Dear Alumni, Faculty and Staff,

The cornerstone of a UMass Lowell education is preparing our students to be ready for work, life and the world. We do this by integrating experiential learning into the curriculum, giving students the confidence and connections to succeed.

The success of our approach is evident in the stories in this issue - our Medical Lab Science grads are receiving multiple job offers while they are still interning, our Community Health students are teaching health to young girls locally and our Physical Therapy students are applying classroom learning to a real-work setting of figure skating. These are just a few of our success stories.

It's an exciting time at the University on all fronts. Drive by Broadway and Wilder Streets and see the steel girders of the new building that will house the Department of Nursing. See an illustration in the article below of one of the open-air spaces where students can mingle. Also be on the lookout around town for nursing's big bus as it visits local schools, such as the Sullivan Middle School highlighted in the article below, to show students what it's like to be a nurse.

Our research funding continues to grow. Congratulations to Laura Punnett of Work Environment for receiving a $4.5 million grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to improve employee health.

Thank you to all of our alumni, students, faculty and staff for making the School of Health and Environment a successful place for our students to thrive and learn with purpose.

Keep up to date on your colleagues, events and news by "liking" our Facebook page: UMassLowellSHE.

All my best,

Shortie McKinney, Dean
School of Health and Environment
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Medical Lab Science Grads Receive Multiple Job Offers

All graduates from both the Medical Laboratory Science and Clinical Sciences programs have been successfully employed after graduation, in spite of the economy, with many medical laboratory science graduates receiving multiple job offers. The reason? It's an essential medical profession.

"Seventy percent of a physician's decisions about patient diagnosis, prognosis and treatment are based on accurate and precise medical laboratory tests," says Prof. Kay Doyle, director of the Medical Laboratory Science program in the Clinical Laboratory and Nutritional Sciences Department. "This critical function will continue to grow as the baby boomer generation retires."

The demand is so great that students are receiving multiple job offers during their laboratory internships. Before Aaron Stella graduated, he was offered positions at Lahey Clinic, Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates, Anna Jaques Hospital and Cambridge Hospital. He accepted a position at Mayo Medical Laboratories New England in Andover.

Students Teach Healthy Choices to Kids

Community health students gain real-world experience as they teach kids about health at an after-school program at Girls Inc. in Lowell, a youth service organization.

The senior students, Jayson-Ann Wright and Alexandra Beauvais, are working as a team every Friday afternoon for eight weeks to teach girls about physical activity, healthy snack choices and managing stress - elements of the "Healthy You Program."

"I think that teaching the kids about health is both challenging and fun at the same time," says Wright. "As a college health student, it is a challenge to put health terms in words that the girls can understand. My partner Alexandra and I work hard to create an environment that makes the girls feel comfortable and safe to share life stories."

The more than ten-year partnership between community health faculty and Girls Inc. has helped students gain practical experience while fulfilling a real community need. The organization provides enrichment programs after school for girls ages 5 through 18.
"Working with the Community Health Department at UMass Lowell on our Healthy You Program has been a wonderful experience for both our staff and girls and has been a fantastic addition to our programming," says Jennifer Demers, program director at Girls Inc.

Read more.

PT Students Sharpen Skills of Figure Skaters

By assessing the strength and power of 40 figure skaters at the Reggie Lewis Track Athletic Center in Boston, physical therapy and exercise physiology students applied classroom learning to the real world.

"The students really enjoyed the experience because it allowed them to use the skills they learned in the classroom in a real work setting," said Associate Prof. Cynthia Ferrara of Exercise Physiology, who serves on the Sports Medicine and Sports Science Committee for U.S. Figure Skating.

Second-year Doctor of Physical Therapy students Celine DeMaggio, Connor Ryan and Heather Jones and senior exercise physiology students Molly Nowill and Greg Titus, along with Ferrara, tested each of the skater's abilities using the standards set by U.S. Skating, called STARS (Standardized Testing of Athleticism to Recognize Skaters).

Read more.

New Building to Feature Light-filled Open Spaces

The new Health and Social Sciences Building, currently under construction, will feature light and open spaces to encourage collaboration among students, faculty and partners.

The Department of Nursing will share the new building with Psychology and Criminal Justice,
Nursing Bus 'Patients' Meet Middle School Students

Nursing's "On the Move" laboratory bus, complete with two high-fidelity, realistic mannequins - mother Noelle and newborn Hal - gave students at the Sullivan Middle School of Lowell a peek inside the world of nursing.

