Department of Regional Economic and Social Development and senior program manager in the Center for Family, Work and Community, joins colleagues from the Dartmouth and Boston campuses to position UMass as a leading promoter of green jobs. Working with him on the $15,000 project are Prof. John Duffy and Madeline Snow of the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production.

“The grant allows us to build on our efforts to date, and will include convening a working group of clean energy leaders from UMass, identifying and creating new undergraduate and graduate certificate programs for the clean energy industry, integrating green education programs and identifying funding sources to support new educational and training programs,” says Turcotte.

For the full background, go to www.uml.edu/awards

Nanoscale Research Center Receives $12.5 Million From NSF

UMass Lowell, Northeastern, UNH Partnership to Continue Industry-Leading Research

Small is beautiful. Thanks to a $12.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), researchers at UMass Lowell will continue to work on new nanotechnology processes that will lead to earlier detection of cancer, more precise targeting of therapeutic drugs and the development of a host of products. Those products include flexible, lightweight solar cells; small, high-powered batteries; and electronics, such as cell phones, that are lightweight and energy efficient.

The Nanoscale Science and Engineering Research Center for High-rate Nanomanufacturing (CHN) has received the five-year renewal grant from the NSF to continue its industry-leading research: translating nanoscale scientific processes into commercially viable technologies. The NSF has provided $24.85 million to the Center to date.

The Center’s three academic partners—UMass Lowell, Northeastern and the University of New Hampshire—are tackling the challenge of mass-producing nanoproducts. Traditional manufacturing approaches for nanomaterials are expensive, slow and unsuitable for commercialization.

“We are excited about this award and look forward to working closely with industry to ensure that we are developing nanomanufacturing processes that are easily adopted,” says Prof. Joey Mead, director of UMass Lowell’s CHN.

The Center is also investigating the environmental, economic, regulatory, social and ethical impacts of nanomanufacturing. The students, faculty and staff involved with the Center come from various areas of expertise, including mechanical, electrical and plastics engineering; physics; chemistry; environmental health and safety; philosophy and political science.

For the full background, go to www.uml.edu/nanoscale

Did you know...

That one nanometer equals one billionth of a meter?

For the full background, go to www.uml.edu/news