The 34-foot bus travels around the area to show students what it's like to be a nurse. The mother and baby mannequins were operated via hand-held devices by Assistant Prof. Margaret Knight and Assoc. Prof. Jacqueline Dowling. The students listened to heartbeats and reacted to the crying baby and the talking mother.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded the UMass Lowell Nursing Department a $298,990 grant for the "On the Move for Nursing's Future" mobile simulation laboratory to reach out to diverse and underserved populations in the Merrimack Valley. The high-tech mannequins offer students a fun and intriguing way to find out if the nursing profession is for them.

NIOSH Approves $4.5M to Improve Employee Health

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has renewed funding of the Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace (CPH-NEW) at UMass Lowell and the University of Connecticut.
Students learn about the accuracy of medical procedures by watching and discussing events and decision-making in TV medical dramas.

TURI awarded grants to faculty to find safer substances used in laundry detergents and adhesives as well as to study the effectiveness of disinfection methods.

Originally funded in 2006 with a $5 million grant, the center is a collaborative research-to-practice program led by Prof. Laura Punnett of Work Environment at UMass Lowell.

NIOSH, which is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has approved $4.5 million to support the center for the next five years.

"Our work has made a substantial difference to the health of workers in nursing homes, correctional facilities and other businesses across New England," said Punnett. "We're very excited that NIOSH has awarded this funding so that we can expand our research to uncover the root causes of how the workplace may be influencing negative health behaviors."

Read more.

Students Examine TV Medical Dramas for Accuracy

Can watching TV help students learn? For students who major in health professions, the answer is yes.

In a new workshop, "Anatomy of a Medical Drama," students watch medical TV shows such as Grey's Anatomy and House and discuss whether the medical procedures are accurate.

Throughout an episode, Arlee Dulak, a lecturer in Clinical Laboratories and Nutritional Sciences, stops the tape intermittently to discuss with students ethical dilemmas and medical procedures.

"It gives the students a chance to apply what they have learned in their courses to something that interests them," said Dulak. "For example, we discuss the relevance of the medical lab tests being performed and the validity of the time it takes to complete the tests. We also examine the various diseases and ethical issues presented in the show, which is relevant to all health profession majors in the School of Health and Environment."

Read more.

TURI Awards $60K in Academic Grants

Washing clothes, disinfecting surfaces and using glues - these are common tasks in everyday life that unfortunately could be exposing people to toxics and harming the environment. Safer substances might exist, but do they work as well as the toxics? UMass
Lowell researchers - including Assistant Prof. Nancy Goodyear of Clinical Laboratories and Nutritional Sciences - are searching for answers with funding from the Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI).

"I was very impressed with the proposals from UMass Lowell faculty that addressed potential solutions for Massachusetts industry's use of toxic chemicals," said Pam Eliason, TURI's industry research program manager, who implements the academic grant program. "Not only is this research critical to public and worker health, it's also critical to keep businesses competitive and innovative as global policy restrictions on certain toxics continue to mount."

Read more.

How to Eat Healthy on Campus

Eating healthy comes down to being mindful of food and beverage choices throughout your day. Every eating event is an opportunity to choose health.

By making smarter food decisions today, you may notice that you'll have more energy and can think more clearly during exams. But the payoff later in life is even greater. What diseases run in your family? The food choices you make today will help you reduce your future risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer and obesity. Unfortunately, these diseases are also showing up at increased rates in younger people.

With your busy schedule of classes, exams, activities and work, how can you find the time to eat healthy?

Take these small steps to yield big rewards.

When the Home Becomes a Hospital

Not long ago, you'd find complicated medical devices - like infusion pumps, ventilators and oxygen concentrators - only in a hospital. Not so today.

Rising health-care costs, an aging population, injured returning veterans and a growing preference to receive care at home have driven the delivery of sophisticated health care services into the home. The problem? Placing technologies in settings for which they were not designed is leading to accidents.

Problems range from plugging an infusion pump into a wall incorrectly to forgetting to remove a cap, blocking the flow of medicine. These malfunctions and mistakes have caused serious injuries and, in some cases, death.
But new research could drive changes across federal agencies to make home care safer. David Wegman, MD, Emeritus Professor of Work Environment, chaired a National Research Council committee that investigated existing systems, revealing problems with product design, shortcomings of health information technology and a lack of training for caregivers.

Read more.

News Briefs: Alums, Students

Merrimack Valley nurse practitioner, nurse educator and business owner Dr. Margaret A. Fitzgerald recently earned national recognition when she was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She is a 1986 graduate of the University of Massachusetts Lowell, where she earned her Master of Science in Nursing. The fellowship is an exclusive designation that recognizes outstanding national contributions and achievements in nursing. Less than 1 percent of the nation's nurse practitioners and registered nurses earn this designation.

Physical therapy students videotaped a wheelchair basketball game in October. This cool video gives you a first-person perspective since it was captured by one of the playing students.

Fourteen Work Environment graduate students are receiving tuition and a stipend through the department's grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The grant supports graduate training in occupational safety and health and related fields. From left, front row, the trainees are Amanda Landers, Jon Kalinoski, Laura Kernan, Bora Plaku-Alakbarova, Rebecca DeVries, Daniel Okyere; from left, back row, Jon Brown, Alex Gyebi, Jay Packard, Katie Tenaglia, Nathalie Regis, and Jenepher Nalyanya. Not pictured: Wilfred Agbenyikey, Natalie Brouillette.
Meet Our New Faculty

**Clinical Laboratory & Nutritional Sciences**

Renee Barrile is a lecturer in Clinical Laboratory and Nutritional Sciences where she teaches human nutrition. A registered dietitian, she previously worked in clinical settings counseling on nutrition for obese patients and in public health settings providing nutrition education for low income populations. Her research interests include vitamin metabolism, especially vitamin deficiencies following weight loss surgery. She holds a Ph.D. in nutrition biochemistry from Tufts University. She earned her Bachelor’s of Science degree in nutrition from the University of Minnesota.

**Nursing**

Heidi Collins Fantasia is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at UMass Lowell and a visiting scholar at Boston College, William F. Connell School of Nursing. She earned her PhD at Boston College in 2009; her dissertation work focused on adolescent sexual decision-making. Her postdoctoral fellowship was at Boston College, where she served as the project and data manager for the NINR-funded study "Mechanisms Underlying Preterm Birth in Minority Women" (Dr. Susan Gennaro, PI). She received her MS from Boston College in 1997 with a concentration as a women's health nurse practitioner.

Bethany Gentleman, a visiting professor in the nursing department, is certified as a Gerontological Nurse Practitioner with the American Nurses Credentialing Center. With nursing experience in community health and as a GNP in the long term care and subacute facility settings, she has developed and implemented a model of NP follow-up care for post-nursing facility discharge to home frail elders. She is also currently in private practice, providing primary care to the homebound and assisted-living older adult population. She has taught clinical nursing as adjunct faculty in the UMass Lowell and Endicott College nursing programs.

Nancy Labore is visiting faculty in Nursing. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the Health Promotion Nursing Program at UMass Lowell, anticipating graduation in May 2012. Her dissertation, "Transition to Self-Management: The Lived Experience of 18-25 Year Old Adolescents with Sickle Cell Disease," was funded by the Eta Iota Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International. She graduated in 1998 from the University of New Hampshire with a BS in nursing. In 2003 she received an MS in nursing with a minor in College Teaching from the University of New Hampshire. She is certified in Obstetrical Nursing from the National Certification Corporation.
Physical Therapy

JoAnn Morarity-Baron is a lecturer in Physical Therapy and also an alum of UMass Lowell. She began her career as a Physical Therapist Assistant in the mid-eighties working with severely neurologically impaired children and adults. She graduated from the University of Lowell in 1991 with a Bachelor’s of Science in Physical Therapy and obtained her doctoral degree from Simmons College in 2008. She is certified Competent in Vestibular Rehabilitation and trained in NDT. The remainder of her clinical practice has been with patients who suffer with neurological dysfunction and deficits in balance and abnormal gait.

Work Environment

Manuel Cifuentes is an Associate Professor of Work Environment. Dr. Cifuentes has more than 15 years of clinical experience as a psychiatrist, occupational mental health/disability researcher, and professor of quantitative analysis. He earned M.D. and M.P.H. degrees from Chilean universities and an Sc.D. in Epidemiology from UMass Lowell. He published about the impact on mental health psychosocial working conditions of public school teachers, healthcare workers, and public transportation drivers in Chile before addressing the impact of job strain on participation and imputed working conditions on injuries on US healthcare workers.

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